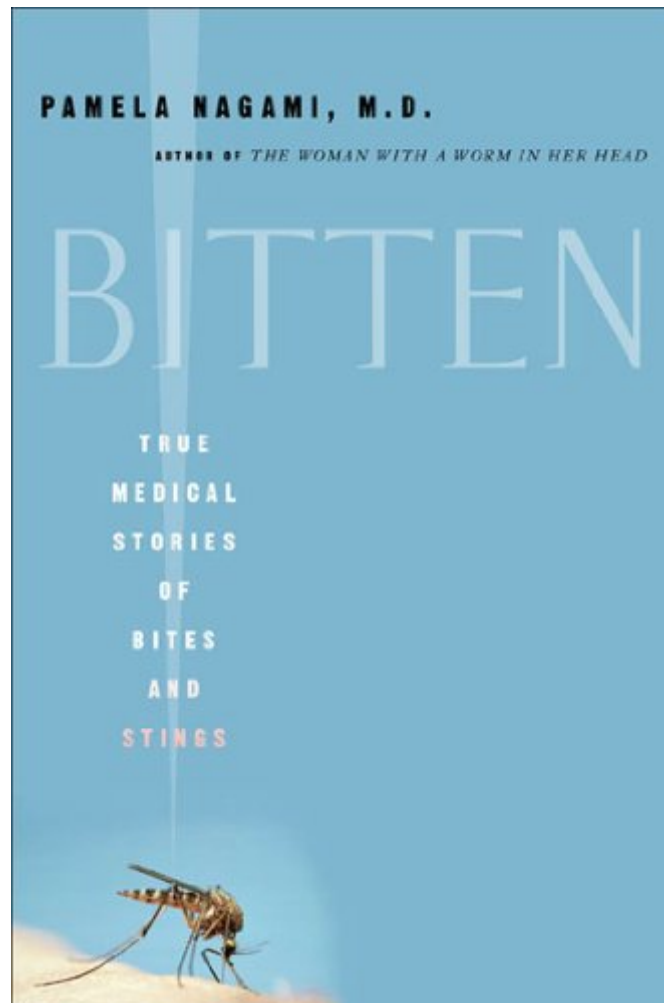


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# Bitten: True Medical Stories Of Bites And Stings



## Synopsis

We've all been bitten. And we all have stories. The bite attacks featured in this dramatic book take place in big cities, small towns, and remote villages around the world and throughout history. Some are as familiar and contemporary as encounters with mosquitoes in New York City and snakes in southern California's Hollywood Hills or as exotic and foreign as the tsetse in equatorial Africa, the camel in Riyadh, and the Komodo dragon in Indonesia. While others, such as people biting other people---well, these are in a category of their own. Among the startling stories and fascinating facts in *Bitten*.o A six-year-old girl descends into weeks of extreme lassitude until a surgeon plucks an engorged tick from her scalp.o A diabetic living in the West Indies awakes one morning to a rat eating his left great and second toes.o A twenty-eight-year-old man loses a third of his nose to a bite by his wife.o In San Francisco, after a penile bite, a man develops "flesh-eating strep," which spreads to his lower abdomen.o Severe bites by rabid animals to the face and digits, because of their rich nerve supply, are the most likely to lead to rabies and have the shortest incubation periods.o Following the bite of a seal or contact with its tissues, sealers develop such agonizing pain and swelling in their bites that, far from medical care, they sometimes amputate their own fingers.o Perhaps the most devastating human bite wound injuries are those involving the nose; doctors in Boroko near Papua, New Guinea, reported a series of ninety-five human bites treated in the Division of Surgery from 1986 to 1992---twelve were to the nose, nine in women, and three in men, and in most of the cases, the biter was an angry spouse. With reports from medical journals, case histories, colleagues, and from her own twenty-eight-year career as a practicing physician and infectious diseases specialist, Pamela Nagami's *Bitten* offers readers intrigued by human infection and disease and mesmerized by creatures in the wild a compulsively readable narrative that is entertaining, sometimes disgusting, and always enjoyable.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is a very well written and well documented book which discusses many stories in which people have been bitten by bugs, animals, and even humans. The first few chapters focus on the many kinds of insects that live among humans, biting them if they get the chance; including red fire ants, black widow and brown recluse spiders, scorpions and more. Other chapters focus on snake bites, jellyfish stings, parasitism by ticks, and more. Some of the chapters talk about bites from different kinds of insects, such as the tsetse fly which then transfers a protozoan which causes a horrible disease to the people which these tiny organisms infest. Many of the chapters after that focus on bites from larger animals, crocodiles, komodo dragons, rabid wild animals, ferrets, dogs, cats, horses, etc. Many of these all carry disease causing bacteria which can infest and kill the human host to which they are transferred. The final chapter focuses on humans in which the author tells stories of accidental bites which can cause in some cases life-threatening diseases; as well as purposeful bites from people wanting to inflict pain and spread deadly diseases to others out of vengeance and rage. When I first started reading this book I thought that no scary movie could give me the chills the same way this book did when I read it at night right before going to bed. There were a couple of nights when I just lay in bed thinking about all the little creepy crawlies that could potentially come and bite me. It gave me the shudders. Then as I read about all the bacteria and diseases that could be spread by animals, even healthy animals, and that most of the diseases are preventable as long as you get your bite looked at right away I was glad to have read such an informative book.

\_Bitten\_ by Pamela Nagami, is a very interesting and well-researched popular science compilation of information and stories about just about every animal that stings, bites, or can carry infectious disease. Though a few are left out (notably sharks), a great many are included, each chapter often opening up with an interesting case history of a person afflicted by one of the animals in question,

followed up by information on the organism, details on the disease that they may spread, and generally several other case histories of various patients throughout the world (some of which are from the author's own experiences as a practicing physician specialized in infectious disease). I found riveting not only some of the case histories but also the incredible medical detective stories, both those relating to saving patient's lives and in other instances the struggle to develop an anti-venom or to find the animal spreading a disease. Several chapters included information on what the reader should do when confronted by this animal (for example tips on safe tick removal and effective treatment for cat and dog bites). A helpful glossary and extensive bibliography are included. The first several animals included in the book are dangerous mainly because of their venomous bites or stings, namely fire ants, several spider species, Portuguese man-of-war and various jellyfish species, cone snails, and a number of venomous snakes. The fire ant chapter was illuminating.

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