

BLUEBOTTLE JELLYFISH

(Physalia sp)

Marine stingers known as **Bluebottles** are wide-spread throughout Australian waters, and can sometimes be seen washed up on beaches. They are usually found further South, but on the odd occasion are found locally.

They are visible, blue, jelly-like creatures that give an immediate, painful sting (burning skin, gland pain, nausea, anxiety and sweating). Treatment is to flush profusely with sea water.

Our team will provide water and ice packs to help alleviate any pain. If you are unsure of the source of a sting, or if there is any doubt to the type of Jellyfish that caused the sting, we recommend taking the precaution of treating it as a Box Jellyfish sting (i.e. applying vinegar to the site), just to be on the safe side. This will not cause any additional harm to a blue bottle sting.

FIRST AID TREATMENT

In the unlikely event that you come into contact with an Irukandji Jellyfish, please instigate the following first aid treatment.

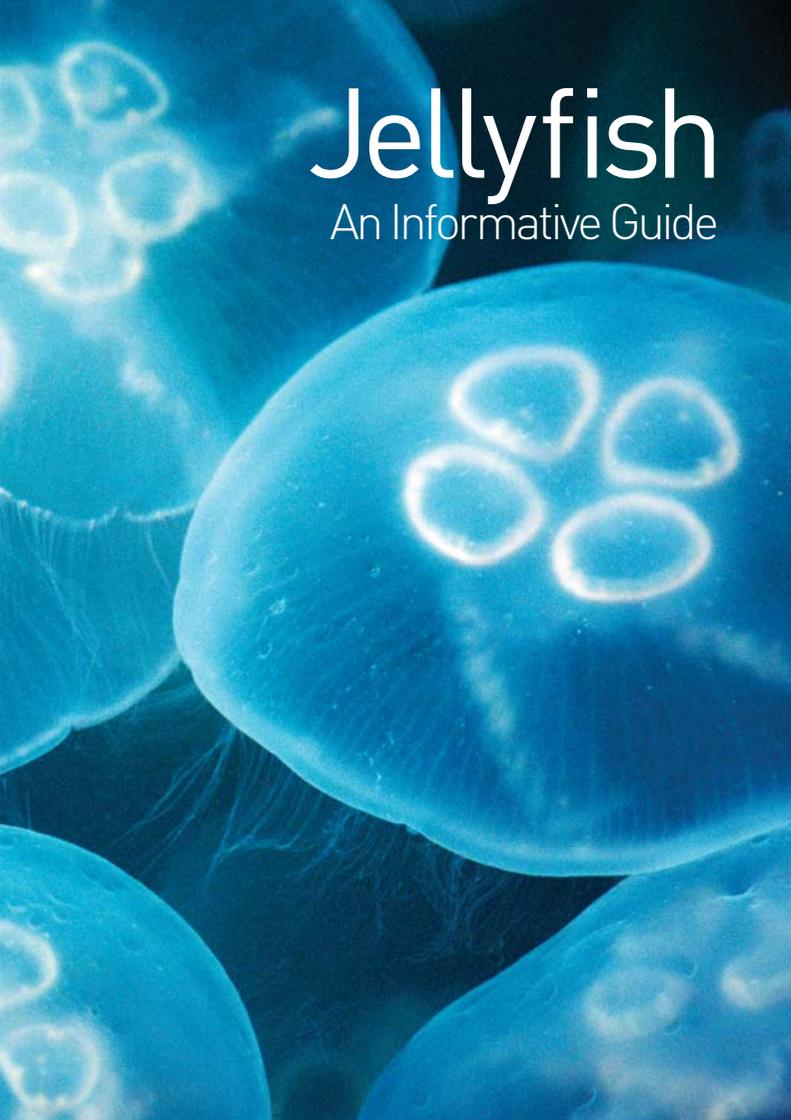
1. Douse the area profusely with vinegar as this stops any un-discharged stinging cells. Vinegar is available at the Bar, Reception, Watersports, all main swimming beaches and in all guest dinghies
2. Do not try to scrape the tentacles off (with hands, wet sand or any item), as this will trigger more stinging cells to fire venom into the body.

3. Contact one of our team members as soon as possible, even if you are not showing any signs of illness. You will be closely monitored for signs of the Irukandji syndrome. Further medical assistance will be arranged for you if and as required.

The initial sting from the Irukandji Jellyfish is very mild, and symptoms usually take 20 – 30 minutes to develop (though this can range from 5 minutes – 1 hour).

Symptoms include severe generalised muscular pain, anxiety, headache, vomiting and sweating. The sting from some species can cause very high blood pressure that may be life threatening (it is believed the risk is greater for people with pre-existing medical conditions). Like many medical conditions, there is a rare chance that additional complications may arise (e.g. difficulty breathing, fluid on the lungs).

Fortunately, the majority of people who have suffered Irukandji Syndrome have recovered fully within 6 – 72 hours.



Jellyfish

An Informative Guide

Welcome to warm, sunny Queensland, where the locals and millions of visitors each year enjoy our fabulous beaches and marine resources.

Anywhere in the world, swimming in ocean waters has potential hazards, including coming into contact with marine creatures, for example, Jellyfish. Most Jellyfish are harmless, however, some can inflict painful stings. There are two types of Box Jellyfish that can be found in Queensland waters (usually during the warmer months) that are considered to be dangerous.

Sometimes, if people are not aware that Jellyfish are a potential danger, they are more distressed by the event itself, rather than the symptoms. So, although it is not likely that you will be stung, it is a good idea to understand these animals and be aware of the first aid treatment. Please take a few moments to review this marine stinger information booklet.

Our records show that there is a very low risk associated with participation in watersports activities that involve any type of water craft (e.g. paddle skis, catamarans, tube rides, etc.). There is a higher risk when swimming, snorkelling or diving as you spend considerable time in the water. At any time you wish to enjoy water activities, you may choose to wear lycra 'protective clothing' (or wet suits when diving).

Protective clothing greatly reduces the risk of exposure (though any areas of the body not covered are susceptible). Stingers Suits are available for hire at the Watersports Centre.

As per Surf Lifesaving Guidelines, we recommend that you refrain from swimming in the ocean during the 48 hour period after a confirmed sting. We will warn you of any recent Irukandji stings. Please check the whiteboard or ask our staff at Watersports prior to swimming or visiting remote beaches.

Please note that some types of Jellyfish are not well known to science, particularly those that cause 'Irukandji Syndrome'. Funding is being provided in Australia for ongoing research to learn more about their life cycles, behavioural and movement patterns, and how to prevent and treat the stings. Due to this lack of knowledge, and ongoing research, we have asked our employees not to provide information on Box Jellyfish, or their personal opinions about swimming in the ocean, as the information provided can vary dramatically.

We will endeavour to keep this leaflet as current as possible, to ensure you are provided with accurate information based on current Government advice, to enable you to make your own informed personal choices about swimming.

The information in this guide was correct at the time of printing but is subject to change. Information sourced from resources produced by Queensland Health & Irukandji Task Force in collaboration with Surf Lifesaving Queensland, James Cook University and CRC Reef.

CHIRONEX BOX JELLYFISH **(Chironex flecker)**

The **Chironex Box Jellyfish** is the well-known, larger and sometimes fatal Box Jellyfish, common at beaches along the mainland.

Fortunately, we have never had a recorded sting from Chironex fleckeri, and consequently consider the likelihood of being stung by this type of Jellyfish in our immediate area as rare.

In the highly unlikely event that you are stung by a Chironex Box Jellyfish, you will feel immediate and severe pain. Refer to First Aid Treatment points 1 & 2 and gain assistance immediately.

IRUKANDJI BOX JELLYFISH **(Carukia barnesi)**

The **Irukandji Box Jellyfish** is the term given to a group of about ten species of Box Jellyfish (e.g. Carukia barnesi, and others that are not yet named and classified). These species can cause 'Irukandji Syndrome', a painful and debilitating reaction to the Jellyfish venom.

Irukandji syndrome can affect anyone who is stung, but people with pre-existing heart or blood vessel conditions may be particularly susceptible to life-threatening complications due to high blood pressure caused by the venom. However, healthy people may also be seriously affected by some species.

Fortunately, it is not common for box jellyfish to visit our waters, though, it is possible. Wearing protective clothing is particularly advisable for those who wish additional peace of mind.