

Fast Facts

Spider Bites

- Only bite if they feel threatened (ex. trapped between you and some object)
- Most spider bites are harmless (not different from any other bug bite)
- Bite might appear as a red, painful, itchy bump or no symptoms
- Only two spiders (black widow and brown recluse) have fangs long enough to penetrate human skin and venom strong enough to cause symptoms

<i>Type</i>	<i>Symptoms</i>
<i>Black Widow</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pain at the bite site worsens within the first hour -Pain in the back, chest, or abdomen (can feel like a severe cramping sensation or make your muscles feel very rigid) -Excessive sweating -Chills -Fever -Body stiffness -Nausea
<i>Brown Recluse</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pain at the bite site worsens within the first eight hours -Fever -Chills -Body aches -Bite heals on its own over the next week, except in some rare cases, the area can turn a deep blue/purple color with a red ring around it and turn into a large open ulcer (sore) that causes the skin around it to die. The ulcer stops growing within the first ten days after the bite and can take months for it to heal completely

Treatment

- Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water
- Apply antibiotic ointment
- Apply cool compresses to reduce pain and swelling
- Elevate the affected area (arm/leg) to reduce swelling
- Take over-the-counter pain medications (acetaminophen or ibuprofen)
- Monitor the bite site for any signs of secondary infection (redness, swelling, leaking pus) or development of an ulcer

Go To ER:

- Were bitten by a poisonous spider
- Unsure if you were bitten by a poisonous spider
- Having severe pain, abdominal cramping, or growing sore at the site
- Having any trouble breathing

Note: If you were bitten by a black widow spider and have life-threatening symptoms, there is an anti-venom available, but it can cause severe reactions, so it is used in only the most extreme cases.

Note: Very rarely are either type of bite deadly, but children are at a higher risk of death if they are bitten.

Prevention

- Avoid spider habits
- Wear long-sleeve shirts, hat, long pants tucked into your socks, boots, and gloves (especially if cleaning out a shed/attic/basement/garage or handling firewood/boxes that have been stored)
- Inspect and shake out gardening gloves, boots, clothing, or tools that have been stored before use
- Use insect repellents on clothing and footwear
- Don't store piles of firewood/lumber/rocks next to your house
- Make sure window screens are tightfitting, there are no empty spaces around doorways, and seal all cracks
- Use indoor safe insecticides
- Keep furniture away from walls and off the floor (legs only touching with nothing stored underneath)
- Remove spiders or spiderwebs from home by vacuuming them up, but be sure to seal the bag and dispose of it

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