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# How to identify a sand fly?

Identifying a sand fly involves looking for several distinctive characteristics. By examining these features, you can distinguish sand flies from other small insects:

## Size



Sand flies are small, typically 1 to 3 millimeters long.

## Wings



Sand flies have long, narrow wings that are held upright at a V-angle over their bodies when at rest. The wings are often hairy and have a distinctive vein pattern.

## Movement



Sand flies exhibit a characteristic hopping or short flight pattern rather than continuous flight.

## Colour



They are usually pale, golden, or grayish.

## Body and Legs



Their bodies and legs are hairy and fuzzy, with very long and delicate legs.

## Biting Behavior



Only female sand flies bite as they need blood to produce eggs. They are most active during dusk and dawn. Sand flies are silent feeders, and most people are unaware when they get bitten.

## Bite Marks



Bites from sand flies are often painful and can cause red, itchy welts.

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If you get bitten by a sand fly (as with any other insect), **follow these steps** to manage the bite and reduce the risk of complications:

### Clean the Bite Area

1

Gently wash the bite with soap and water to reduce the risk of infection.

### Apply an Antiseptic

2

Use an antiseptic cream or lotion to help prevent infection.

### Reduce itching and swelling

3

Apply a cold compress or ice pack to the bite area to reduce swelling and relieve itching.

Use over-the-counter anti-itch creams, such as hydrocortisone cream, or take an oral antihistamine.

### Avoid Scratching

4

Scratching the bite can lead to infection. Keep nails trimmed and clean to minimize damage if scratching is unavoidable.

### Monitor for Symptoms

5

Sand fly bites can sometimes transmit diseases such as leishmaniasis. Watch for symptoms such as:

Persistent redness, swelling, or pain at the bite site;

Fever or chills;

Development of sores or ulcers at the bite site.



### Seek Medical Attention

6

If you experience any of the above symptoms or if the bite area shows signs of infection (such as increased redness, warmth, pus, or red streaks), contact a healthcare professional.

### Prevent Future Bites

7

Use insect repellent, wear protective clothing, and avoid areas where sand flies are common to reduce the likelihood of future bites.

