

How to Care for Your Child After a Scorpion Sting

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



What is a scorpion sting?

- A scorpion sting is when a scorpion uses its stinger to inject venom (poison). Scorpions usually sting when they feel threatened.
- Scorpions can live in and outside people's homes, hiding in cracks or holes, in clothing, in shoes, under rocks, and in firewood.
- A scorpion sting can happen if you accidentally step on a scorpion, disturb one while reaching into hidden spaces, or even while you're getting dressed or getting into bed.
- All scorpion species have venom. However, most scorpion types in Qatar are not dangerous and rarely cause severe symptoms.
- It is usually difficult to identify the type of the scorpion that caused the sting.

What are the symptoms of a scorpion sting?

- Symptoms of a scorpion sting may start within 30 minutes after a sting, but some symptoms may show up a few hours later.
- Severity of the symptoms depends the scorpion type.
- Symptoms may include:

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

- Local pain at the sting area
- Numbness
- Skin redness
- Swelling
- Itching

Generalized (whole-body) symptoms – severe:

- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Difficulty breathing and/or swallowing
- Drooling
- Sweating
- Fast or pounding heartbeat
- Increased blood pressure
- Muscle cramps and restlessness
- Cold limbs
- Allergic reactions

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

Do:

- Take your child to the emergency department immediately, or call 999 for ambulance transfer.
- 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.
- Remove tight clothing, jewelry, or shoes from the affected limb or sting area.
- Note the time when the sting happened.
- Wash the sting area with soap and water.
- You can apply ice to the sting area to relieve pain.
- You can also give your child pain medicines (such as paracetamol or ibuprofen).

DO NOT:

- Do not place a tourniquet (a tight band) or wrap a cloth tightly around the sting area.
- Do not try to capture or kill the scorpion.
- Do not try to suck the venom out or cut around the sting area.
- Do not apply heat, electricity, or any substances to the sting.
- Do not give any medicines other than pain killers before confirming the correct dose for your child with Qatar Poison Center.

How is a scorpion sting treated?

- The doctor at the emergency department will assess the severity of the sting by evaluating your child's symptoms and performing vitals signs and blood tests if needed.
- Treatment will depend on the severity of the sting:

For local (sting area) symptoms:

- Pain medicines to relieve pain (such as paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- Anti-histamines (allergy medicines) to reduce itching and other skin reactions
- Anti-nausea medicines to stop nausea and vomiting

For generalized (whole-body) symptoms:

- Anti-venom might be needed in some severe cases. However, anti-venom can cause severe allergic reactions, and should only be given at the hospital. Such severe cases are extremely rare in Qatar.

When should I seek urgent medical care?

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

- Got stung by a scorpion.
- Has any of the following symptoms:
 - Severe pain
 - Allergic reactions
 - Difficulty breathing and/or swallowing
 - Dizziness or loss of consciousness

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