

Bites and stings



**IN A MEDICAL EMERGENCY
CALL TRIPLE ZERO (000) FOR AN AMBULANCE.**

DRSABCD Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

The DRSABCD Action Plan is the first step when providing first aid. Use this to assess the immediate situation. [DOWNLOAD THE DRSABCD FACT SHEET.](#)

for any snake bite (including sea snakes), funnel-web spider and mouse spider bites, blue-ringed octopus bite, cone shell sting	Pressure bandaging and immobilisation <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 If the bite or sting is on a limb, apply a broad pressure bandage (crepe preferred) over the bite site.2 Apply a firm heavy crepe or elasticised roller bandage (10–15 centimetres wide) starting just above the fingers or toes, and moving upwards on the bitten limb as far as can be reached.3 Apply the bandage as tightly as possible to the limb.4 Immobilise the bandaged limb using splints.5 Seek medical aid.
for box jellyfish; Irukandji, morbakka and jimble jellyfish, or other tropical jellyfish sting	VINEGAR <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Immediately flood the entire stung area with lots of vinegar for at least 30 seconds. DO NOT use fresh water.2 If pain relief is required, apply a cold pack only after vinegar has been applied.3 Seek medical aid.
for bluebottle and other nontropical jellyfish stings; stinging fish (eg stonefish, lionfish, bullrout); stingray, crown-of-thorns starfish, sea urchin DO NOT use on suspected box jellyfish or Irukandji stings.	HOT WATER <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Check the water to ensure it is as hot as you can comfortably tolerate before treating the patient.2 Place the stung area in hot water for 20 minutes—help patient under a hot shower, place a stung hand or foot in hot water, or pour hot water over the stung area.3 Remove briefly before reimmersing.4 Continue this cycle if pain persists.5 Seek medical aid for a severe wound or if pain persists.
for red-back spider or other spider bite; bee, wasp or ant sting; tick bite; scorpion or centipede sting; jellyfish sting	COLD PACK <ol style="list-style-type: none">1 Apply a cold pack to the bitten or stung area for 15 minutes and reapply if pain continues.2 The cold pack should be changed when necessary to maintain the same level of coldness.

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