

BEE STING EMERGENCY

It's just half an inch long and weighs practically nothing, but without emergency treatment, a severe reaction to its sting can potentially lead to anaphylactic shock and death within minutes. The odds are five times greater that this creature will kill you than a close encounter with a shark. A tiny winged insect, it can be found practically anywhere.

It was another beautiful summer day in New Jersey and Steve Poot was enjoying a round of golf with friends. The bee that circled around him was little more than a nuisance. He flapped his hand in front of his face a couple of times, trying to whisk the pesky little insect away. "I'd been stung a couple of times in the past, but it was no big thing. The stinging sensation faded away pretty quickly so I really wasn't concerned," Steve recalled.

The bee that had been circling Steve disappeared. But later he felt a pinch on his arm and then that familiar stinging sensation. "It really didn't hurt that badly...I just wanted to get on with my game," Steve said.

By the time he reached the tenth hole, his friends noticed that Steve was looking pale. Then he started to hyperventilate. "They didn't know that I was stung...they thought that I might have been choking on something. Then they performed the Heimlich maneuver," Steve recalled. That's all Steve remembered – until he woke up suddenly and found himself lying on the ground looking up at his golf partners looking directly down at him.

But choking was not the issue. Steve had broken out in hives and a series of red splotches appeared up and down his arms and around his neck. He decided to skip the last nine holes and let his friends know that he was just going to sit in his car for a while – then drive himself home.



A few hours later, Steve's wife Renee returned home from traveling. Steve said, "I told her about the bee sting and mentioned that the redness and swelling on my arm had subsided. When I mentioned that I had passed out a few hours ago, my wife's facial expression changed dramatically." Renee said, "My husband looked okay, but I just wanted to be sure. I told him 'We're calling Global Rescue now!'"

A Medical Operations team member immediately answered the phone. Steve's wife told the critical care paramedic about the incident. "He asked me about my husband's envenomation (the bee sting) and asked about the severity of the response," Renee recalled. "The paramedic asked a number of questions about his breathing and any respiratory symptoms, the loss of consciousness, if he had any dizziness, itching, burning or sweating. I really felt like we were in good hands."

Global Rescue's medical professional advised Steve to take an adult dose of Benadryl. "He told me that my husband should notice that any remaining redness or hives – the allergic reaction from the bee – should subside within a half-hour or so," Renee recalled. "He also advised us that a hospital visit would not be necessary – just as long as Steve had no further symptoms. However, if my husband was still experiencing symptoms later on, he should go to the hospital ER. Finally, he advised my husband to seek medical care the following day...to be sure."

"By calling Global Rescue, we avoided the hassle of a visit to the ER late at night and sitting in some waiting room for hours on end," said Renee. "The best part was 'peace of mind' – the feeling we both felt from speaking with the paramedic."

In most cases bee stings are just annoying, and home treatment is all that's necessary to ease the pain. But if you're allergic or you get stung numerous times, you may have a more serious reaction that requires emergency treatment.

Find out more about the signs of a mild, moderate or potentially life-threatening severe reaction. It just might save your life.