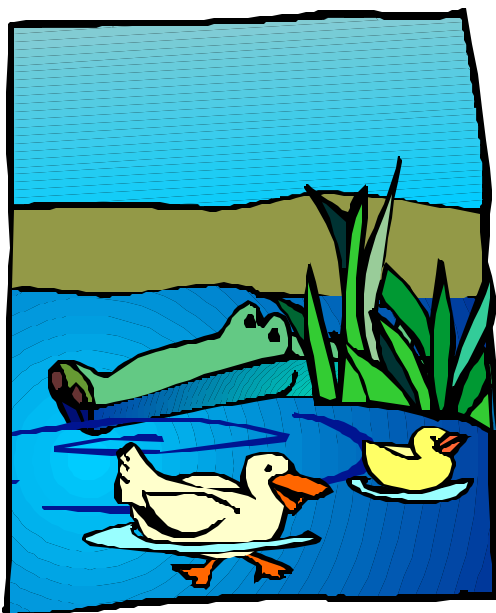


Alligator's Allergy



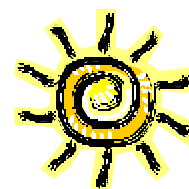
Alicia Alligator lived in a swamp with her mother, her father, two brothers and a sister. During the day, Alicia wallowed in the mud, swam in shallow water, or climbed up on the bank and laid in the sun. She liked to play with the other alligators and sometimes she could be a real trickster. "Come look at all the minnows" she would call. When the other alligators would run to the edge of the water, she would swish her tail and splash them with water. Sometimes she would bury herself in mud and when another alligator swam by, she would pop out with an alligator roar and surprise the unsuspecting alligator.

One day Alicia and her family went on a picnic. They swam down the river to a little beach at the end of the swamp. The mud was cool in the shade and it was peaceful and quiet. There were big green plants to shade her from the sun if she got too hot, and there was warm beach sand if she wanted to sun bathe.



Alicia slid off the sand into the water, she dove from a rock and raced with her brothers and sisters. All morning she played in the sand and water. After lunch the whole family napped in the warm sand. When it got too warm, they moved into the shade of the green plants. Alicia found a spot where the large flat leaves of a plant made a roof over her. She slid under the plant and went to sleep.

When she woke up she felt very funny. Her skin itched and felt lumpy. She walked out into the sunlight. Her family all stared, no one knew what had happened.



When Alicia looked in the water, she saw that she was covered with spots. The cool mud seemed to stop the itching. Her mother decided they should swim down the river to the wise old doctor alligator and find out what was wrong with Alicia.

They found the wise old doctor alligator in the swamp grass, his eyes peeking above the water. "Alicia ran into something she is allergic to," he said.

"What could that be?" the alligator family asked at once.

"Well some people are allergic to certain foods, some to animals, some to plants, it's hard to say"

"It must have been the plants I slept under" said Alicia, "but what is an allergy?"

The wise old alligator answered "An allergy is when you react to something you are in contact with. You can react by having a rash, and itching, by being sick, by sneezing. Some people have reactions that are hard to see, they just feel or act different."

"So what should I do?" said Alicia

"Stay away from what you are allergic to" said the wise old alligator. Some people can't get near a cat without sneezing, and some people can't eat certain foods. Some people even have to go on special diets. You should stay away from that plant."



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