

Habu Jellyfish Outbreak Advisory (2018)

The oceans of Okinawa are home to the habu jellyfish, a highly venomous species. Starting around June of each year, these jellyfish grow large enough to pose a danger to humans. Because this coincides with beach season, every year there is a surge in the number of sting victims.

In 2017, there were 268 incidents of people being stung or bitten by dangerous sea creatures. Of these, 118 incidents (approx. 44%) were caused by habu jellyfish.

Okinawa has issued a Habu Jellyfish Outbreak Advisory for the period of June 1 to September 30, 2018. We call on local citizens as well as visitors from mainland Japan and abroad to take every precaution in order to avoid being stung by the habu jellyfish.

To prevent jellyfish stings:

1. Expose as little skin as possible when swimming, and stay inside of the jellyfish netting's safe zone when swimming at the beach.
2. Bring vinegar when going to the beach.

If stung by a jellyfish, remain calm and take the following steps:

1. Get out of the water and seek help from others nearby without making any large or sudden movements.
2. Do not scratch the affected area. Pour vinegar liberally over the sting, and cool the affected area using ice or cold water after removing any tentacles.
3. After applying first aid, seek medical help at a hospital or clinic.

Beach custodians are responsible for properly placing and thoroughly checking the safety nets so that no one is stung within them.

June 1, 2018

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