



Bites and Stings

Insects, rodents and snakes can bite or spread illness. If you work outdoors, take precautions and keep your safety in mind.

Insects, Spiders and Ticks

- To protect yourself from biting and stinging insects, wear long pants, socks and long-sleeved shirts.
- Use insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin.
- Treat bites and stings with over-the-counter products that relieve pain and prevent infection.
- Avoid fire ants; their bites are painful and cause blisters.
- Severe reactions to fire ant bites, including chest pain, nausea, sweating, loss of breath, serious swelling or slurred speech, require immediate medical treatment.

Rodents and Wild or Stray Animals

- Dead and live animals can spread diseases such as Rat-bite Fever and rabies.
- Avoid contact with wild or stray animals.
- Avoid contact with rats or rat-contaminated buildings. If you can't avoid contact, wear protective gloves and wash your hands regularly.
- Get rid of dead animals as soon as possible.
- If bitten or scratched, get medical attention immediately.

Snakes

- Watch where you place your hands and feet when removing debris. If possible, don't place your fingers under debris you are moving. Wear heavy gloves.
- If you see a snake, step back and allow it to proceed.
- Keep bite victims still and calm to slow the spread of venom in case the snake is poisonous. Seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Poison Hotline - If you are bitten or stung, call the Poison Center Hotline, 800.222.1222.

Rattlesnakes

- Bites are rarely fatal but extremely painful and can damage body tissue.
- Snakes are most active in August and September.
- Signs of a bite – pain or burning sensation
- Seek medical attention from a hospital immediately.

Bark scorpions

- Scorpion stings are extremely painful, but only the bark scorpion can be deadly.
- Bark scorpions are found inside houses and buildings.
- Most stings occur between April and October.
- Call the Poison Center for first aid instructions and advice on further medical care.

Black Widow Spiders

- Most often found in areas where water and insects are readily available
- Bite initially may feel like a pin prick
- Call the Poison Center for first aid instructions and advice on medical care; severe cases may require antivenin treatment.

Africanized honey bees, ants and wasps

- Stings by a bee swarm can cause illness and death.
- Allergic reactions to an insect sting require immediate medical attention.
- Allergic reactions include: hives, itching, swelling, tightness in chest, difficulty breathing, hoarse voice, tongue swelling, dizziness, a sharp drop in blood pressure, unconsciousness, cardiac arrest.

Source: Banner Poison Control Center

Safety tips developed based on generally accepted safety standards believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

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