

Home remedies for bee stings

Unless you're allergic to bees or experiencing signs of a severe allergic reaction, you can treat most bee stings at home.

If a honeybee stings you, remove the stinger immediately with the edge of your fingernail or the edge of a credit card. This helps curb the amount of toxins released into your skin.

Wash the sting site with soap and water. Icing the sting site is the most effective way to reduce venom absorption. It also can help reduce swelling.

Most home treatments for bee sting symptoms aren't supported by scientific research. Yet they've been passed down for generations.

These home remedies may help relieve bee sting symptoms:

Honey

Honey may help with wound healing, pain, and itching.

To treat bee stings with honey, apply a small amount to the affected area. Cover with a loose bandage and leave on for up to an hour.

Baking soda

A paste made of baking soda and water can help neutralize bee venom to reduce pain, itching, and swelling.

Apply a thick layer of baking soda paste to the affected area. Cover the paste with a bandage. Leave on for at least 15 minutes and re-apply as needed.

Apple cider vinegar

Vinegar may also help neutralize bee venom.

Soak the sting site in a basin of apple cider vinegar for at least 15 minutes. You can also soak a bandage or cloth in the vinegar and then apply it to the sting site.

Toothpaste

It's unclear why toothpaste can help bee stings. Some people claim that alkaline toothpaste neutralizes acidic honeybee venom. If true, however, toothpaste won't work on alkaline wasp venom.

Either way, toothpaste is an inexpensive and easy home remedy to try. Simply dab a bit on the affected area.

Meat tenderizer

An enzyme in meat tenderizer called papain is also believed to help break down the protein that causes pain and itching.

To treat a bee sting this way, make a solution of one-part meat tenderizer and four-parts water. Apply to the sting site for up to 30 minutes.

Wet aspirin tablet

A popular home remedy for reducing the pain and swelling of a bee sting is to apply a wet aspirin or aspirin paste to the sting site.

Results of one [2003 study](#)Trusted Source showed that applying aspirin topically to bee stings or wasp stings actually increased redness and didn't decrease the duration of swelling or pain compared to using ice alone.

Herbs and oils

These herbs have wound-healing properties and may help relieve symptoms of a bee sting:

- [Aloe vera](#) is known for soothing the skin and relieving pain. If you have an aloe vera plant, break off a leaf and squeeze the gel directly onto the affected area.
- [Calendula cream](#) is an antiseptic used to heal minor wounds and ease skin irritation. Apply the cream directly to the sting site and cover with a bandage.
- [Lavender essential oil](#) has anti-inflammatory abilities and can help relieve swelling. Dilute the essential oil with a carrier oil, such as a coconut or olive oil. Dab a few drops of the mixture onto the sting site.
- [Tea tree oil](#) is a natural antiseptic and may ease bee sting pain. Mix with a carrier oil and apply a drop to the sting site.
- [Witch hazel](#) is a tried-and-true herbal remedy for insect bites and bee stings. It can help reduce inflammation, pain, and itching. Apply witch hazel directly to the bee sting as needed.