

# BITES & STINGS



Spring/Summer is  
bite and sting  
season.

Following are some  
guides to prevention and  
cure.

## SNAKES

Snakes would rather not interact with humans. Given the opportunity, they will slither away and hide. However, if confronted and threatened they will strike back. In fact, over 90% of snake bites are on people who were trying to catch or kill them, even though all native snakes are protected in NSW.

Snakes like to shelter in garden rubbish or old building materials, so try and ensure these are cleared from school grounds.

If you are bitten by a snake, apply a bandage over the affected area and stay still. The bandage needs to be kept on until removed by a doctor. This is to both slow the progress of the venom and to assist in identification of the type of venom.

Never use a tourniquet or try and suck the venom out.



## SPIDERS

The most deadly spider is the male funnel-web. He wanders on hot humid nights or after heavy rain. He is also often found near construction earthworks. He is particularly active during December and January - the usual breeding season.

Symptoms of a bite include extreme pain at the site, nausea and abdominal pain, difficulty in breathing, and sweating.

If bitten by a funnel-web, apply a pressure bandage to the entire limb. Then immobilise the limb (possibly using a second bandage and splint) to reduce blood flow to vital organs and promptly call an ambulance.

Other venomous spider bites produce similar symptoms but should be treated differently. As their poison is slow moving, you should NOT bandage. Simply restrict the patient's movement, apply an ice pack and seek first aid.

Where possible, take the spider to the hospital to assist with identification.

*(www.termite.com has an excellent section on spider identification.)*

please turn over

# Wasps

Common wasps in Australia are the European and the Paper Wasps. The European Wasp is bright yellow and black. They generally live in the ground, tree stumps, wall cavities and similar environments. They can attack in groups with a painful sting. European Wasps will often enter a sweet drink, posing a major hazard. If swallowed, they will sting the throat, causing swelling and possible asphyxiation.

Paper wasps have a very painful sting and are more aggressive in hot weather.



# BEES



Bees are particularly active in summer, when establishing new hives. They often attack in swarms and have been known to cause death.

Many people are allergic to bee stings. If someone is stung, you should monitor them for a time to ensure they do not have an allergic reaction. In extreme cases, people may go into anaphylactic shock, an acute reaction which can cause difficulty with breathing, heart failure and even death. If anaphylactic shock is suspected, call an ambulance immediately and tell them the situation.

# Ticks

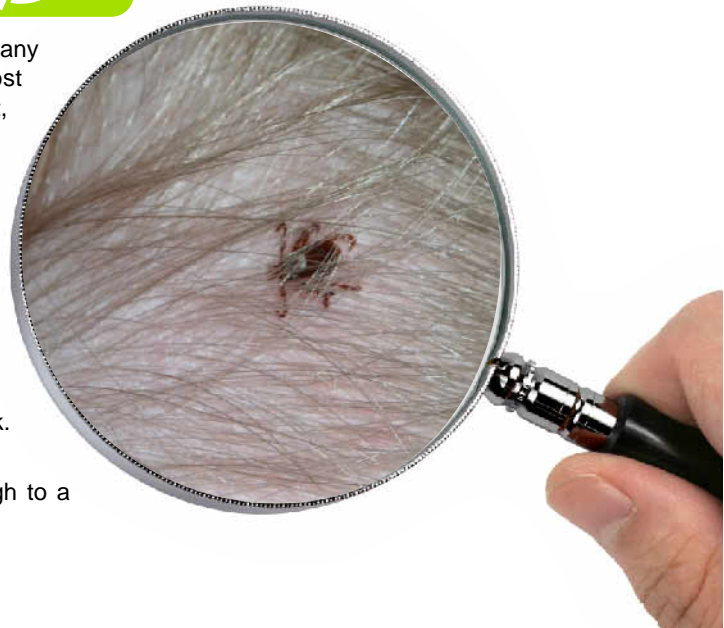
While usually associated with dogs and cats, there are many types of ticks which also attack humans. The most common of these, found predominantly on the east coast, is the Paralysis tick.

When ticks need to feed on blood, they climb up vegetation and wave their forelegs to and fro slowly, hoping to touch a passing victim and latch on. It is generally only female ticks which feed on humans.

Ticks can cause paralysis, tick typhus, and allergic reactions. Initial symptoms of tick paralysis include unsteadiness, weak limbs, rashes, flu-like symptoms and partial facial paralysis. Symptoms develop slowly and may continue for a time after the removal of the tick. An antitoxin is available to treat the condition.

Allergic reactions to ticks, like bees, can be slight through to a severe anaphylactic shock.

Source: [www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au](http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au), [www.termite.com](http://www.termite.com) and <http://medent.usyd.edu.au/fact/ticks.htm>.



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