



Insect Bites and Stings

Toolbox Talks are intended to facilitate health and safety discussions. Find more Toolbox Talks on the [Occupational Safety web page](#).

General Information

Summer in Iowa means more time outside and exposure to insects that bite and sting.

Protection

- Wear clothes that cover most of your body.
- Use insect repellent and follow the label instructions.
- Avoid contact with overgrown grass, brush, and leaf litter if possible.
- If stung, clean the affected area with soap and water.
- Call 911 or seek medical assistance immediately if you or a co-worker have a severe reaction (hives, trouble breathing, become dizzy, etc.) to an insect bite or sting.
 - EpiPens must only be used as prescribed by a physician.
- Scrub the bite area with soap and water, then apply calamine lotion or anti-itch cream like hydrocortisone.
- Scratching may increase irritation or allow bites to become infected.



Bees and wasps

- Bees in Iowa include honey, carpenter, ground, and bumble.
- Wasps in Iowa include yellow jacket, paper, mud dauber and cicada killer.
- They are usually non-aggressive unless they are disturbed or feel threatened, but they will sting to protect themselves.
- Bees only sting once because the stinger is embedded in the skin, killing the bee.
- Wasps can sting multiple times.
- Stings will initially cause a sharp pain followed by redness and swelling and can be deadly for people who are allergic to the venom.

Mosquito

- Mosquitos feed on blood and can spread disease.
- Bites typically result in a raised bump on the skin that is red and itchy.
- Cover, empty, or treat containers, buckets, or pots with standing water to reduce potential breeding sites.

Chigger

- Chiggers are mites found on vegetation until they find a host.
- They burrow into the top layer of skin and usually appear in groups.

Discussion Date:

Supervisor:

Participants:

Source:
<https://www.healthline.com/> and
Preferred Pest Control