

Mayo Clinic Minute: What to do if you are stung by a jellyfish

Video	Audio
Michael Boniface, M.D. Emergency Medicine Mayo Clinic	Catching a few sun rays and beach waves are a great way to spend the day. An encounter with a jellyfish can change a carefree day to an irritating and painful one.
	"Jellyfish stings actually result from hundreds of tiny little nematocysts that get adhered to your skin from their tentacles. Once these are adhered to your skin, they can continually pump toxin through your skin."
	Dr. Michael Boniface says never pick up a dead jellyfish.
	If you do get stung, there are three important steps.
	"The very first thing to do is gently remove the tentacles if they are still attached."
	No 2: Remove the nematocysts that are in your skin.
	"Remove them with a firm piece of plastic. Something like a credit card would work."
	And, third, immerse the sting in warm water, and avoid cold.
	"We know that cold water, which is fresh, such as the showers at beaches, can encourage those nematocysts to pump a little more toxin into your skin."
	What's the biggest rule of advice?
	"It you see them, don't touch them."
	And avoid common myths.
	"I've heard people say urinate on the jellyfish sting; pour ammonia; pour cold, fresh water; and, really, you want to avoid all of these interventions."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Ian Roth.