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## Maine Physician Offers Bee Venom Therapy



### The Sweet Sting of Relief

By Kathryn Skelton, [Sun Journal](#) (USA), 9/14/2008

Before a transatlantic flight, he arranges for 40 bee stings in his back. (It's extra-relaxing, of course.) Maine's Théodore Cherbuliez and his bee venom therapy.

Théodore Cherbuliez teaches people how to get bees to sting them. He coaches how to aim a bee, how to get its shot of venom to hurt a little less and how it can provide a jolt of non-traditional pain relief to the not-so-squeamish.

Cherbuliez, 80, takes a bee to the wrist every three months for arthritis.

He does not, fortunately, offer to sting visiting journalists.

Lanky and trim with a strong Swiss accent, he moved to Maine four years ago to be closer to his children. He's a psychologist and the former president of the [American Apitherapy Society](#), a group that explores all the ways to use bees as medicine. (He's VP now.)

He says he learned his techniques from Charles Mraz, the U.S. father of bee venom therapy. He got into apitherapy 25 years ago and proposes - but does not recommend - treatment for people suffering from symptoms of muscular sclerosis and other ailments.

"There is no treatment that has the diversity and the maintenance quality that bee venom has. It's quite remarkable in terms of how it can improve people's conditions," he said...

He only sees each client two or three times. Cherbuliez said he'll get to know their personality, their condition and test for allergies. (He tests both the person who wants to be stung and their partner; stinging should be a two-person affair. It's hard to reach your own back, plus, he warns, there's always the risk of an adverse reaction.)

He always keeps adrenaline on an end table in his office, just in case, and has never had to use it.

"Depending on how you handle it, you can administer venom very un-painful," Cherbuliez said...

If clients feel like they've gotten some relief of symptoms, post-sting, and decide to start treating themselves, they can order tiny boxes of bees from Maryland (you actually get a subscription,) start their own hive, or make friends with someone with a hive.

"Bee sting is not a game, it's a tool. A very sharp tool," he said...

Venom as a treatment is something the body can't become immune to, he added. While over-the-counter medications are the same in every dose, venom is different from bee to bee, influenced by her age and the pollen she's eaten...