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THE OUCH FACTOR

Don't let a sunburn, rash, or bee sting put a damper on your day. Ease the pain with these smart strategies.

WHAT HAPPENED: You fell asleep in the sun, and now you're as red as a lobster.

RE: First, take aspirin to banish the throbbing and reduce inflammation, suggests Kavita Marwaha, M.D., director of dermatologic surgery at Continuum Cancer Center in NYC. Then apply aloe gel or a paste made with 2 tablespoons cornstarch and 2 tablespoons water—to burned areas. If you opt for the paste, rinse it off after about 10 minutes.

WHAT HAPPENED: You touched poison ivy.

RE: You need to get rid of the oily residue ASAP, so wash the affected area with rubbing alcohol or a product like **Thee Extreme Medicated Poison Ivy Scrub** (510, amazon.com), says Steven Lamm, M.D., an internist and faculty member at New York University School of Medicine. Then jump in the shower. If you develop a rash, the CDC recommends treating it with wet compresses, calamine lotion, or hydrocortisone cream. An oral antihistamine, like Benadryl, can also help with itching. If the rash seems severe—or if it's on extra-sensitive areas like your face or genitals—see a doctor; you may need an oral or topical steroid.

WHAT HAPPENED: You stepped on some sea glass and your foot is bleeding badly.

RE: Apply firm pressure with a cloth or paper towel for a solid 15 minutes—“no peeking,” says Marwaha—and the oozing should stop or at least slow dramatically. If it doesn't, get yourself to a doctor; you may need stitches. If you have some **WoundBed Powder** (516, drugstore.com) on hand, apply it first to form an artificial scab and make the trip less messy.

WHAT HAPPENED: You were attacked by a jellyfish.

RE: No, don't pee on the injury! That old wives tale has been thoroughly debunked. Instead, soak the area in vinegar or seawater or

douse repeatedly for 15 minutes, says Marwaha, then remove any visible tentacles with tweezers. If you can see any of the tiny venom-containing sacs on your skin, cover them with shaving cream and scrape them away with a credit card. Take Benadryl regularly for the next 24 hours to reduce pain and inflammation.

WHAT HAPPENED: You got stung by a bee.*

RE: First of all, move out of the area. “When bees sting you, they send out a signal that they're in danger—which is designed to attract more bees,” says Marwaha. Next, use tweezers to remove the venom-filled stinger if it's still in your skin, ice the area to relieve pain, and pop a Benadryl to reduce itching and irritation. —KARLINA BRODY

*Many of these solutions could lead to a serious allergic reaction. If you have trouble breathing, turn red, or feel dizzy or weakened, immediately call 911.



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