JELLYFISH STINGS

Ensure Safety for Self and Others

Dial Triple Zero (000) for an Ambulance

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

Any or all of the following:

From tentacles:

(i.e. Box Jellyfish, Bluebottle)

- Visible tentacles stuck on the skin
- Immediate severe pain
- Skin - whip-like weals, red flare, orange peel effect, blotchy, frosted ladder pattern
- Respiratory/cardiac arrest can occur very quickly

Irukandji syndrome:

- Minor sting site, no tentacles
- 5-40 minutes after the sting - severe generalised pain
- Cramping, nausea, vomiting
- Difficulty breathing, sweating
- Restlessness, a feeling of impending 'doom'
- Serious complications can occur

First aid depends on:

1. The type of sting, and

2. Where the sting occurred

Serious incidents occur in the tropical region

Tropical - from Bundaberg (QLD) across the northern coastline, down to Geraldton (WA)

If casualty stops breathing:

- **Stop treatment**
- **Perform CPR**

TROPICAL

PRIORITY - TO PRESERVE LIFE

Remove from water, restrain if necessary
Resuscitate if required

VINEGAR FOR 30 SECONDS

Liberally douse the stung area with vinegar

Pick off any remaining tentacles

(not harmful to first aider)

If no vinegar:

Pick off the tentacles, rinse with seawater

DO NOT APPLY FRESH WATER

(this may cause more stinging)

APPLY COLD PACK

SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

(lifeguard, 000)

NON-TROPICAL

PRIORITY - TO RELIEVE PAIN

Do not use vinegar or rub the sting area
Rest, reassure and monitor

PICK OFF TENTACLES

RINSE WITH SEAWATER

PLACE IN HOT WATER FOR 20 MINUTES

If pain is not relieved by heat or if hot water is not available, use a cold pack

Box jellyfish *- A large box like bell with multiple very long tentacles (20–30cm).*

Urgent assistance is required.

In tropical areas hospitals and ambulances carry anti-venom.

Irukandji syndrome *- Some small offshore and onshore jellyfish are known to produce an "Irukandji syndrome." These jellyfish have only four tentacles and some are too small to be seen.*

Bluebottle *(Portuguese–Man-O-War)*

Although a tropical jellyfish, if obviously stung by bluebottle, treat as for non-tropical.

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