

How to Care for Your Child After a Jellyfish Sting

This leaflet will provide you with information about jellyfish sting symptoms and important treatment tips. .



What is a jellyfish sting?

- Jellyfish are sea creatures that live in oceans all over the world.
- Jellyfish sting by touching your skin with their tentacles, which release venom (poison).
- Jellyfish stings often happen while swimming in the sea, especially during the summer.
- Jellyfish stings can also happen if you touch or step on a dead jellyfish at the beach.
- It is usually difficult to identify the type of jellyfish that caused the sting.
- The jellyfish in Qatar usually cause mild-to-moderate symptoms and are rarely life-threatening.

What are the symptoms of a jellyfish sting?

Severity of the symptoms depends on the type of jellyfish, how long it touched the skin, and the area of skin affected. Symptoms may include:

Local (sting area) symptoms – low-to-moderate:

- Local pain at the sting area
- Numbness or tingling
- Skin burning and itching
- Rash with red and purple patches, skin blisters, and local swelling

Generalized (whole-body) symptoms – severe:

- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Difficulty breathing and/or swallowing
- Chest pain
- Muscle cramps
- Sweating
- Agitation
- Allergic reactions

What should I do if my child got a jellyfish sting?

- Stay calm and call the Qatar Poison Center at 4003-1111 immediately. They can advise on how you can further help your child depending on the situation.
- Get your child out of the water. Do not allow your child to continue swimming after a jellyfish sting.
- Remove your child's clothing/swimwear using gloves. Do not touch the sting area or their clothing/swimwear with your bare hands.
- Pack and wash your child's clothing/swimwear separately in hot water. Do not mix it with other clothing/items.
- Wash the sting area with seawater or warm water. Do not wash the sting area with alcohol, urine, freshwater, or vinegar, as these may worsen the symptoms

- Remove any visible tentacles carefully. You can use a credit card to scrape the skin, or any similar tool with an edge. Do not use your bare hands to remove the tentacles.
- Avoid placing a tourniquet (a tight band) or wrapping a cloth tightly around the sting area.

How is a jellyfish sting treated?

- Most jellyfish stings do not require medical care at a hospital, unless the symptoms are more severe or generalized.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the symptoms.
- There is no anti-venom medicine in Qatar for jellyfish stings. However, you can treat the symptoms with the following:
 - Give your child anti-histamines to treat skin reactions such as itching and rash.
 - Give your child anti-nausea medicines for nausea and vomiting.
 - To relieve pain:
 1. Immerse the sting area in seawater or warm water (around 45°C, or as warm as tolerated. do not use hot water that might burn the skin) for 20 minutes. This can help stop the venom.
 2. Give you child pain medicines, such as paracetamol (Panadol), if needed.
 3. Apply calamine lotion to the sting area.
- Consult the Qatar Poison Center before giving your child any medicines to confirm the correct dose.

When should I seek urgent medical care?

Go to the nearest emergency department, or call 999 for immediate ambulance transfer if your child:

- Has severe pain that won't go away
- Has swelling that keeps getting worse, especially in the face and/or tongue
- Develops hives on the skin
- Has difficulty breathing and/or swallowing
- Develops nausea and/or vomiting
- Develops fever above 38°C

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