

Marine stings

FIRST AID FACT SHEET

First aid for marine stings

Creatures such as the catfish, stonefish and crown-of-thorns starfish can sting (penetrate) the skin via spines or barbs which contain infected and toxic material.

Stingrays have a whip-like tail which releases venom into the wound as it penetrates the skin.

What to do

Catfish, stonefish, crown-of-thorns starfish

1. Urgent medical aid. Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance.
2. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
3. Rest and reassure the casualty.
4. If the wound is on a limb, carefully remove any remaining spines or barbs. Clean visible foreign material from the wound.
5. If possible place the stung area in hot water (no hotter than the first aider can tolerate).

Stingray

1. Urgent medical aid. Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance.
2. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
3. Rest and reassure the casualty.
4. Stop any severe bleeding before placing stung part in hot water (no hotter than the first aider can tolerate).
5. **DO NOT** remove the embedded stingray spines especially from an injury to the chest, abdomen, neck, head, groin, or bone. This is a medical emergency.
6. If possible place the stung area in hot water (no hotter than the first aider can tolerate).

Caused by

Spines or barbs penetrating the skin.

Signs and symptoms

Immediate pain usually lasting 30 minutes.

Redness on the skin.

Muscle pain.

Nausea and vomiting.

Bleeding from the wound.

Breathing difficulties.