

# INSECT STINGS



## BE PREPARED FOR SPRING ACTIVITIES BY KNOWING THE FACTS

### Stinging insect facts:

- Insects that can cause allergic reactions in the person they sting are: honeybees, wasps, yellow jackets, hornets, and fire ants.
- Approximately 90-100 people die each year due to anaphylaxis caused by an insect sting.
- Symptoms of an allergic insect sting
  - Itching
  - Flushed skin
  - Pain
  - Redness
  - Swelling
  - Hives
  - Anaphylaxis
  - Tightness in the chest or difficulty breathing
  - Swelling of the tongue or difficulty swallowing
  - Stomach cramps or vomiting
  - Dizziness or drop in blood pressure
- If stung and stinger is left in your skin, remove it by scraping it with something flat. Never pinch a stinger, because that will release more venom from the insect.

### How to avoid insect stings:

- Avoid walking outside with bare feet or in sandals.
- Stay calm if a bee or wasp approaches. Swatting will agitate the insect. Keep movements to a minimum and the insect will usually fly away on its own.
- Avoid using strong perfumes, colognes, hairspray, or other cosmetics. Stinging insects are attracted to the smell.
- Keep a close eye on all food and drinks while eating outside. Stinging insects will fly into open drinks and land on food items.
- Avoid wearing brightly colored clothes. Stinging insects are attracted to brightly colored objects.
- Wear pants, long sleeves, shoes, socks, and gloves when doing yard work outside to prevent insects from stinging.
- Keep any prescription medication on hand for those with severe insect allergies.

