

VENOM ALLERGY

Definition:

- Allergy to the venom of stinging insects (hymenoptera)

Yellow Jackets

- Most common
- Nests found on grounds and in walls
- Attracted to food



Wasps

- Nests in eaves and buildings

Hornets

- Yellow and White-faced hornets
- Nests found in bushes and trees



Honeybee

- Least common
- Often leaves stinger in (yellow jackets, hornets, wasps DO NOT)
- Attracted to flowers



Symptoms:

- **Large local:** large swelling/redness at site of sting
- **Allergic/Systemic:** hives, difficulty breathing, throat tightening, lightheadedness, fainting, chest pain, nausea, vomiting diarrhea
- **Toxic:** similar to allergic (nausea/vomiting, headache, vertigo, etc) often from multiple stings
- **Delayed:** rash, joint pains, fever, increased lymph nodes

Treatment:

- **Epinephrine for anaphylaxis**
- Antihistamines (NOT Benadryl (diphenhydramine)) for large local reactions
- Allergy shots for prevention of anaphylaxis/allergic reaction

Avoidance:

- Do not frighten the insect (move slowly, do not run, do not slap or brush away)
- Minimize exposed skin (wear long sleeves, pants or stockings, gloves while gardening)
- Do not walk outside barefoot
- Do not drink from can/bottle if outdoors (pour in a glass) since they may hide in container
- When outside, do not keep food open (cover or package food, seal garbage)
- Check for nest: inspect property and if nest found call exterminator
- Avoid areas where stinging insects gather (gardens, hedges, fruit trees, garbage cans)

Dr. Ellie Tsai

www.kingstonallergyandasthma.com