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Alert: Protect yourself from yellowjackets on the rampage



Photo Cynthia Brian

Yellowjacket stings caused swelling in this reporter's hand.

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1. Take an antihistamine according to package directions.
2. Hold an ice pack covered in a thin cloth on the area.
3. Make a paste of baking soda and water and apply to affected areas. The alkalinity in the baking soda neutralizes the venom.

4. A cotton ball application of undiluted ammonia, vinegar or toothpaste works in the same manner. The acid in vinegar reduces swelling and inflammation.

5. Two or three aspirins can be crushed and mixed with water to make a paste to apply to the stings. The anti-inflammatory properties will assist in the control of swelling and pain.

6. Spread honey on the stings to reduce pain and itching. Leave on the skin for 30 minutes before rinsing with warm water. Reapply as necessary.

Remember that yellowjackets are not bees. They are wasps. Don't confuse the two.

Cynthia Brian is the author of Growing with the Goddess Gardener and the Digging Deep columnist for the Lamorinda Weekly. www.CynthiaBrian.com



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