



marinestingers

irukandji

Distribution

Tropical Australian waters north of Agnes Water Queensland, all Northern Territory waters and Western Australia south to Exmouth. Different species may occur coastally and on the reefs and island; at times they may occur in epidemic proportions close to shore. Irukandji stings are occasionally reported in sub-tropical and temperate regions of the world, including Moreton Bay, Fraser Island, Sydney and Melbourne.

Description

Originally attributed to just one small jellyfish (*Carukia barnesi*), the name Irukandji is now used to encompass a group of small to medium-sized carybdeids (box jellyfish with just one tentacle in each corner).

Size and appearance

Small transparent box jellyfish, 1-2 centimetres in diameter, usually not seen. Some newly described species may be larger (up to 10 centimetres).

Symptoms and signs

Irukandji jellyfish causes an initial minor skin sting followed 5-40 minutes later by severe generalised muscular pain, headache, vomiting and sweating. The sting from some species can cause very high blood pressure or have effects on the heart which may be life threatening. These symptoms are sometimes referred to as Irukandji Syndrome.

First aid

Because the symptoms of Irukandji Syndrome take time to appear after the sting, all tropical jellyfish stings should be doused with vinegar and the victim to remain out of the water, in a safe location with someone to monitor them for 45 minutes.

1.	Call for help	Dial 000 for an Ambulance.
2.	Emergency care	Oxygen should be applied. Administer CPR if needed.
3.	Treat the sting	Pour vinegar onto sting.
4.	Seek medical aid	Transport to hospital



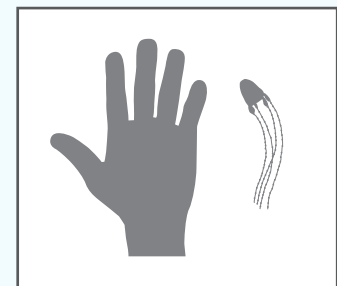
Carukia barnesi



Distribution in Australian waters



Irukandji sting showing localised sweating



Size relative to human



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