

# Australian insects: biters guide

## Biters



Biters use their mouths to suck blood. They can infect you with diseases.

## Stingers



Stingers inject you with venom, which can trigger an allergic reaction.



**Dial triple zero (000)** and ask for an ambulance if you suspect that either you or someone else is having a severe allergic reaction

## Common biters

### Mosquitoes



Mosquito before feeding



Mosquito after feeding



#### Key facts

- Diseases can be passed on to people through mosquito bites.
- You can protect yourself against mosquitoes biting you.

#### Mosquito-borne diseases acquired in Australia

- Ross River virus
- Murray Valley encephalitis
- Barmah Forest virus
- Dengue

#### Mosquito bite prevention DOs and DON'Ts



DOs

- **Do** use repellents outdoors and insecticides indoors
- **Do** screen windows, doorways and tents, if camping
- **Do** wear long pants and long-sleeved shirts



DON'Ts

- **Don't** create mosquito breeding opportunities at home (standing water)
- **Don't** go to wetlands at dawn or dusk
- **Don't** think you don't attract mosquitoes

## Symptoms and treatments

### Type of reaction



Local reaction



**Key fact:** Most people will have a local reaction after being stung or bitten.



Severe allergic reaction



**Key fact:** People at risk are advised to have a personal action plan to manage a severe allergic reaction.

### Symptoms



Burning pain



Skin swelling



Redness



Itching



Flushing



Collapsing



Difficulty breathing, talking or swallowing



Coughing or wheezing



Itching around the eyes, ears, lips, throat or mouth



A rash that may appear anywhere on the body



Swelling of the mouth, throat or tongue



Stomach cramps

**Have you been bitten or stung?**  
healthdirect's Symptom Checker can help you decide what to do next

[www.healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au/symptom-checker)

### Treatments



Clean stung area



Apply ice pack



Call triple zero (000)



Personal action plan



Take a painkiller



Antihistamine tablets



Administer adrenaline via an autoinjector or EpiPen