

Homeopathic Healthcare
George Guess, M.D.

Insects Stings

Summer is upon us and with it the inevitable annoyances of insect stings and bites. Self treatment with homeopathic medicines is usually highly successful in managing these complaints. Of course, if the condition is severe or there is a history of severe reaction to insect stings, professional medical advice should be sought and heeded. For the more common reactions to insect stings and bites one of the following homeopathic remedies will probably be effective.

Ledum palustre (marsh tea) — This is the most common remedy for stings/bites in general. It is recommended for routine use unless symptoms specifically point to another remedy. Specific Ledum symptoms include: the affected area feels cold yet discomfort is relieved by cold applications. Ledum can relieve the redness, swelling, stinging, itching, and prickling associated with the sting. There may be numbness in the affected area, sensitivity to touch, and pains that extend up the limb. This remedy has frequently been effective in resolving the effects of brown recluse spider bites.

Additionally, undiluted Ledum tincture can be applied directly to the sting site. Such application can be quite effective, for example, for the itching of mosquito bites. Calendula (marigold) tincture can help as well, again only topically.

Apis mellifica (honey bee) — The bite or sting causes marked redness (rosy) and impressive puffy swelling; the affected part is hot and made worse by heat and warm applications. Apis is also commonly indicated for hives after a bite or sting (*Urtica urens* is another). Burning, stinging pains. Apis is more frequently indicated for Hymenoptera (bee, wasp, hornet) stings.

Staphysagria (stavesacre) — Staphysagria is useful for large, irritating mosquito bites, especially in kids. The sufferer may display anger, indignation at the fact of having been bitten.

Cantharis (Spanish fly) — Cantharis can be useful if the site displays great burning, and is red and inflamed. The area is worse from touch, and there is a dread of being approached (The remedy Arnica has this symptom also.).

Hypericum perforatum (St. Johns' Wort) — This remedy may be indicated if the pain of the sting or bite is severe and shoots upward (toward the body).

Vespa vulgaris (wasp) — There is burning, stinging, soreness, and intense itching; the symptoms are likely to be better from bathing the affected area with vinegar.

Dosage: depending on the severity of the reaction, take one dose of 30X or 30C every 15 minutes to 2-3 hours until improvement begins, then take as needed. Lower potencies (6C or X, 12C or X) can work as well.

Note: Any reaction to insect stings which is very severe — that is entailing swelling in locations other than that of the sting itself, generalized hives, shortness of breath, throat constriction and swelling, faintness, loss of consciousness — should be viewed as a medical emergency. If you are in the possession of a prescribed bee sting kit, use it as directed. Otherwise, immediately seek emergency medical care.

Dr. Guess is a family physician and has practiced classical homeopathic medicine since 1978. He maintains a private family practice in Crozet, Virginia, near Charlottesville. He is the past editor of the American Journal of Homeopathic Medicine (a professional homeopathic medical journal)

and Vice-President of the American Board of Homeotherapeutics (a national homeopathic specialty board). www.drgeorgeguess.com