

# Jellyfish Sting

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## FIRST AID FACT SHEET

# How to provide first aid for a jellyfish sting

## Non-Tropical Jellyfish Stings

Many species of jellyfish such as the Bluebottle occur in nontropical Australian coastal waters. Stings from these jellyfish can cause immediate pain and allergic reactions.

### What to do

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Rest and reassure the casualty.
3. Prevent the casualty from rubbing stung area.
4. Monitor the casualty constantly.
5. Douse affected area with seawater, DO NOT use freshwater.
6. Pick off any remaining tentacles with fingers taking care not to get stung yourself.
7. If possible place the stung area in hot water (no hotter than the first aider can tolerate).
8. Medical aid if required

### Caused by

Venom injected on contact with skin through nematocyst tubules on the tentacles.

### Signs and symptoms

Immediate pain ranging from mild irritation to intense, sharp or burning pain.

Whip like marks, raised welts and redness on the skin.

Muscle aches and cramps.

Nausea.

Vomiting.

# Tropical Jellyfish Stings

The Box Jellyfish and Irukandji are found in tropical waters that range from Geraldton and extend north around the coastline of WA.

The Box Jellyfish are large, cube-shaped and have tentacles draping from the body which produce very potent venom. The stings from these are painful and can be fatal to humans.

The Irukandji are small jellyfish and at times too small to be seen, the sting can be minor but can cause severe generalised pain

## What to do

1. Follow DRSABCD St John Action Plan (<https://stjohnwa.com.au/online-resources/first-aid-information-and-resources/drsabcd-action-plan>).
2. Remove casualty from the water.
3. Urgent medical aid. Call Triple Zero (000) for an ambulance.
4. Calm casualty.
5. Flood stung area with vinegar for at least thirty (30) seconds.
6. If vinegar is unavailable, flick tentacles off using a stick or gloved fingers and rinse with seawater.
7. DO NOT use freshwater, this will cause further stinging cell discharge.
8. Apply a cold pack.
9. Rest and reassure, monitor vital signs and consciousness until medical aid arrives.
10. Give CPR if necessary.

## Caused by

Contact with jellyfish tentacles.

## Signs and symptoms

Pain at the site (sometimes extreme).  
Respiratory and cardiac arrest in minutes.  
Severe pain (back and abdomen).  
Nausea.  
Vomiting.  
Sweating.  
Feeling of impending doom.