

Insect Bites and Stings: Here's Help

There you were, minding your own business... [buzzing] and with a hum, a buzz, or no noise at all...

YOWZA! [yelps] An insect bit you or stung you. [buzzing] It could have been a bee, wasp, or ant, but whatever did it hurt.

A lot. [scratching] Sometimes the sting or bite can cause swelling, redness, or itching right away.

And some bites can get worse over time.

Unless you have a severe reaction or allergy, most bites or stings will heal on their own.

But there are a few things you can do to feel better.

One, you can try an ice pack.

Be sure to protect your skin by putting a thin cloth between your skin and the ice.

Two, you can try an over-the-counter allergy medicine with antihistamines.

Read the label and follow the directions.

And three, hydrocortisone cream or calamine lotion can help with the itching and redness.

Again, be sure to read and follow the directions.

Watch for problems and call your doctor right away if it's hard to breathe or your skin has raised, red, itchy patches--hives.

And call if you have a lot of swelling.

For example, if you were bitten on the arm and your whole arm swells.

Also call if you have signs of infection, such as red streaks leading from the area, pus draining, or a fever.

So when you have a pain in the--wherever--thanks to the bite or a sting, give it a little time.

It'll get better soon.