

Bites, Stings and Venomous Things

Venomous critter identification, sting symptoms and wound first aid for Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas

from The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education

Table of Contents

- First Aid Kit
- Glossary
- Caterpillars
- Insects
- Millipedes & Centipedes
- Scorpions
- Snakes
- Spiders
- Acknowledgements

Development and production of this publication was supported by CDC/NIOSH Cooperative Agreement U50 OH07541.

This publication has been reformatted. It was first published by the Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education as a corner-bound set of laminated cards, approximately 4' x 6', so that it is convenient to carry. Contact the Southwest Center to determine the availability of the original format. Contact information appears at the end of this publication.

Disclaimer — The information contained in Bites, Stings, and Venomous Things tips cards is believed to be accurate and reliable; however, The Southwest Center for Agricultural Health, Injury Prevention, and Education (SW Ag center) and other affiliated organizations assume no responsibility for any errors appearing in the information. In addition, neither The SW Ag Center or their affiliated organizations assume responsibility for the use of the information provided. The contents of these tip cards do not necessarily represent the official views of The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) or any other affiliates.

Call the Poison Control Center toll-free for more information about venomous critters.

First Aid Kit

The following are recommended items for a first aid kit: modify to suit your particular needs. When in doubt, always seek advice from a licensed healthcare professional.

- Adhesive tape (non-allergenic)
- Antiseptic Ointment
- Band-Aids (assorted sizes)
- Benadryl ®
- Blanket
- Cold Pack
- Disposable Gloves Epi-Pen ® (www.epipen.com)
- Gauze Pads and Roller Gauze (assorted sizes)
- Hand Cleaner
- Plastic Bags
- Safety Pins
- Scissors and Tweezers
- Small Flashlight and Extra Batteries
- Topical Cream containing: Antihistamines, corticosteroids, benzocaine, or menthol (e.g., Sting • Kill®)
- Triangular Bandage

All agents should be used according to the manufacturer's use and dosing recommendations.

Glossary

Anaphylactic shock — Severe and sometimes fatal systemic reaction upon a second exposure to a specific antigen (as wasp venom or penicillin) after previous episode characterized by respiratory symptoms, fainting, itching, and hives.

Antihistamine — Medicines that oppose the actions of histamine and are used especially for treating allergic reactions, cold symptoms, and motion sickness.

Analgesic — A drug or medication given to reduce pain without resulting in loss of consciousness.

Benzocaine — Local anesthetic.

Corticosteroids — Any of the steroid hormones made by the outer layer of the adrenal gland; e.g., Cortisol.








Envenomation — The injection of a poisonous material by sting, spine, bite or other similar means.

Neurotoxic — Toxic to the nerves or nervous tissue.

Systemic Reaction — Affecting the body generally; dizziness, fainting, difficulty breathing, swollen lymph nodes.

Tourniquet — A device, typically a tightly encircling bandage, used to check bleeding by temporarily stopping the flow of blood through a large artery in a limb.

Caterpillars

 <p style="text-align: center;">Asp</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Buck Moth</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Hag Moth</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">Saddleback</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Io Moth</p>	 <p style="text-align: center;">Spiny Oak Slug</p>
 <p style="text-align: center;">Stinging Rose</p>		

Sting Symptoms

Local Reactions

- Cold or Numb Feeling
- Severe Body Pain
- Swollen Lymph Nodes
- Red and Swollen Sting Site

Systemic Reactions

- Dizziness and Fainting
- Difficulty Breathing
- Swollen Lymph Nodes in Groin

* Caterpillar hairs can cause respiratory problems and blindness.






First Aid

- Apply sticky tape (medical adhesive or duct tape) to sting. Assure firm adhesion and then pull it off.
- Apply topical cream or hydrocortisone.
- Oral Benadryl® may be taken.





SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR:

- Systemic Reactions
- Extreme Pain
- Inhaled Hairs or Hairs in the Eye




Insects 1

Insect	Symptoms	First Aid
<p>Fire Ant</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple stings • Severe burning sensation • Small blister or whitish pustule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash wound • Apply cool compress • Reaction far from sting suggests risk for anaphylaxis with future stings
<p>Carpenter Ant</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injects no venom 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove stinger • Wash wound • Apply topical cream containing antihistamines, corticosteroids, benzocaine, or menthol • Or, apply baking soda paste
<p>Harvester Ant</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful bite • Venom may travel along lymph vessels and create serious medical problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pain reliever if necessary
<p>Paper Wasp</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple stings • Painful bite • Swelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash wound • Apply topical cream containing antihistamines, corticosteroids, benzocaine, or menthol • Or, apply baking soda paste
<p>Yellow Jacket</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central white spot with red halo • Local swelling 	


Insects 2

Insects	Symptoms	First Aid
<p>Bald Face Wasp</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful sting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash wound • Apply topical cream containing antihistamines, corticosteroids, benzocaine, or menthol • Apply baking soda paste
<p>Cicada Killer Wasp</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically do not sting • Have a long stinger 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash wound • Apply topical cream containing antihistamines, corticosteroids, benzocaine, or menthol
<p>Tarantula Hawk Wasp</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typically do not sting 	
<p>Velvet Ant Wasp (female)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Females sting upon extreme provocation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wash wound • Apply ice pack • Take analgesic if necessary




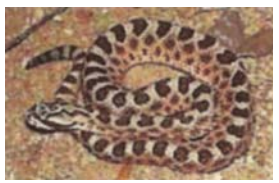












Millipedes and Centipedes

	Symptoms	First Aid
Desert Centipede 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple bites • Very painful • Swelling • Lymph Node swelling • Redness • Headache • Irregular heartbeat • Nausea and vomiting • Anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool, moist packs • Apply topical creams containing benzocaine
Garden Centipede 		
Millipede 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not dangerous to humans • Secrete staining chemical • Chemical could blister skin 	

Scorpions

	Symptoms	First Aid
Striped Bark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple stings • Local burning pain • Swelling • Numbness • Nausea and vomiting • Irregular heart beat • Blood pressure change • Blurred vision • Difficulty swallowing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool packs • Topical medication • Benadryl® by mouth <p>*Seek Medical Attention Immediately for face numbness or a metallic taste in the mouth.</p>

Snakes

Pit Vipers			
			
Mojave Rattlesnake >>>Neurotoxic<<<	Timber Rattlesnake >>>Neurotoxic<<<	Banded Rock	Desert Massasuaga
			
Mottled Rock Rattlesnake	Northern Blacktail	Western Diamondback	Prairie Rattlesnake
			
	Western Massasuaga	Western Pygmy	
Copperheads and Cottonmouths			
			
Broad-banded Copperhead	Southern Copperhead	Trans-Pecos Copperhead	Western Cottonmouth
Coral Snake			
	<p>“Red on Black Venom Lack, Red on Yellow Kill a Fellow”</p>		
Coral Snake * >>>Neurotoxic<<<		Milk Snake <i>Not Poisonous</i>	

Snakes

Bite Symptoms

Mild Envenomation

- Fang marks, usually paired but not always
- Mild to severe pain
- Mild inflammation and swelling
- No systemic symptoms

Moderate Envenomation

- Fang marks with swelling
- Immediate pain at bite site and spreading to surrounding tissue
- Blood and/or serum may ooze from fang punctures
- Vomiting, metallic taste in mouth
- Muscle twitches or tremors

Severe Envenomation

- Immediate, severe pain at bite site
- Oozing of serum and blood from fang punctures
- Rapid swelling, some bruising
- Metallic taste, numbness of lips, nose or tongue
- Blurred vision, altered mental state
- Shock, diffuse or life-threatening internal bleeding
- Respiratory difficulty, kidney failure

* Symptoms of Coral Snake bites may be delayed for 10-12 hours. If it is likely that the bite is from a coral snake, the victim should be taken to a hospital for observation and treatment.




First Aid

- Seek medical attention immediately for treatment.
- Remain calm.
- Remove any rings or constricting items because the affected area may swell.
- If possible, wash the bite with soap and water and cover with a clean cloth or dressing.
- Immobilize the bitten area.
- Keep the bitten limb level with the heart.

- **NEVER** cut the skin.
- **NEVER** attempt to suck the venom out.
- **NEVER** use ice.
- **NEVER** use a tourniquet.
- **NEVER** use aspirin, anti-inflammatory drugs or alcohol.
- **NEVER** use electric shock.
- **NEVER** try to capture the snake.

Call the Poison Center at 1-800-222-1222 for more instructions.

Spiders

	Symptoms	First Aid
<p>Black Widow >>>Neurotoxic>>></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pin prick bite • Tingling sensation • Muscle and abdominal cramping • Nausea, vomiting, and weakness • Difficult breathing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benadryl® by mouth • Seek Medical Attention Immediately
<p>Brown Recluse</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stinging sensation • Painful bite site after 6-8 hours • Pale circle with red spot • Hot bite site • Fever • Joint pain • Nausea and vomiting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool packs • Seek Medical Attention Immediately
<p>Yellow Sac</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painful bite • Swelling • Tissue damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply cool packs • Benadryl® by mouth • Consult doctor

Acknowledgments

- *Product created from source material developed by:*

Paul H. Risk, Ph.D., Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas

- *Photos courtesy of:*

Ricardo Bessin, Ph.D., Kentucky Cooperative Extension
James Castner, UF, Entomology and Nematology Department
Troy and Terry Hibbits
Carolyn Houghton Insall, M.S., Central Texas Poison Center
Jim Kalisch, University of Nebraska, Dept. of Entomology
Mark M. Lucas
Jude McNally
Gary Nafis
Jerry A. Payne, USDA Ag Research Service, Bugwood. Org
Jason Penney
Michael A. Seymour, LSU Agricultural Center
Emedicine Clinical Knowledge Base
Texas Department of State Health Services
The Nature of Things
www.nmherps.com

- *A special thanks to our reviewers:*

Jim T. Criswell, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University
Jean Hite, Oklahoma State University
Carolyn Houghton Insall, M.S., Central Texas Poison Center
William I. Lutterschmidt, Ph.D., Sam Houston State University
Tracie Nalie, Oklahoma State University
Paul H. Risk, Ph.D., Stephen F. Austin State University

- *Additional copies are available upon request, or for more information:*

Southwest Center for Agricultural Health,
Injury Prevention, and Education
11937 U.S. Hwy 271
Tyler, TX 75708-3154

Phone: (903) 877 5896
Fax: (903) 877-7014
E-mail: agcenter@uthct.edu
Web: www.swagcenter.org

