CAMFiC
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Jellyfish sting

Jellyfish are marine invertebrates. Their tentacles have stinging cells that they use to hunt small marine animals and defend themselves. They are abundant in the Mediterranean Sea. There are several species. They are often carried to the coast by ocean currents or wind.

Some can inject a toxin through a sting. This causes a local or, sometimes, generalized reaction.

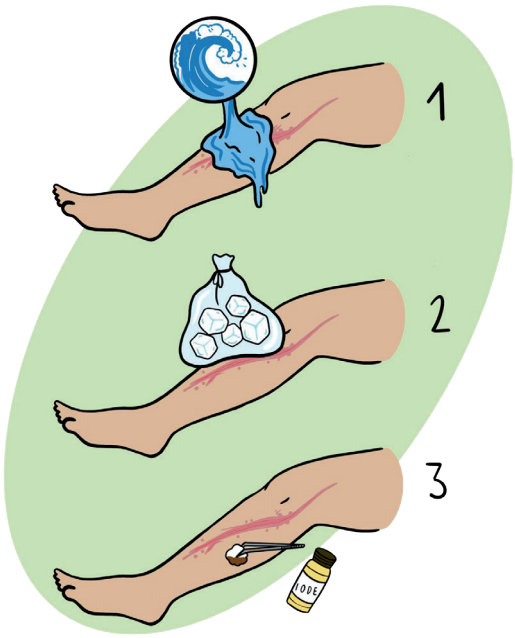
What discomfort does it cause?

If a tentacle touches our skin, it causes intense pain similar to a burn. A rash (inflammation, redness) appears, and even blisters filled with clear fluid, which often form a line. It can take days to heal, sometimes weeks, and in some cases a scar may remain.

If an allergic person suffers a second jellyfish sting, the venom can cause a more severe allergic reaction.

What to do if you are stung by a jellyfish?

1) Get out of the water.
2) Do not scratch or rub the affected skin, or apply any home remedies.
3) Remove any visible tentacle remains with tweezers or gloves.
4) Wash the wound with salt water, but never with fresh water, as this will increase the amount of toxins.
5) Apply ice (not directly, but inside a plastic bag or wrapped) for about 5-15 minutes.
6) For the first 2-3 days, clean the wound thoroughly with iodine or chlorhexidine every 8 hours. If necessary, you can take a painkiller.



When should you go to the emergency room?

If the pain does not improve; if you have difficulty breathing; if you experience nausea, dizziness, tremors, or general discomfort; if the wound oozes or appears infected; or if you have a fever.

How can you avoid stings?

Use physical barriers that cover as much skin as possible, such as swimsuits and T-shirts. It is also advisable to wear swimming goggles and sunscreen.

There are mobile apps, such as iMedJelly, that provide real-time information on which beaches have jellyfish and what species they are.

Authors: Alícia Ruiz Pontes, Raquel Garcia Trigo, Judith Muñoz, and Lluís Cuixart
Scientific and editorial review: CAMFiC Health Education Group
Translation: Quasar Serveis d'Imatge
Pictures: Alícia Ruiz Pontes