



## Insect Bites or Stings

### Prevention

- Dress your child in clothing that protects their arms and legs (long pants, long sleeves) when in an area where there could be a lot of bugs (stagnant pools of water, wooded areas, gardens).
- If possible, avoid these areas between dusk and dawn when insects are more likely to be active.
- Avoid scented soaps or lotions, perfumes, or hair sprays as these may attract insects.
- On your child's skin, apply an insect repellent with no more than 30% DEET. On clothing, using >30% DEET is okay.
- Repellant may be used on a child over the age of 2 months on both their body and clothing.

### Treatment

- Wash the insect bite with soap and water as soon as possible.
- Oral antihistamines such as Benedryl can also be used to relieve itching and swelling.
- Ice packs or cool compresses can also be applied to reduce discomfort and swelling.
- Make sure you keep your child's fingernails short and clean, and discourage scratching or picking at the bite which can lead to infection. Cleanse scratched bites with soap and water then apply an antibiotic ointment such as Neosporin or Bacitracin to help prevent infection.
- **Wasp or Bee Stings** require special attention:
  - If you see the stinger (looks like a black dot on the skin), try to scrape it out with a credit card or your fingernail. Try not to squeeze it because this may inject venom. If you can't get the stinger out, it will usually dissolve and shed as your skin heals.
  - Next, apply ice to the area to reduce swelling and discomfort.

### Seek Medical Attention If

- Bee sting inside the mouth or signs of severe allergic reaction such as hives all over the body, difficulty breathing or swallowing, or swelling around the eyes or lips.
- If you notice signs of infection which include:
  - Progressively spreading area of redness around the bite
  - Red streaks traveling up the affected extremity
  - Draining pus or crusting around the bite
  - Increasing pain beyond the first 24 hours