

Common Health Concerns

To obtain more information about any of the topics listed below, call Health Services at **701-845-7212**.

If you need to be seen in Health Services, having an appointment assures you are seen more quickly with less wait time!

To schedule a Health Services visit, call 701-845-7212 or email patricia.egeberg@vcsu.edu

Problem	Symptoms	Treatment
Acne	Whiteheads, blackheads, pimples	Wash gently with mild soap; shampoo regularly; eat a sensible diet; avoid oil-based makeup; use non-comedogenic products; avoid squeezing pimples. Keratolytic (shedding) Medications: 1. Benzoyl Peroxide, 2.5-5%--use lower percentages in winter or with combination skin 2. Salicylic Acid (with Sulfur) Seek medical assistance if no improvement after 6-8 weeks of using a nonprescription medicine.
Allergies/ Hay Fever	Congestion, itching, runny nose, tearing eyes, sneezing	Antihistamines such as Benadryl relieve symptoms (though may cause drowsiness). Seek medical care if symptoms are severe or wheezing develops. Or, take this quiz (http://www.webmd.com/allergies/allergy-and-sinus-symptom-evaluator/default.htm) to distinguish allergies versus sinus symptoms.
Animal Bites	Either a puncture wound or cut	Wash thoroughly with soap and water. Cover with light bandage same as for Cuts or Puncture Wound. Get tetanus shot if needed. Seek medical attention if cut is deep or jagged and/or if there is any question that the animal was rabid.
Blisters	Fluid-filled raised areas, usually on the skin of hands or feet	Do not break the blisters, but if they burst on their own, leave the skin intact for protection. Avoid using anesthetic (numbing) sprays or creams because they may slow healing. Cover the sore lightly to keep it clean. Change the bandage frequently and watch for infection.
Burns	First degree burns--superficial, reddened skin Second degree burns--blistering and painful Third degree burns--	Quickly put skin into cold water or apply cold water until pain subsides. Do not apply ice. Reapply cold water as needed. Apply dry dressing, if necessary. Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen to relieve pain. Do not break blisters. For large burns, seek medical attention.

	-pale white, or black leathery tissue, no blisters, painless.	
Colds	Runny nose, sneezing, fever, fatigue, headache, sore or dry throat, sore nose, muscle aches, hoarseness, cough	Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen for aches, fever, and headache. Take decongestants for runny nose. Drink plenty of fluids and get plenty of rest. Seek medical care if you have hard coughing spells, significant fever, chest pain, thick sputum, or severe headache.
Constipation	Feeling of fullness in the bowels Not having bowel movements as usual	Increase fluid intake to 6-8 glasses of water per day; increase intake of fiber. When stools first begin to become hard, add raw vegetables, fresh fruit, and fluid to your diet. Laxatives should not be used often. If they are needed frequently, seek medical care.
Cough	Irritation in respiratory tract, tickling in throat, tightness in chest	Take a cough expectorant to clear secretions. Increase fluid intake to 2-3 quarts a day. Take a cough suppressant only at night. Seek medical care if cough persists more than 7 days.
Cuts	Arterial bleeding--bright red blood spurts from wound Nerve injury--numbness, tingling, or weakness Infection--swelling, redness, warm touch, tender, puss. Seek medical attention for any of above.	Prevent large blood loss: 1. Apply pressure to wound using clean gauze compresses. Maintain for 3-10 minutes to allow clotting. 2. Do not replace dressing once it is in place. 3. Elevate the injured area. 4. Never apply tourniquet unless it is a life or death situation and then only to an arm or a leg. The need for a tourniquet is RARE. 5. Cleanse soap and water. Apply clean bandage. 6. If bleeding persists, maintain pressure to site of wound and obtain medical care. 7. Check status of tetanus booster.
Diarrhea	An abnormal increase in the frequency and liquidity of your stools May be related to an infection or other causes (eg, food allergy)	Prevention of infectious diarrhea: practice good hygiene by washing your hands frequently. Prevention of non-infectious diarrhea: Avoid food triggers and stress. Treatment: Drink plenty of fluids. Seek medical attention if your diarrhea gets worse, if you develop a high fever or abdominal pain, or if you have bloody stools.

Fainting	<p>A partial or complete loss of consciousness which occurs suddenly</p> <p>Possible nausea</p> <p>Clammy, pale skin</p> <p>Tingling or numbness</p> <p>Slow pulse rate</p>	<p>Lay person down, place on back and elevate feet 12 inches or more to replenish blood to brain. Make sure airway is clear.</p> <p>If possible, apply cool wet cloths to forehead. Ensure plenty of fresh air.</p> <p>Give nothing by mouth until person is revived.</p> <p>Get medical attention if victim does not immediately regain consciousness (within 60 seconds).</p>
Fever Blisters/ Cold or Canker Sores	<p>Blisters usually on lips, sometimes in mouth; recurrent episodes</p>	<p>Use over the counter preparations (made specifically for sores inside the mouth) or obtain antiviral medication.</p> <p>For crusted sores, apply cool compresses. Seek medical care if sores do not heal in two weeks or for recurrent episodes.</p>
Headaches	<p>Types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tension 2. Migraine 3. Hunger 4. Hangover 5. Eyestrain 	<p>Treatment per type:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Relax and/or take acetaminophen or ibuprofen. 2. Seek medical care. 3. Low blood sugar--eat something sweet. 4. Rest. Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Coffee may help. 5. Rest eyes. Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
Head Lice	<p>Signs/Symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tickling feeling in head • Itching (caused by bites) • Irritability and difficulty sleeping • Sores on the head (caused by scratching) 	<p>Follow guidelines for OTC or prescription medication treatment here:</p> <p>http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/treatment.html</p>
Heartburn	<p>Burning pain below breastbone or ribs</p> <p>Difficulty swallowing</p> <p>Sour belching</p>	<p>Do relaxation exercises to relieve stress.</p> <p>May get relief from antacids like Maalox or Mylanta.</p> <p>Eat smaller, low-fat meals more frequently. Avoid lying down one to two hours after eating.</p> <p>Seek medical care if symptoms persist, if vomiting black/bloody material, if passing black stools, or if pain goes through to back.</p>

Hemorrhoids	Pain, itching, a small amount of bleeding around anus, palpable lump at anus site	Soak in a tub of warm water for half an hour. Use over the counter rectal creams. Increase intake of high fiber foods and fluids to relieve constipation. Seek medical care if symptoms persist for more than a week or if bleeding.
Influenza (Flu)	Shaking, chills, fever, bad headache, repetitive, dry hacking cough, marked fatigue, muscle aches	Get plenty of rest. Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen for aches, fever, and headache. Take decongestant for runny nose. Drink plenty of fluids and wash hands frequently. Do not share drinks or eating utensils with others. Seek medical care if you have hard coughing spells, significant fever, chest pain, thick sputum, or severe headache. Watch for secondary bacterial infection such as ear infection, sinus infection, or pneumonia. For more on influenza, go here: http://www.geneseo.edu/health/other_medical_issues#flu
Insect Bites/Stings	Pain, redness, swelling at site	Apply a cold compress as soon as possible. Take mild analgesics for pain or antihistamine for itching. Use over the counter cortisone cream. Monitor for infection.
Mental Health	Depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and other issues	Visit our Common Mental Health Issues page for more information. - http://www.geneseo.edu/health/mental_health_issues
Nausea/Vomiting	Stomach ache, nausea, vomiting	While vomiting continues do not eat. Only sip fluids (no milk products) or ice chips in small amounts. When vomiting stops for 2-3 hours, take 2-3 ounces of fluids at a time. When you have not vomited for 6-8 hours, start eating a soft, bland diet such as crackers, toast, Jell-O, soup, soft boiled eggs, etc. Return to regular diet when hungry. Seek medical care if symptoms persist or in cases of severe headache, fever, or persistent/ severe abdominal pain.
Nosebleed	Bleeding from nose	Hold center of nose between thumb and forefinger and squeeze to apply pressure. Hold for five minutes; repeat if necessary. Ice may also be applied. Seek medical care if condition persists more than one hour.
Puncture Wounds	Bleeding may be heavy if major vessel is punctured Tingling, weakness if nerves are injured Infection may occur 24 hours later (pus, red, swollen)	No need to apply pressure unless there is profuse bleeding. Get a tetanus booster if you have not had one in the last 5 years. Clean wound with soap and water. Seek medical care if you have any of the listed symptoms or if a fever develops.

Sore Throat	Sore, scratchy and/or dry throat; difficulty swallowing; hoarseness; fever/chills; no appetite; headache or muscle aches; enlarged lymph nodes in neck	Rest, drink plenty of liquids, stay warm. Gargle with warm salt water to soothe throat. Treat fever as in the Colds section. Seek medical attention if symptoms persist or if fever, difficulty swallowing, or pus/discharge noted in throat. For information on strep throat, go here .: http://www.geneseo.edu/health/other_medical_issues#strep
Sleep Issues and/or Insomnia	Difficulties falling asleep Difficulties staying asleep Earlier morning awakening Non-restful sleep and/or daytime fatigue	Please see our Hot Topics! page on College Students & Sleep for more information. http://www.geneseo.edu/health/sleep
Sprained Ankle	Swollen ankle Later, skin around ankle may become bruised and discolored Minor sprains are more comfortable within 3 days Severe sprains may remain swollen, red and discolored for 10-14 days	Immediately after injury, apply intermittent ice for 24-48 hours. Cover cold material with fabric before placing it next to skin; never place ice directly on skin. Elevate leg. Support the thigh and calf with pillows. Use ace bandage. Take ibuprofen for discomfort and for swelling. When some motion has returned, elevate your leg and draw the "A, B, C's" in the air with your foot five times a day. Wear a stiff-soled shoe or boot when beginning to walk. Don't return to activities if pain remains.
Sunburn	See Burns section for symptoms	Use cool compresses and baths. Use moisturizing cream to control peeling, but don't rub. If dizziness, abdominal cramps or infection occur or if pain persists, seek medical care.
Urinary Tract Infection (UTI)	Discomfort during urination, increased frequency of urination, urgent need to urinate, blood in the urine	Seek medical care; a urine specimen is needed for diagnosis and treatment with antibiotics. In the meantime, increase fluid intake, especially water and cranberry juice. For more information, go here : http://www.geneseo.edu/health/other_sexual_health#uti