



Preventing Bee Stings

Your best bet for avoiding stinging critters is to be on the alert when you're outdoors. If you do see a bee or hornet, move calmly and casually.

Whether you've been stung by a honeybee, hornet, wasp, or yellow jacket (or bitten by a fire ant, which belongs to the same venomous class of insects), in most cases the symptoms are pretty much the same: pain, redness, swelling, and itching at the site.



Ways to avoid stings include the following:

- Avoid known areas of concentration such as hives and nests.
- Do not molest hives and nests.
- Take care with motorized equipment such as lawnmowers, because they may provoke the insects.
- If flying insects are around, leave the area and refrain from swatting at them.
- Avoid activities outdoors with sugary drinks, brightly colored clothing, and strong fragrances or perfumes because some insects may be attracted to them.
- Wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts because they may provide some protection.
- Keep outdoor dining and camping areas clean and free from garbage.



If a bee does land, take steps to avoid frightening it:

1. Hold still. Tell kids to pretend they're statues. Rapid movement startles the bee and encourages stinging.
2. Try blowing gently on the bee. This can encourage it to move on while not startling it.
3. Wear shoes. Bees will of course be frightened if you step on or near them. Shoes don't make them less frightened, but they do protect feet from frightened bees.
4. Wear long pants when you know you are going to be in an area that is likely to have bees in it, such as a field.
5. Wear a hat. Furry animals steal honey from bees. Bees are in a heightened state of readiness when they are close to hair or fur. They have been proven to have a lower threshold for stinging people with hats.

Remember: "No task is so important that it be done at the risk of Safety."