

## **Insect Sting Allergy**

Source: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology

For most people, an insect sting means a little pain and discomfort. But some people may have trouble breathing or itch and have hives all over their body after being stung. These people are allergic to insect stings. This means that their immune system overreacts to the insect's venom.

Most allergic insect sting reactions are caused by five kinds of insects:

- Yellow jackets
- Honeybees
- Paper wasps
- Hornets
- Fire ants

For people who are very allergic to an insect's venom, a sting may cause a dangerous allergic reaction called anaphylaxis (an-a-fi-LAK-sis).

Signs of anaphylaxis include:

- Itching and hives over a large part of the body
- Swollen throat or tongue
- Trouble breathing
- Dizziness
- Stomach cramps
- Nausea or upset stomach
- Diarrhea

If you are stung by an insect and experience any of these symptoms, call 911 immediately. You should also seek follow-up care from an allergist/immunologist.