

Bug Bites

Identification and Care

Black Widow

- ⇒ This spider is **VENOMOUS**.
- ⇒ Black Widow spiders are black, glossy, and have a distinctive red, orange, or yellow hourglass shape on their underside.
- ⇒ The bite will look like one or two small fang marks. The bite area will be red, tender, and possibly swollen.
- ⇒ Severe muscle cramps, nausea, vomiting, seizures, and a rise in blood pressure may result.
- ⇒ **Get medical care immediately if you were bit by a spider.** An anti-venom medication may be needed.



Brown Recluse

- ⇒ This spider is **VENOMOUS**.
- ⇒ These spiders hide in dark areas like attics and closets.
- ⇒ They can be yellowish-tan to dark brown with darker legs.
- ⇒ The brown recluse bite may cause a stinging pain at the time of the bite and may cause the skin to redden, blister, and become painful. The tissue around the bite will begin to die if not treated properly.
- ⇒ **Get medical care immediately if you were bitten by a spider.** Anti-venom treatment may be needed.

Ticks

Ticks are abundant in grassy, wooded areas. They will wait on the tips of grass and trees to attach to the skin of an animal or human passing by. Ticks usually will remain attached to the body after they bite you. They can stay and suck blood from your body for weeks. Tick bites are usually harmless and produce no symptoms unless you are allergic to the tick bite or if the tick transfers a disease to you.

Diseases that ticks can carry and transmit to humans:

- Lyme disease
- Colorado tick fever
- Rocky Mountain spotted fever
- Tularemia
- Ehrlichiosis
- Anaplasmosis



If you have any of these symptoms following a tick bite, seek medical attention as soon as possible:

- Difficulty breathing
- Pain or swelling at the tick bite area
- A rash near the tick bite
- Headache and nausea
- Muscle or joint aches
- Fever or chills
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue
- Headache



To Remove a Tick:

- ⇒ Use tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- ⇒ Pull straight up while the tweezers grasp the tick. Do not twist the tweezers.
- ⇒ If there is part of the tick stuck in your skin, you can use the tweezers to remove the parts.
- ⇒ Clean the area with rubbing alcohol or soap and water, and watch for any of the above symptoms.

Fleas

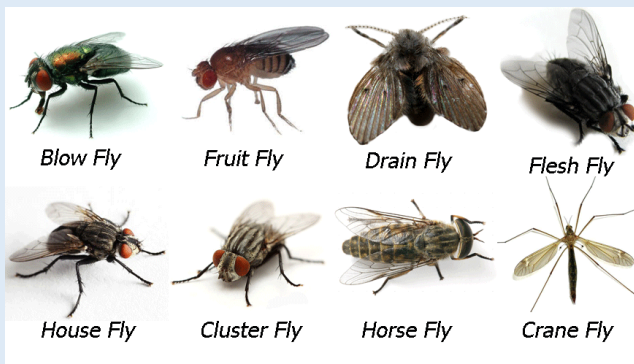
- ⇒ While fleas are commonly found on animals, they can also attach to people. Some people are more sensitive to flea bites than others. The bites will look like little red dots. Fleas do not usually pose any danger, but scratching the flea bites can cause a wound or lead to infection.
- ⇒ Wash the bites with soap and water, and apply ice to reduce any swelling. Use calamine lotion or anesthetic creams to treat the itching.

To Get Rid of Fleas

- **Thoroughly clean your home.** Sweep tile or wood floors, and vacuum carpets, rugs, and furniture.
- **Use carpet spray.** Spray carpets and upholstery in the home. Fleas love dark places, so spray under furniture and in crevices.
- **Fog your house.** Some foggers are effective up to 7 months, long enough to kill all the life stages of a flea in most cases. You may need to use 2-3 foggers depending on the size of your home.
- **Spray your yard.** Kill fleas with a yard spray before they come into your home on your shoes, clothing, or pet.
- **Use preventative medications for your pets.**



Flies



- ⇒ If a fly bites you, there will be immediate pain and a red, itchy bump.
- ⇒ If you get bitten by a fly, clean the area with soap and water and keep from scratching to prevent infection. You can ice the area for 15 minutes at a time to reduce swelling.
- ⇒ **Note:** The bites of some flies like horseflies or deer flies can bleed. If bleeding from a bite does not stop on its own, see a doctor.
- ⇒ **Some flies can transmit a diseases like tularemia, salmonella, and ecoli.** If you have skin ulcers, a fever, or a headache with a fly bite seek medical attention.

Mosquitoes

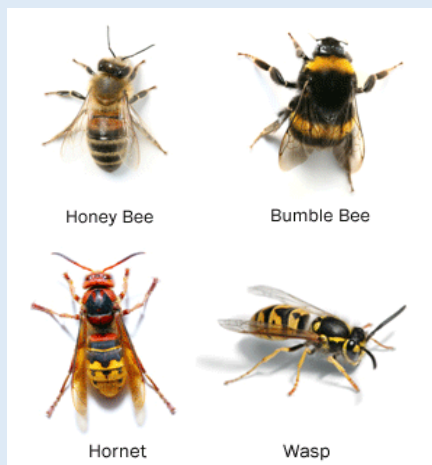
- ⇒ Female mosquitoes bite humans in order to ingest their blood. The protein in blood is used in mosquitoes' egg production.
- ⇒ A mosquito bite will leave a swollen, itchy bump. Clean the area with soap and water and take an antihistamine to control itching. Scratching the bite can lead to infection. You can apply cold to the bite to reduce swelling.
- ⇒ Other reactions vary depending on how sensitive a person is to the mosquito saliva. **If you have blistering, inflammation, or trouble breathing, seek medical attention immediately.**
- ⇒ Wear repellent to deter mosquitoes from biting you. Mosquitoes are most active at from dusk to dawn, so wear long shirts and pants if you are outside at these times.

Some mosquitoes may be infected with a disease. These diseases can be transmitted to humans through a bite. Diseases include:

- West Nile Virus
- Encephalitis
- Malaria (not common in the United States)
- Yellow fever (not common in the United States)

If you have any of the following reactions following a mosquito bite, seek medical attention immediately:

- Fever
- Headache
- Rash
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Aches in muscles and joints
- Fatigue or weakness



Bee, Wasp, or Hornet

- ⇒ When certain bees sting, they will lose their stinger and die, but a wasp or hornet can sting you multiple times.
- ⇒ If you are allergic to bees, a serious reaction can occur. Call 911 and use your epipen right away if you are known to be allergic to bees.
- ⇒ If you are not allergic to bees, the sting should only hurt for a few minutes. **If you have trouble breathing with any sting, call 911 immediately.**

If you are not allergic:

- Remove the stinger with tweezers.
- Clean the area with soap and water.
- Apply ice to the area for 20 minutes once an hour as needed.
- Take an oral antihistamine for itching.

Bedbugs

- ⇒ Bed bugs are not considered a medical health hazard, but some people may have allergic reactions to the bite. If there is an allergic reaction, medical attention may be necessary.
- ⇒ Bedbug bites leave itchy, red spots on the skin. Scratching them could lead to an infection.
- ⇒ Clean the bites with soap and water or rubbing alcohol.
- ⇒ A tell-tale sign of home infestation are rusty colored blood spots on the mattress, sheets, nearby furniture, etc. Bedbugs excrete blood filled fecal matter.

If you discover bedbugs, remove them from your home:

- Personal items such as blankets, quilts, and stuffed animals should be removed, cleaned, and bagged in plastic for a couple days with Nuvan strips.
- There may be bedbugs hiding within your bed frames, so you may need to dismantle them to find additional bugs.
- Remove all your clothes from drawers and the closet and wash then in hot water.
- Thoroughly clean the infested rooms by using a stiff brush. This will dislodge any hidden eggs.
- Vacuum areas of infestation. Vacuum along baseboards, furniture, bed stands, headboards, foot boards, carpets, etc. Do not use the bristle attachment of the vacuum because bed bugs can cling to this and be transferred to other parts of the house. Use the hard plastic attachments to vacuum.
- You may need to get a new mattress if the bed bugs are *inside* the mattress.
- You could also call an exterminator to help remove the bugs.



Chiggers

- ⇒ Chiggers are commonly found in outdoor areas such as berry patches, tall grass and weeds, or edges of woodlands. They are tiny and usually cannot be seen without a magnifying glass. They are most active during the summer and fall months.
- ⇒ A chigger bite will result in severe itching and red bumps. The bumps may look like welts, blisters, pimples, or hives.
- ⇒ Avoid scratching the bites as this could cause infection. You can apply ice to the bites to relieve the itch.
- ⇒ You can use an over-the-counter medication like hydrocortisone to treat the bites.
- ⇒ In most cases, chiggers do not cause any harm to your health. They feed on skin cells, not on blood. They do not carry or transmit disease.
- ⇒ If the bites do not go away or you have swelling, fever, or other signs of infection, seek medical attention.

To prevent chigger bites:

- Wear repellent, especially around the tops of your shoes, shirt neck, cuffs, and waistband.
- Stay on trails if you are in a wooded area.
- If you will be in wooded areas or areas with high grass, wear long sleeves and long pants that can be tucked into your socks and shoes.



Note: The diseases mentioned for each bug bite are ones that are common in the United States. If you are traveling to other countries, certain bugs may pose other serious health risks. Check with your local health department before traveling. You may need specific vaccinations before you travel.