

# Banbury Health Centre



## Blandford Fly Bites – it's that time of year again!

The **Blandford Fly** is a 2-3mm blood sucking fly, which gives a nasty and painful bite during the summer months, particularly in May and June during the breeding season. The flies are typically found in short grass and near water and fly less than 0.5m from the ground, resulting commonly in bites to the lower limbs. The effects of the bites on humans range from small to large blisters (up to 22cm) and purple (haemorrhagic) lesions, with intensely painful stabbing sensations. The saliva of the fly, which passes into the wound, often causes severe local irritation, spreading redness and swelling (oedema), pain, joint pain and even high temperature of 38 C (100F). Local reactions can last for several days or longer but can be treated with over the counter products from the pharmacy



### Treatment for Blandford Fly bites

1. Clean the bite area and dry gently.
2. Do not scratch, this could lead to infection.
2. Apply cold compress or calamine lotion.
3. Hydrocortisone cream may reduce inflammation.
4. Antihistamine tablets can help if taken promptly.
5. Antihistamine creams are not recommended as they themselves can cause skin reactions.
6. Cover large blisters with a dry dressing.
7. If bites are on the lower limbs there may be swelling of the ankles and feet for several days – do not worry about this - just rest with the feet supported on a stool whenever possible.

### Seek medical advice (telephone 111 or contact you're GP/Nurse) if:

1. Red lines appear on the affected limb
2. Swelling of the glands in the groin or armpit
3. Persistent high fever