



# MAFES DAWG TRACKS

Bees and wasps are most abundant during the warm months. Nests and hives may be found in trees or shrubs, among a building's structure, or on equipment leaving outdoor workers most at risk. When pestered by a flying insect, it's helpful to know the nature of the creature that is accosting you.

- Bees have one stinger, so, at worst, they can only sting you once. Most bees are not aggressive; a sting is a warning. However, if a person disturbs a hive, the bees may swarm and sting as a group.
- Wasps, on the other hand, are aggressive and will aggressively swarm to protect their nest. Wasps do not lose their stingers in human skin as bees do, so they can sting multiple times.

## The Sting

Most stings only cause only mild discomfort, including a burning sensation, redness and localized swelling. These symptoms usually fade after a couple of hours. Taking an over-the-counter antihistamine can help alleviate itching and possibly even the swelling associated with a sting. However, some stings may result in a severe allergic reactions that require immediate medical care. In sensitive individuals, a sting can trigger anaphylaxis if the venom in the sting triggers the body to go into shock. This can happen quite quickly and cause symptoms like swelling of the face and throat, drop in blood pressure, difficulty breathing, racing or weak pulse, nausea, diarrhea, dizziness, stomach cramps, or loss of consciousness. If this occurs, the individual requires emergency medical help. If you have a known allergy, and an epinephrine pin for use, tell your co-workers and supervisor so they can better help you should an adverse reaction occur.

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## First Aid

- ✓ Have someone stay with the worker to be sure that they do not have an allergic reaction - For most people, these symptoms develop rapidly, usually within a few minutes of being stung. In some rare instances, it can take over thirty minutes for the symptoms to begin.
- ✓ Wash the site with soap and water.
- ✓ If a bee sting, remove the stinger using gauze wiped over the area or by scraping a fingernail over the area - Never squeeze the stinger or use tweezers.
- ✓ Apply ice to reduce swelling.
- ✓ Do not scratch the sting as this may increase swelling, itching, and risk of infection.

## Protect Yourself

- ✓ Wear light-colored, smooth-finished clothing. Wear clothing to cover as much of the body as possible.
- ✓ Avoid perfumed soaps, shampoos, and deodorants. Do not wear cologne or perfume.
- ✓ Avoid bananas and banana-scented toiletries.
- ✓ Avoid flowering plants when possible.
- ✓ Keep work areas clean. Some insects are attracted to discarded food.
- ✓ Remain calm and still if a single stinging insect is flying around. (Swatting may cause it to sting.)
- ✓ If attacked by several stinging insects, run to get away. (Bees release a chemical when they sting, which attracts other bees.) Go indoors. Shaded areas are better than open areas. Do not jump into water. Some insects (ex. Africanized honeybees) are known to hover above the water.

## Sources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh>

<https://facty.com/ailments>