

Guidance on management of Scorpion sting/ envenomation

The nature of treatment options to be exercised depends on the classification of the scorpion sting/envenomation

Classification of scorpion sting/ envenomation

Class I – local manifestations at the site of the sting – commonest symptom is pain; often the pain is very severe. There may also be burning sensation, itching, redness, swelling, tingling and numbness and rarely necrosis.

Class II – minor non-threatening systemic manifestations – headache, agitation, confusion, dry mouth, vomiting, diarrhoea, muscular cramps and twitching etc. Sometimes these may be severe.

Class III – life threatening manifestations – serious reactions involving the heart, breathing or the nervous system.

First aid

Wash gently and well with mild soap and water.

Applying a cool compress to the site of the sting will help to reduce pain and slow the spread of the venom. DO NOT APPLY ICE directly. Apply a cool pack for about 10 minutes, remove for 10 minutes and apply again. This works best when done within two hours of the sting.

Pain relief medications such as Paracetamol or Ibuprofen that may be available at hand can be consumed, and is often required as the pain can be severe. Paracetamol is relatively safe in children, but some pain medications can have life threatening complications and it is better to seek medical advice for pain relief in children.

Seek health care if symptoms are severe, particularly if there is difficulty in breathing, swallowing or staying alert and performing normal activities.

References

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