A•Cute Kids Urgent Care

Insect Bites

Insect bites are a frequent occurrence in childhood. The most common bites are ant bites, mosquito bites, spider bites, and bee stings. Most bites are not a problem and only cause local inflammation. Children who are sensitive to bites or receive multiple bites may develop an allergic reaction. If your child develops difficulty talking or breathing after a bite, call 911 immediately.

Symptoms: Most bites will develop a local inflammatory response sometime in the first 24 hours, often immediately. The symptoms include itching, redness, swelling, and minor discomfort. More serious allergic reactions cause a generalized rash, difficulty breathing or talking, or drooling, and require immediate attention.

Bites can also become infected, usually 2-4 days after the bite. Infected bites are classically warm, swollen, tender to the touch, and bright red. The redness and swelling can develop and spread rapidly.

Treatment: Localized inflammatory reactions can be treated with over the counter hydrocortisone cream 2-3 times a day and anti-itch cream. You can also use benadryl by mouth to help with the itching.

Early infections can sometimes be cleared with antibiotic ointment on the affected area. More serious infections will require antibiotics by mouth to cure your child.

Follow up: Typically, the inflammatory reaction will resolve in 2-3 days and no follow up is needed. You should follow up immediately if your child develops any of the following:

- Difficulty swallowing, talking or breathing
- Increased drooling
- Rapid, labored, noisy breathing
- Increased redness, swelling, or pain
- Development of fever
- Worsening symptoms

Please note: These guidelines are not meant to diagnose any condition, or treat any condition not diagnosed by a physician. They are provided for general information only. If you are concerned about your child's condition, call a physician or 911 immediately.