



How to Treat Chigger Bites

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Three Methods: [First Aid for Chigger Bites](#) [A Time Proven Home Remedy](#) [Unverified Home Remedies to Help Alleviate Itching](#)

Chiggers are tiny mites that, as members of the arachnid family, are a cousin of spiders and ticks.^[1] Chiggers attach themselves to humans who walk through infested vegetation, exploring their human hosts for 3 to 6 hours before biting them. Most chigger bites occur in thin-skinned areas of the body like the ankles, waist, groin, armpits and backs of knees. This article will teach you first aid for chigger bites as well as home remedies to help relieve itching while the bites heal.

Method
1

First Aid for Chigger Bites

- 1 Take a hot shower the moment that you realize you have a chigger bite.** Scrub your body with soap to remove any additional chiggers from your skin. A shower will also help to minimize skin reactions from the bites.
- 2 Use an antihistamine or topical hydrocortisone cream to relieve the itching.** Alternatively, apply an icepack or a cold compress to the area to stop the itching.
- 3 Avoid scratching.** Trim your fingernails closely if you're struggling to stop scratching the bite. If you do break the skin, then apply an antiseptic ointment to prevent infection.^[2]

Method
2

A Time Proven Home Remedy

- 1 Here's a simple solution, that's been used for more than a century.** Take a partial jar of Vicks Vaporub, add a couple of tablespoons of regular table salt to it.
- 2 Stir it up and then apply a small amount to each bite.** The purpose of the Vicks is to hold the salt granules in place, and the menthol alleviates the itching.
- 3 Make sure to have three or four salt granules right on top of the bite.** Put it on when you go to bed, and when you wake up the swelling is down, it no longer itches and the chigger is dead and gone. If you have any residual inflammation, apply it again the second night. That 1/4 full or less jar of Vicks that you added salt to? It'll last you 10 to 20 years.

Method
3

Unverified Home Remedies to Help Alleviate Itching

- 1 Apply clear nail polish or Elmer's glue to the bites.** Doing this will help to alleviate scratching.
 - This remedy is based on the myth that chiggers burrow into the skin, and thus sealing over the bites will cause them to suffocate. However this is incorrect—chiggers do not actually stay under the skin, and are easily dislodged. Coating the affected area with nail polish or glue may help prevent too much scratching, but will do little to stop itching.^[3]
- 2 Grind up some aspirin into a powder.** Apply the powder to the chigger bite.
- 3 Make a paste of baking soda and water.** After showering, apply the paste to your bites.
- 4 Put a topical ingredient on the bite.** You can dab Listerine on the bite, apply castor oil or spread on some Vick's


Vap-o-Rub or Rawleigh's Medicated Ointment. The Camphor, Menthol & Eucalyptus oils in both will help stop itching and aid in quick healing of the bites.

5 Use a household ammonia solution. Mix water with any common household ammonia like a blue window cleaner. Use a cotton ball to dab this onto your bite, repeating the treatment as necessary.

6 Hold a handheld hair dryer set to a high setting 2" (5 cm) over your bite. Blow dry the bite for a few seconds. The itching sensation should fade away after your skin releases the heat.^[4]

Community Q&A


What is a chigger, and what do they look like?

 A chigger is a type of mite that is smaller than a flea and has a reddish appearance.

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Do chiggers stay on your shoes?

 Yes - and on your clothes. If you put the same clothes on the next day without washing them, you often will start itching right away. We use rubbing alcohol on our legs to kill them before they bite or to prevent additional bites.

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Are chigger bites contagious?

 No, it is the same as if you were bitten by a mosquito or an ant. The bite only affects you and cannot be spread to other people. You could however have chiggers on your clothing that could be transferred to someone else.

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What is the strongest stuff to use?

 TREK 100 Deet is a maximum strength insect repellent to help protect against the risk of malaria and other insect-borne diseases such as dengue fever, West Nile Virus and filariasis. Hopefully that will help.

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Can chiggers relocate on your body after they have already bitten you?

 Yes. After scratching, wash your hands to avoid touching an uninfected area on your body. They can travel over the body that way.

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How many bites can you get?

 The number of bites depends on how long the chiggers go unnoticed.

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Can I get chiggers by sleeping in the same bed as someone who has them?

 If the chiggers are still on that person, yes, they can get on you.

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What do I do if the bites reappear?

 Keep doing the same routine you have been doing to get rid of them and prevent them.

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Tips

- Instead of scratching the bite, lightly slap it to help stop the itch.
- Spray non-toxic, skin-friendly bug spray around ankles, waist band, or any tight area to keep them away.
- Wash your clothing in hot water after you discover you have chigger bites to kill any remaining chiggers in your clothes.
- Rub bites instead of itching.
- Wear loose fitting long sleeved shirts and long pants when you are exploring an area that may be inhabited by chiggers. Keep the cuffs fastened tightly, and consider tucking the hem of your pants into your socks.^[5]
- Dab the bite with Gojo hand cleaner. Leave the skin exposed, after Gojo melts, then dab the bite again and leave skin exposed; the chigger will be gone.^[*citation needed*]

Warnings

- If you have a case of severe chigger dermatitis, a strong allergic reaction to a bite, or signs of infection around the bite, visit your doctor.

Sources and Citations

1. http://kidshealth.org/kid/ill_injure/bugs/chigger.html
2. <http://www.oklahomapoison.org/chiggers>
3. http://www.medicinenet.com/chiggers_bites/page2.htm

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