BLANDFORD FLY… BEWARE!

**Blandford fly bites are common during May and June.** They often occur on the legs and are very painful. They can produce a severe, localised reaction (a reaction that is confined to the area of the bite), with symptoms such as:

* swelling
* blistering
* a high temperature of 38C (100.4F) or over
* joint pain



The Blandford fly is a 2-3 mm bloodsucking black fly.

Although it is named after the Blandford area, it is also found in other areas including Norwich, Oxfordshire and HEREFORDSHIRE as the larvae live in the mud on the banks of slow flowing rivers and streams.

***The bugs tend to fly at less than half-a-metre from the ground - so most people are bitten on the legs.***

***NHS Herefordshire recommends people should cover up and use insect repellent when out and about particularly near affected rivers and streams.***

## Treatment for Blandford fly bites

* Clean the bite wound with water and dry gently
* Creams bought over the chemist counter can soothe the pain of a bite, as can an [***antihistamine***](http://www.webmd.boots.com/cold-and-flu/cold-guide/decongestants-antihistamines-cold)***tablets***. Even though it may be itchy, try to avoid scratching the bite because you may damage the skin and allow bacteria to get in.
* Redness and irritation are common and should settle within a few days with these measures
* ***Secondary infection is less common. If you notice red lines appearing on the skin, redness and swelling which keeps spreading outwards or enlarged lymph nodes (swelling) in your armpit or groin,***[***seek medical advice***](http://www.webmd.boots.com/nhs/seeking-medical-advice)***.***