

BEE Courteous, Bee Safe

Bees are most likely to sting when they are near their hive (where their young are raised) and feel threatened. If you see lots of bees in an area this may tell you there is a hive nearby and it is best to keep a safe distance.

When bees are away from their hive gathering water, pollen and nectar they are very busy and not likely to sting unless they are bothered.

Other insects, such as wasps, can also sting

Ways to protect yourself from stinging insects:

- Be cautious and respectful of all bees and flying insects.
- Don't disturb bees -- contact an adult if you find a nest or swarm.
- Be alert -- if you hear loud buzzing it usually means there is a nest or swarm of bees nearby.
- Use care when entering sheds where bees may nest.
- When you are outdoors, in a rural area, a park, or wilderness reserve wear light-colored clothing and avoid wearing floral or citrus perfumes.
- Know what to do if you are stung.

If you are stung:

- Quickly go to a safe place to avoid being stung again.
- Tell a responsible adult.
- Remove the sting as soon as possible by scraping the sting out with a fingernail or flat object. Don't squeeze the sting -- this only releases more venom.
- Wash the sting area with soap and water like any other wound.
- Apply an ice pack for a few minutes to relieve pain and swelling.
- Get medical attention if you begin to have trouble breathing, or if you are stung numerous times or are allergic to bee stings.