

Rising Threat of Fire Ant Stings Spurs Brisbane First Aid Training Call to Action

Amid rising fire ant threats, My First Aid Course urges Australians to learn vital first aid to manage anaphylaxis and save lives.

BRISBANE, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA, February 15, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- With the spread of red imported fire ants (RIFA) identified in recent [submissions to the Senate](#), My First Aid Course is calling for increased vigilance and first aid preparedness for all Australians. According to the World Allergy Organisation, 1%-7% of the general population is allergic to insect stings and bites, and insect stings are a common cause of anaphylaxis (Source: <https://www.worldallergy.org/education-and-programs/education/allergic-disease-resource-center/professionals/allergy-to-insect-stings-and-bites>).



Red imported fire ants are reported to cause almost 3 times the number of anaphylactic reactions than bee stings.

Managing Director of My First Aid Course, Mal Thompson, warned “Anaphylaxis is a serious medical emergency, with life-threatening consequences. Bee stings are currently Australia’s most common cause of insect sting anaphylaxis. Red imported fire ants are reported to cause almost 3 times the number of anaphylactic reactions than bee stings. The implications of the Senate submissions are sobering.”

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Mal Thompson, Managing Director, My First Aid Course

The [Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy \(ASCIA\) warns](#) that with the ongoing spread of RIFA there is the potential for an increase in the number of stings experienced by Australians. Thompson states, “People need to be prepared for the possibility of RIFA and other insect stings.”

There are approximately 20 deaths from anaphylaxis in Australia each year, with insect stings causing an average of three deaths per year (Source: <https://allergyfacts.org.au/allergy-anaphylaxis/other-allergens/insect-bites-and-stings>). Symptoms of severe allergic reactions can go from bad to worse very quickly. ASCIA recommends mild allergic reactions be managed with cold packs and Stingose cream or similar, whereas severe reactions require prompt recognition of the crisis and intervention using an adrenaline autoinjector, calling 000 and managing the casualty while waiting for emergency care to arrive.

Thompson explained that many Australians may not have these basic first aid skills, with the potential for devastating outcomes. "First aid intervention can help in the event of a sting, with first responders able to recognise the signs and respond to an anaphylactic event or severe allergic reaction in a timely manner and even save a life," said Thompson.

"I encourage all adults to undertake first aid training in order to have these life-saving skills at hand."

To address this need in the community, My First Aid Course offers comprehensive [first aid and CPR training](#), which includes allergy and anaphylaxis recognition and management. More information can be obtained online at the My First Aid Course website.

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