

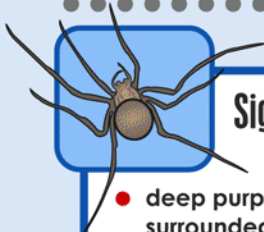
Spider Bites



Most spider bites cause only mild reactions in children and can be safely treated at home. Occasionally, though, a severe allergic reaction to spider bites can be life-threatening if left untreated. And some spider bites (such as those from the poisonous black widow and brown recluse spiders) need immediate care.

Signs of a Severe Allergic Reaction:

- swelling of the face or mouth
- difficulty swallowing or speaking
- chest tightness, wheezing, or difficulty breathing
- dizziness or fainting
- abdominal pain, nausea, or vomiting



Signs and Symptoms of Brown Recluse or Black Widow Spider Bites:

- deep purple or blue area around the bite, surrounded by a whitish ring and a larger outer red ring
- swelling or redness around the bite
- joint stiffness or pain
- muscle spasms, tightness, and stiffness
- body rash
- fever
- headache
- abdominal pain
- pink or reddish urine
- general feeling of sickness
- lack of appetite

If the child was bitten by a spider (other than a brown recluse or black widow) and doesn't seem to be having an allergic reaction:

1. Wash the bitten area with soap and water.
2. Apply an ice pack or a cool wet cloth to the bite to relieve pain and swelling.
3. Elevate the area to slow the spread of venom.

Seek emergency medical care if:

- the child has any signs of an allergic reaction
- the child develops any kind of rash after a bite
- the area begins to look infected (increasing redness, pain, swelling, warmth, or pus)
- you think the child was bitten by a brown recluse or black widow spider

Think Prevention!

DEET usually is not effective against spider bites. Make sure that garages, attics, and woodpiles are free of spider webs, and that children wear long sleeves and pants when playing around these areas. Wood should be kept outside the house to avoid bringing spiders inside.

Note: All information is for educational purposes only. For specific medical advice, diagnoses, and treatment, consult a doctor. Review this with a doctor prior to use.

Reviewed by: Larissa Hirsch, MD Date reviewed: June 2007