

Bites & Stings

Insects can be classed as venomous or non-venomous according to how they bite or sting. Wasps, hornets, bees and ants attack as a defence mechanism, injecting painful toxic venom through their stings. Such stings are painful with lots of swelling and redness; and for sensitive people can cause anaphylactic reactions. Insects can leave their stings in the skin, with the venom sac attached. Unless it can be removed, the venom will continue to pump into the body through the stinger until the sac is empty.

Non-venomous insects such as mosquitoes, sand flies, fleas, lice, bugs, ticks and chiggers bite in order to feed on blood. They cause local irritation and allergic reactions to their saliva. Bites can be painful; but allergic reactions are rare. However, they may spread diseases such as Malaria, Yellow Fever, Lyme's Disease, Typhoid and Encephalitis.

Insect Bite Protection

- Wear long sleeves and trousers if you know you are prone to being bitten – especially in the evenings (from dusk til dawn).
- Wear light clothing – bugs are more attracted to dark clothing.
- Stay away from stagnant water – this is where mosquitoes breed.
- Use mosquito nets if travelling in a Malaria risk region.
- Avoid wearing perfumes and after-shave.
- Use insect repellents such as Citronella (NB: Citronella oil deters insects – burn it like a candle or add to a light cream for application to the skin), Zap, Neem spray (NB: Neem is an Indian tree known for its anti-malarial properties), Buzz-Off and Pyrethrum spray (which contains *Hypericum*, *Rumex*, *Echinacea*, *Ledum*, *Calendula*, *Arnica* and *Pyrethrum* – the latter obtained from Chrysanthemums). Available from Helios Pharmacy.
- Taking extra Vitamin B1 (50 mg night and morning) plus a B-complex will help to prevent mosquito bites. Eat garlic (raw if possible).
- Rub fresh lime onto the skin to prevent insect bites.
- Apply diluted Geranium aromatherapy oil to the skin.
- Take *Ledum* 30c or *Caladium* 30c once a week as a preventative.

Mosquitoes feed between dusk and dawn and are aware of carbon dioxide from your breath. They are also attracted to sweat and other body odours. For more information, see <http://www.ihatemidges.co.uk>

For more information on Malaria, see the *No Nonsense Travel Vaccine Handbook*, available from Helios Pharmacy or Liz Bevan-Jones (020-8540-0486).

Also refer to the Spring 2006 issue of the ARH magazine: "Silent and Deadly: Prophylaxis and Treatment of Malaria" (the Alliance of Registered Homeopaths).

A Few Words on DEET

This is a chemical insect repellent (diethyl-meta-toluamide); irritating to the skin and toxic if swallowed. DEET can enter the blood stream through the skin.

Homeopathic Remedies

- *Apis*
Swelling, puffiness and redness around the bite or sting. Burning stinging pains. Worse for heat. Allergic reactions. Hives.

- ***Caladium***
Take in 30c potency as a prophylaxis one dose a week to repel mosquitoes. Use also a remedy for bites which itch and burn.
- ***Cantharis***
Burning pains around the sting or bite as if the skin is on fire; skin may be blistered too.
- ***Carbolic Acid***
Carbolic Acid has severe allergic reaction to bee stings.
- ***Culex Musca***
Remedy made from mosquito. Oedematous swellings. Much itching, burning and heat.
- ***Histamine***
Take in 30c or 200c potency for more severe reactions to bites. Use in combination with other indicated remedies.
- ***Ledum***
For puncture wounds which are cold and blue and feel better for cold applications. Can be taken as a preventative in a 30c potency weekly.
- ***Pulex Irritans***
For flea bites.
- ***Staphysagria***
Where being bitten cause an angry reaction.
- ***Urtica***
Urtica Ø can be applied to the inflamed area around the bite. Ill effects of bee stings.
- ***Nelson's Homeopathic Pharmacy Combination Remedy for Bites and Stings***
Contains *Apis*, *Ledum*, *Urtica* and *Hypericum*, all in 30c potency.
- ***Nelson's Homeopathic Pharmacy Combination Remedy for Allergies***
Contains *Arsenicum* 30c, *Allium Cepa* 6c, *Rhus Tox* 30c and *Sulphur* 6c.

Australian Bush Flower Essences

Emergency Essence, Fringed Violet, Mountain Devil.

A Few Words on Jellyfish Stings

Use vinegar, *Apis* and *Medusa* (remedy made from jelly fish: good for numbness, burning and pricking heat). If all else fails, pee on it.

For more advice on bites and stings, see the *World Traveller's Manual of Homeopathy* (Dr Colin B Lessell).