



marinestingers

physalia

Distribution

Australia wide and in most warm oceans worldwide.

Common names

Bluebottle, Portugese man-o'-war, Pacific man-o'-war

Size and appearance

Air-filled sac up to 8 centimetres in length, usually with a single, long, blue main fishing tentacle hanging underneath. This may contract to a few centimetres or extend to cover over a metre in length. Some species (Portugese man-o'-war, Pacific man-o'-war) have numerous main fishing tentacles and cause more severe stings with symptoms similar to Irukandji syndrome. These multi-tentacled species are uncommon, but have been reported in Australian waters.

First aid (non-tropical)

- Do not allow rubbing of the sting area.
- Adherent blue tentacles may be seen after a sting and are distinctive for Physalia. Remove any adhering tentacles.
- Rinse the area well with sea water (not freshwater).
- Place the stung area in hot water – no hotter than the rescuer can comfortably tolerate.
- If the pain is unrelieved by heat, or if hot water is not available, apply ice packs.
- Send for medical aid if symptoms persist or worsen.

First aid (tropical)

- Call for help (000) or get assistance from a lifesaver/lifeguard.
- Provide emergency care if necessary.
- Liberally douse the area with vinegar. If vinegar is not available, remove remaining tentacles and rinse the area well with seawater.

Did you know?

- Bluebottles are not actually jellyfish, but a colony of four kinds of highly modified individuals (polyps). The polyps are dependent on one another for survival and each performs a different function.



Physalia utriculus



Distribution in Australian waters



Physalia sting



Size relative to human



For additional information visit www.marinestingers.com