

Bee Stings and Allergic Reactions

Family Matters

Most dogs and cats are naturally curious.

Unfortunately, curiosity sometimes involves investigating a buzzing bee or wasp.

The result is often a painful sting.

Fortunately, **most bee and wasp stings are minor and resolve within a day or two.**

Occasionally, however, they can trigger a severe allergic reaction that requires immediate veterinary attention.

At Amity, we believe that recognising the difference can save lives. Our purpose is to **Empower You Through Education**, helping you know when to monitor your pet and when to seek urgent help.

What Happens When a Pet Is Stung?

A sting injects venom into the skin, causing pain, swelling and inflammation.

The most common places pets are stung include:

- The nose.
- The lips.
- Inside the mouth.
- The paws.
- Around the face.

Dogs are particularly prone because they often try to sniff or catch bees.

What Signs Should I Expect?

Most pets develop:

- Sudden yelping.
- Localised swelling.
- Redness.
- Licking or rubbing the affected area.
- Mild discomfort.

Although the swelling may look dramatic, particularly around the face, most pets remain bright, comfortable and recover well.

When Should I Be Concerned?

Seek veterinary attention immediately if your pet:

- Has difficulty breathing.
- Has swelling affecting the mouth or throat.
- Collapses.
- Vomits repeatedly.
- Becomes weak or unresponsive.
- Is stung multiple times.

These signs may indicate a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), which can become life-threatening very quickly.

Should I Remove the Sting?

If you can clearly see a **bee sting**, gently scrape it away using the edge of a bank card or similar object.

Avoid squeezing the sting with tweezers, as this may release more venom.

Don't spend too long looking for it, however.

Your priority should always be assessing how your pet is responding.

Can I Give Antihistamines?

Many people have antihistamines at home and wonder whether they should give one.

The answer is:

Speak to your vet first.

Not every swelling is an allergic reaction, and the correct medication and dose depend on your pet's size, species and medical history.

If treatment is needed, we'll advise you on the safest option.

What Will the Vet Do?

Treatment depends on the severity of the reaction.

It may include:

- Pain relief.
- Anti-inflammatory medication.
- Treatment for allergic reactions.
- Oxygen therapy if breathing is affected.

- Intravenous fluids.
- Hospitalisation for monitoring in severe cases.

The good news is that the vast majority of pets recover completely.

Prevention Isn't Always Possible

Bee and wasp stings are difficult to prevent.

The best approach is supervising curious pets outdoors and discouraging them from chasing insects whenever possible.

Even then, accidents happen.

The important thing is recognising when it's simply a painful sting and when it has become something more serious.

Stay Calm. Watch Closely.

Most bee stings are uncomfortable rather than dangerous.

But if your pet develops facial swelling, difficulty breathing or suddenly becomes weak, don't wait.

Seek veterinary attention immediately.

At Amity, we'd much rather reassure you that it's a simple sting than miss the early signs of a severe allergic reaction.

Because acting early saves lives.

Because they're not just your pet.

They're family.

Family Matters.

If you need more information, book an appointment with an Amity vet. We're here to Empower You Through Education and help you become your pet's greatest advocate.