

## Insect Bites and Anaphylaxis – What to do



It's finally Spring! It's the time of year when we head outside into the longed-for sunshine.

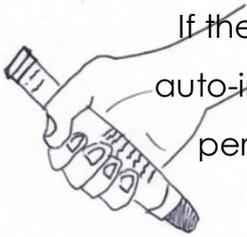
Whether is playing in the park with friends and family or planting seeds in the back garden, if the sun is out so are we.

It's probably a good moment to remind ourselves what to do if someone **reacts badly to an insect sting**.

If the sting is still in the skin, brush or scrape it away but try not to touch it yourself. After the sting has been removed it is a good idea to apply something cold to the area (such as an ice pack) to reduce the pain and minimise the swelling.

So, what are the signs of a bad reaction?

The casualty might develop a **rash** and may be **itchy** or have a **swelling**. They may start to have **difficulty breathing**. They may be sick or have diarrhoea. If you see these symptoms you should **call 999**. The reaction could be very serious and may even cause a swelling of the person's airway which could eventually cause them to stop breathing.



If the person has a known allergy, then they are likely to be carrying an auto-injector. You can help them use this or administer it yourself with their permission. There will be instructions of how to do this on the injector.

While you wait for the ambulance to arrive you should reassure them and keep them comfortable. You should be aware that at any point you may have to administer CPR.

Make sure you tell the paramedics if you have used an auto-injector.

**What is Anaphylactic Shock?** A severe and potentially life-threatening reaction to a trigger such as an allergy.

Contact us if you have any other questions about first aid for someone who is having a severe allergic reaction.

