Advice for care of wasp or bee stings

Airedale NHS Foundation Trust

Stings from wasps and bees are very painful. They cause redness and swelling around the site of the sting. Wasp and bee poisons are different, so different treatments may help the pain.
If the poison sac is still in the skin, it should be removed by scraping something across the skin. Do not pull on the sac as squeezing it will make more poison go into the skin.

Wasp stings

Soak a cloth or pad with any type of vinegar and apply it to the skin after any sting has been removed.

Bee stings

Make a paste of water and either bicarbonate of soda or baking powder and then apply it to the skin after the sting has been removed.

In both cases an antihistamine cream may soothe the skin. Sometimes the skin continues to swell after a sting. If this happens you should either see your GP or attend the Emergency Department.

Rarely some people can have a serious reaction to stings. If there is any difficulty breathing after a sting, you should go straight to your nearest Emergency Department by dialling 999 or 112 for an ambulance.

For more information contact:

- Emergency Department — 01535 294481
- NHS 111 — 111, or 111.nhs.uk
- Your GP
- The NHS website — www.nhs.uk

Are you a victim of Domestic Violence? For confidential advice, contact:

Bradford	0808 2800 999	https://www.stayingput.uk.net/contact
North Yorkshire	03000 110 110	https://www.idas.org.uk/
Lancashire	0300 323 0085	https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/health-and-social-care/your-health-and-wellbeing/domestic-abuse/

If you require this leaflet in other languages or formats please telephone the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01535 294019

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