

Normal versus Allergic Reactions to Insect Stings

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I. Normal, non-allergic reactions at the time of the sting

1. Pain, sometimes sharp and piercing b.
2. Burning, or itching burn c.
3. Redness (erythema) around sting site
4. A white area (wheal) immediately surrounding the sting site
5. Swelling (edema)
6. Tenderness to touch

II. Normal, non-allergic reactions hours or days after itching

1. Itching
2. Residual redness c.
3. A small brown or red damage spot at the puncture site
4. Swelling at the sting site

III. Large Local reactions

1. Massive swelling (angioedema) around the sting site extending over an area of 10 cm or more and frequently increasing in size for 24 to 72 hours, sometimes lasting a week in duration.

IV. Cutaneous allergic reactions

1. Urticaria (hives, nettle rash) anywhere on the skin
2. Angioedema (massive swelling) remote from the sting site
3. Generalized pruritis (itching) of the skin
4. Generalized erythema (redness) of the skin remote from the sting site

V. Non life-threatening systemic allergic reactions

1. Allergic rhinitis or conjunctivitis
2. Minor respiratory symptoms
3. Abdominal cramps
4. Severe gastrointestinal upset
5. Weakness
6. Fear or other subjective feelings

VI. Life-threatening systemic allergic reactions

1. Shock
2. Unconsciousness
3. Hypotension or fainting
4. Respiratory distress
5. Laryngeal blockage (massive swelling in the throat)