

## 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 the Student Health Center immediately.**

### 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 Student Health Center 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 over 100 F degrees
- Dirt or object in skin
- Rash is spreading

**Self Care:**

Itching

- Cool compresses
- Daytime antihistamine such as Claritin/Loratadine, Zyrtec/Cetirizine or Allegra / Fexofenadine per package dosing instructions
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) 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) per package dosing instructions. Take as needed.
  - Avoid Ibuprofen (Advil) or Aspirin for bleeding cuts or wounds.

**Please call to make an appointment at the Student Health Center 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 the SHC Triage Nurse at 570-389-4451 with any questions.**

Commonwealth University – Bloomsburg Student Health Center, Room 324 Kehr Union Building, Bloomsburg, PA 17815  
Phone: 570-389-4451 FAX: 570-389-3417

Skin Problems Nurse

Developed 8/18

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

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