Please call 911 if you think you have a medical emergency.

**Jellyfish Sting Treatment**

- Rinse with seawater. Avoid fresh water because it will increase pain. Do not rub the wound or apply ice to it.
- For classic box jellyfish stings, apply topical acetic acid (vinegar) or isopropyl alcohol.
- Remove tentacles with tweezers.
- Apply shaving cream or a paste of baking soda or mud to the wound. Shave the area with a razor or knife and then reapply vinegar or alcohol. The shaving cream or paste prevents nematocysts that have not been activated from discharging toxin during removal with the razor.
- Immobilize the extremity because movement may cause the venom to spread.
- Hydrocortisone cream may be applied 2-3 times daily to relieve itching. Discontinue immediately if any signs of infection appear.
- Eye stings should be irrigated with 1 gallon of fresh water.
- Mouth stings should be treated with 1/4 strength vinegar. Avoid vinegar if oral swelling or difficulty swallowing occurs.
- For a box jellyfish sting, after treatment with vinegar or alcohol, use the pressure-immobilization technique.
  - The extremity should be wrapped with a bandage in a style similar to wrapping a sprained ankle.
  - Bind the limb firmly but do not stop the circulation. The fingers and toes should remain pink.
  - Leave bandages intact until medical personnel are available for treatment.
- CPR may be necessary.

WebMD Medical Reference from eMedicineHealth
Reviewed by Cynthia Haines, MD on May 24, 2006
Last updated: May 24, 2006
This information is not intended to replace the advice of a doctor.
© 2006 WebMD Inc. All rights reserved.