

BuzzAboutBees.net

The wonderful world of bees.....

If you are worried about the possibility of being stung, then it may help to put the dangers in perspective.

So here are some statistical facts:

- In the USA, there is a greater chance you'll be murdered by a fellow human, than die from being stung by a bee!
- In the USA, you are more likely to die of the flu than bee stings.
- Even lightning kills more people every year than bee stings!

According to the *Journal of Asthma and Allergy*, approximately 5 to 7.5 percent of people will experience a severe allergic reaction to insect stings in their lifetimes.

Many people who react to insect stings will experience a mild to moderate allergic reaction in the form of localized redness and swelling.

For a small minority of people, the allergic reaction can be much more severe, requiring emergency medical treatment. Fatal reactions are rare.

Most of the time, bees go about their business and don't bother us. Think of the last time you walked through a garden or public park full of flowers. The bees go about their business, and are largely unnoticed.

Honey bees could sting if aggravated. Swarming honey bees are 'drunk' on the honey they have consumed prior to swarming, and are only a problem if they are aggravated/provoked, or if they are having difficulty locating a suitable nest site, meaning they are becoming hungry.

Contact a beekeeper via your local beekeeping association if you need assistance to move a swarm.

If you are concerned generally about bee stings, there are actions you can take to prevent them.

How to Prevent Bee Stings and Wasp Stings

Here are 12 ways to prevent bee stings and wasp stings....

Prevention is better than cure. Here are some tips to help you prevent bee and wasp stings:

1. Protect your feet on lawns

Prevent bee and wasp stings to the feet by keeping feet covered.

Do not walk barefoot, or allow children to run around barefoot on lawns, especially flowering lawns featuring clover, dandelions or other flowers where they may be foraging.

Some bee and wasp species may nest in the ground. If bees and wasps are trodden on by accident, they may sting.

2. Leave bee and wasp nests alone

Bumble bees are not aggressive and can be left alone.

Nests of bumblebees and solitary bees can generally be left alone.

However, if you see a large, wild honey bee nest or wasp nest, never throw objects or spray chemicals, since you risk causing aggravation. Keep children and dogs away.

If you have a honey bee nest in your garden, ask a beekeeper for assistance and advice (locate a local beekeeping organization).

If a wasp nest must be moved, seek professional help, but remember that wasps nests also will last only a season.

3. Eating outdoors? Keep face and hands clean and dry - and free of food!

This is so true for children, who may be inclined to get food around their mouths and hands, and spill food onto their clothing.

Wasps are attracted to sweet foods and drinks, so ensure the face and hands especially, are free of sweet, sticky foods like ice cream, jams and jelly, chocolate and fruit juice.

Clean away spillages on clothes. Take a packet of wet wipes with you when out and about, and dry the hands and face after wiping clean.

4. Out and about? Store food and drinks in containers

To help prevent wasp stings whilst out and about, it's sensible to store food in appropriate containers, especially drinks.

Select a suitable travel mug or beaker, with a lid and straw such as these below. There are some really nice designs available too!

5. Choose 'pop in the mouth' picnic foods

This is especially useful for children. Since wasps are attracted to foods, try to select foods that can easily be popped into the mouth in one go, or cut sandwiches, fruit and cakes into small pieces that can be put into the mouth.

Keep them in sealed containers until ready to eat, and take them out one at a time. This avoids the risk that a child will be holding a food item for some time, thus attracting wasps.

6. Keep calm

Allow bees and wasps to go about their foraging activities in peace. Try to avoid waving your arms around that will aggravate them. Keep calm and move away.

7. Ask a beekeeper to deal with a honey bee swarm

If you discover a bee nest or a bee swarm, move calmly away and contact a local beekeeper. Keep children and pets away from the area.

8. Avoid scented hair spray and perfumes during the day

If you don't like them being near you, avoid highly scented hairsprays and perfumes during the day in Spring and Summer, when bees and wasps are more active.

9. Use a deet-free insect repellent

Consider wearing a deet-free insect repellent if you are able. Alternatively, try a repellent containing Picaridin. There are many available, including wrist bands and lotions.

10. Avoid sitting, standing or eating in areas where bees and wasps may gather

Avoid sitting close to refuse bins, where wasps may gather looking for human food scraps and drinks cans. If you are afraid of bees, avoid sitting close to flowering shrubs.

11. Install a Waspinator

Planning a summer picnic? Want to deter wasps from making a nest in your garden? Take a Waspinator with you to deter wasps, and install a Waspinator at strategic points around your home and garden, such as seating areas, the eaves of the house, and so on. Available on Amazon.com.

12. Pay attention to the signs

Do the bees or wasps 'sound' angry or aggravated? If so, keep away.

Note that bumblebees are largely docile, but will raise their middle leg if they feel threatened.

If they feel threatened, it's your signal to leave them alone.

Remember that most of the time, you can walk around parks and gardens, and you won't even notice the bees, busily going about their business, pollinating fruit and flowers!

Resource: <https://www.buzzaboutbees.net/prevent-bee-stings.html>