

Skin Problems

Types of Skin Problems:

- Blisters
- Wounds
- Cuts
- Lacerations
- Rashes
- Skin infections (e.g., infected toenail or fingernail)
- Boils
- Sunburns
- Insect bites /stings (e.g., bee or wasp stings)
- Tick bite
- Bites (human or animal)

Seek Immediate Medical Care through Emergency Room For:

- Difficulty breathing or swallowing
- A wound that won't stop bleeding
- Any loss of sensation or function of affected body part
- Wound caused by animal or human; especially a bite
- Any burn or laceration on face, hands or genitals
- Swollen face or eyes
- Burn that is large, blistering, or isn't painful
- Rapidly spreading rash
- Fever
- If the wound is extensive in size, deep and/or bleeding profusely, apply a clean or sterile bandage and seek medical attention ASAP.

Tetanus

If it is more than 5 years since your last Tetanus booster, call your provider or on-campus Student Health Clinic ASAP.

Self-Care Treatment:

- Wash your hands with soapy water before touching the wound, cut or burn.
- Rinse the wound thoroughly with warm running water.
- Rinse a new burn with cool water until pain subsides. Avoid use of ice or cold packs.
- If chemical burn, avoid soap. Seek medical attention ASAP.
- If needed, cleanse the wound with soap, rinse thoroughly and blot dry with a clean cloth.
- When the wound is dried, apply a dry sterile bandage.
- Do not use alcohol or peroxide to cleanse the site or wound.
- Do not use antibiotic ointment on any piercing.
- For tattoos or body piercing infections – follow recommended piercing / tattoo cleansing and care routine per instructions from tattoo establishment.

- For boils: Apply warm compresses every 30 minutes. Do not squeeze or drain.
- Tick Removal
 - Use fine tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin surface as possible. **Do not use** a smoldering match or cigarette, nail polish, petroleum jelly (eg, Vaseline), liquid soap, or kerosene.
 - Pull backwards gently but firmly, using an even, steady pressure. Do not jerk or twist.
 - Do not squeeze, crush, or puncture the body of the tick.
 - After removing the tick, wash the skin and hands thoroughly with soap and water.
 - If any mouth parts of the tick remain in the skin, these should be left alone; they will be expelled on their own. Attempts to remove these parts may result in significant skin trauma.
 - After removal, observe the area of the bite for expanding redness, which would suggest the characteristic “erythema migrans” (looks like a bulls eye) rash of Lyme disease, usually within 1 week to 1 month after bite. If you develop a rash, burning, itching, multiple lesions, or other concerns, call the Student Health Center or seek medical attention.

Call the on-campus Student Health Clinic or go to Urgent Care for Medical Attention if:

- Any animal or human bite
- Increased warmth of the surrounding skin
- Redness
- Swelling
- Pain
- Pus (white to yellow to green drainage)
- Wound is getting larger
- Bleeding
- Open wound
- Red streaks
- Fever >100.4 F degrees or greater
- Dirt or object in skin
- Rash is spreading

Self Care:

Itching

- Cool compresses
- Daytime antihistamine such as Claritin/Loratadine, Zyrtec/Cetirizine or Allegra / Fexofenadine, take per package dosing instructions
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl), take per package dosing. Do not exceed 300 mg in 24 hours. May cause drowsiness, use caution while driving

Pain Relief

- Ibuprofen (Advil) or Acetaminophen (Tylenol), take as needed per package dosing instructions.
 - Avoid Ibuprofen (Advil) or Aspirin for bleeding cuts or wounds.

Please call to make an appointment call your 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 problem 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 your on-campus Student Health Services Clinic with any questions.

Skin Problems self care handout

Developed 8/18

Reviewed 8/19; 8/21; 2/22; 1/23, 1/24, 1/25

Revised 8/19; 8/21; 2/22; 1/23, 1/24, 1/25