

“Bug Bites and Stings”

Most bug bites and stings will heal on their own and don't require an office visit for evaluation and treatment.

- Insect bites: most are small red bumps, some look like a hive and others can have a small water blister in the center
 - Itchy insect bites (mosquito bites) can be treated as follows:
 - Apply calamine lotion or a baking soda paste.
 - Over the counter hydrocortisone 1% cream can be applied 3 times daily.
 - An ice cube in a wet washcloth can be applied for 20 minutes.
 - If local treatment isn't helping, then an oral antihistamine like Benadryl can be given (see our Medication Dosing Chart at hunterdonpediatrics.org).
 - Painful bites
 - Rub the area for 15-20 minutes with a cotton ball soaked in a baking soda solution (do not use near eyes).
 - Apply an ice cube in a wet wash cloth for 20 minutes.
 - Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen (see our Medication Dosing chart at hunterdonpediatrics.org).
 - Expected course
 - Most bites are itchy for several days.
 - Swelling may last 7 days.
 - Bites of the upper face can cause swelling around the eye (call if there is severe pain or redness).
 - An office visit is necessary if:
 - The bite looks infected – new redness after 48 hours, increased swelling, increased pain, pus or fever.
 - There is severe pain.
 - Redness is not improving after 3 days.
- Bee, wasp, hornet, yellow jacket sting:
 - Remove stinger, if present, using a fingernail or credit card to scrape it off. Pulling it off may squeeze out more venom.
 - If the stinger is below skin level, leave alone. It will be shed with normal skin healing.
 - Apply a meat tenderizer solution or baking soda solution on cotton ball for 20 minutes (Do not use near the eye).
 - Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen for pain.
 - If itchy, a dose of Benadryl can be given. Also over-the-counter 1% hydrocortisone cream may be applied 3 times daily.
 - Pain or burning can last 1-2 hours. Swelling may increase over the first 24 hours and redness may be present. Redness can last 3 days and the swelling 7 days.
 - **Call 911 if there is difficulty swallowing or breathing.** Call the office if redness lasts more than 3 days, there is a very large area of swelling, or the area looks infected (worsening redness after 3 days, increasing pain, pus is present or fever).

Adapted from: *Pediatric Telephone Protocols – 13th Edition 10/16 – 3/17*