# JELLYFISH STINGS

#### **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

# **Ensure Safety for Self and Others**

## Dial Triple Zero (000) for an Ambulance



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 antivenom.



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.