

Ear, Nose, Mouth Problems

Types of Problems:

- Hearing loss
- Ear pain
- Ringing in ear
- Excess wax
- Foreign body in ear
- Nose bleeds
- Jaw pain
- Dental pain
- Mouth pain (ulcers)
- Lip problems (cold sores)

Seek Immediate Medical Care through Emergency Room For:

- Severe ear pain
- Blood coming from ear
- Head injury with trauma to ear
- Nose bleed that won't stop
- Sudden hearing loss

Self-Care Treatments until able to make appointment at the on-campus Student Health Office or Urgent Care:

Ear

- Warm compress to affected ear for 20 minutes at least four times a day
- Ibuprofen (Advil) with food, as needed, or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) per package dosing instructions
- Do not use Q-tips
- Avoid water in ear, no swimming
- Do not use ear drops
- If you believe ear pain is due to sinus issues, you may try a decongestant such as pseudoephedrine (need to buy at pharmacy counter and show ID proving you are 18 years) or nasal steroid sprays. Do not take decongestants if you have high blood pressure. You could also try an antihistamine (generic Claritin, Zyrtec, or Allegra) sold over the counter or Benadryl (Diphenhydramine) at bedtime per package dosing
- For ear wax concerns, please call the Student Health Office for an appointment

Nosebleed

- Slightly tilt head forward and squeeze the nose between the thumb and forefinger just below the hard portion of the nose with constant pressure for at least 10 minutes. Then, release slowly.
- Prevention of nose bleeds – use cool-mist humidification (vaporizer). Nosebleeds tend to occur more in winter when heat is on, causing dry air. Use nasal saline spray or gel (Ayr or Nasogel) to keep membranes moist. Follow package dosing instructions.

Dental Pain

- Ibuprofen (Advil) with food, as needed, or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) per package dosing
- Avoid extremes of hot and cold in food and drink
- Avoid chewing on painful side or tooth if possible
- If possible, contact your home dentist
- Warm salt water rinses (1/4 teaspoon salt in 8 ounces of water)
- Apply warm compresses as needed

Mouth Pain/Ulcers – Internal (inside) Mouth

- Rinse and swish with warm salt water (1/4 teaspoon salt in 8 ounces of water) or cool water rinses
- Avoid acidic foods or irritants - e.g. orange juice, pasta sauce, etc.
- Ibuprofen (Advil) with food, as needed, or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) per package dosing
- Rinsing mouth with liquid antacid may be soothing
- May hold an antacid (Tums) over ulcer area and allow to dissolve
- Avoid alcohol mouthwashes like Listerine
- Topical over-the-counter pain reliever such as Orajel or Anbesol per package instructions

Lesions on Lips (external)

- This can be caused by a virus.
- Avoid touching lips so as not to spread to other areas on you or to other people
- Avoid kissing or other direct skin contact with lips
- Do not share eating utensils or cups/drinks
- Avoid sun exposure or irritants to lips
- Apply cool tap water with a clean cloth for 10-15 minutes 2-3 times a day
- Ibuprofen (Advil) with food, as needed, or Acetaminophen (Tylenol) per package dosing

Please call to make an appointment at the on-campus Student Health Clinic or with your PCP or go to Urgent Care or the Emergency Department if your concerns do not improve with conservative self-care treatment or if you have worsening symptoms.

Please know your health problems and allergies. Information contained in this handout is for educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for evaluation and treatment by a Healthcare professional. As new and updated information becomes available, the content may change. Please contact your Healthcare Provider or the on-campus Student Health Services Clinic with any questions.

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