

Normal and Allergic Reactions to Bee Stings

after J. O. Schmidt, in *The Hive and the Honey Bee* (1995)

Copyright 1999, 2012 Carl J. Wenning

- I. Normal, non-allergic reactions at the time of the sting
 - Pain, sometimes sharp and piercing
 - Burning, or itching burn
 - Redness (erythema) around the sting site
 - A white area (wheal) immediately surrounding the sting puncture mark
 - Swelling (edema)
 - Tenderness to touch

- II. Normal, non-allergic reaction hours or days after the sting
 - Itching
 - Residual redness
 - A small brown or red damage spot at the puncture site
 - Swelling at the sting site

- III. Large local reactions
 - Massive swelling (angioedema) around the sting site extending over an area of 10 cm or more and frequently increasing in size for 24 to 72 hours, sometimes lasting up to a week in duration

- IV. Cutaneous allergic reactions
 - Urticaria (hives, nettle rash) anywhere on the skin
 - Angiodema (massive swelling) remote from the sting site
 - Generalized pruritis (itching) of the skin
 - Generalized erythema (redness) of the skin remote from the sting site

- V. Non life-threatening systemic allergic reactions
 - Allergic rhinitis or conjunctivitis
 - Minor respiratory symptoms
 - Abdominal cramps
 - Severe gastrointestinal upset
 - Weakness
 - Fear or other subjective feelings

- VI. Life-threatening systemic allergic reactions
 - Shock Unconsciousness
 - Hypotension or fainting
 - Respiratory distress (difficulty in breathing)
 - Laryngeal blockage (massive swelling in the throat)