



# Treating bites and stings



**Most insect bites and stings cause itching and swelling that usually clears up within a few hours - here are some handy tips to help:**

- Wash with soap and water
- Use a cold compress - such as a cool flannel - to reduce swelling
- Place an ice pack wrapped in a towel on the swelling and try not to scratch!
- Take painkillers such as paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Use antihistamine or mild hydrocortisone (1%) spray / cream or take an antihistamine tablet to help reduce swelling and itching

**Your local pharmacy will give you advice and recommend over-the-counter medication. If it hasn't gone away after a few days please call NHS 111.**



when it's less  
urgent than 999

**NHS 111 is a free 24 hour service and will give you healthcare advice or direct you to the local service that is best for you.**