



A publication of the Student Health Advisory Council and the Student Health Service

UD STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE
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Pink Eye

DEALING WITH CONJUNCTIVITIS

A red, irritated eye is a common complaint. A frequent cause is viral conjunctivitis, commonly known as pink eye. Symptoms include redness in the eye, mild irritation, and mucous drainage (often noticed as crustiness upon waking in the morning).

Because viruses that also cause the common cold cause viral conjunctivitis, patients often have associated runny or stuffy nose, sore throat, and cough within the past week. Viral infections are self-limiting, meaning that your body's own defense system will cure the infection in time. Symptoms may last for 7 days. Since antibiotics do nothing to treat viruses, they are not indicated for pink eye. Treatment includes saline drops to lubricate and flush the eye. Viruses are very contagious and can be spread from one eye to the other and to other people. Therefore, you should avoid touching the affected eye and wash your hands frequently if you are infected.

About 1 out of 10 times, the cause of conjunctivitis is bacterial rather than viral. Bacterial conjunctivitis is more severe with pus draining from the eye and sometimes redness and swelling around the eye. Contact wearers are at increased risk of bacterial infection. Antibiotic drops are used to treat bacterial conjunctivitis.

In either viral or bacterial conjunctivitis, contacts should not be worn until the infection has cleared. If you have a red eye, you should be examined by a physician to rule out other more serious causes that could affect the health of your eye in the long-term.

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BUYING SNEAKERS

Sizing up your foot

Buying athletic shoes can be almost as complicated as buying a new car these days. When shopping, we are often left on our own with a new employee to guide us in our purchase. This short article will hopefully make the process much less confusing.

KNOW YOUR FOOT TYPE

If you have flat feet, you probably wear out the inside edge of your shoes first. You should look for shoes with more stability on the inside edge

and better arch support. As a rule of thumb, the more supportive materials are darker in color so you should look for a shoe with a gray or black inside edge. People with high arches will also want good arch support but should look for shoes with better cushioning because their feet do not absorb shock as well. These people will often show more wear on the outer edge of their shoes.

WHAT SIZE SHOULD I BUY?

You should have your feet measured every time you buy shoes because your foot structure changes as you age. The best time to go shoe shopping is later in the day. Because our feet commonly swell as the day goes on, shopping later in the day will help assure a better fit. Your foot should be comfortable in the shoe, but your foot should not move from side to side. The length of the shoe should be one centimeter (about one finger width) longer than the longest toe on your biggest foot. Don't be embarrassed; most of us have two different sized feet.



WHICH SHOES ARE BEST SUITED FOR RUNNING?

Continued from front

Cold or flu? Check this out.

Both a cold and influenza, the “flu,” are infections that typically affect the respiratory tract. Because viruses, not bacteria, cause colds, an antibiotic can’t cure them. One of the best ways to help fight the common cold or the respiratory symptoms of the “flu” is by drinking plenty of fluids. The following list of symptoms will help you to decide whether you have a cold or the “flu.”

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Onset	Gradual	Sudden
Fever	Rare	Characteristic, high (over 101°F) lasting 3–4 days
Cough	Hacking	Nonproductive, can become severe
Headache	Rare	Prominent
Myalgia	Slight	Usual, often severe
Fatigue, Weakness	Very mild	Can last up to 2–3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Rare	Early and prominent
Chest Discomfort	Mild to moderate	Common
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore Throat	Common	Sometimes

Gardasil® The new HPV vaccine

Gardasil® is the new vaccine that is being recommended for girls and young women between the ages of 11 and 26. It protects against four major types of human papillomavirus (HPV). HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the U.S. and around the world. More than 50% of sexually active men and women are infected with HPV at some time in their lives. If a woman contracts HPV and it lingers in her body, it can lead to cervical cancer. Every year in the U.S. approximately 10,000 women develop cervical cancer and 4,000 die from the disease. The HPV vaccine can prevent most genital warts and most cases of cervical cancer. The series of three vaccines is given over a six-month period. It is important for girls to get the HPV vaccine series before they have been exposed to HPV. Please see your health care provider to learn more about this important new vaccine.

Buying Sneakers, *continued from front*

WHAT TYPE OF SHOE DO I NEED?

It is usually not necessary to buy a specialty shoe unless you participate in that sport more than three times per week. A simple running shoe or a cross trainer is all that most people need. The current style trend or the price of the shoe often misleads people. Very rarely does a recreational athlete benefit from the top of the line shoe. Many times a mid-priced shoe that has the proper support for your foot will be better than the newest style or the most expensive shoe.

WHEN TO GET NEW SHOES

As a rule of thumb, running shoes should not be worn for more than 500 miles of training. At about that time, you will feel that the shoe has begun to break down. Another way of determining whether your shoe is providing the proper support is go to a store and find the latest model of the shoe you are currently wearing and try it on. If this shoe feels better than the shoes you are wearing, it is time for new shoes. Keep in mind that sneaker styles change every 15–20 months so it is not always easy to find the same shoe. Ask a sales person for assistance: they usually know which models coincide with the old models.

Staying out of the woods with LYME DISEASE

Spring has sprung! Along with the birds, flowers, and budding trees comes the arrival of the insect population. Although most insects are harmless, there are a few that can cause discomfort and possibly serious health concerns. Lyme disease is currently the most frequently reported vector-borne illness in the United States.

Lyme disease is transmitted by the deer and lone-star ticks. A tick can transmit a spirochete germ from an animal host to humans. Symptoms of Lyme disease usually begin 3 days to 4 weeks after a bite. A spreading ring-like rash appears at the site of the bite. The rash is typically about 4 inches in size and may feel warm, itchy, or painful. A rash may appear elsewhere after the spirochete moves through the body. In the early stages most people feel flu-like symptoms, joint pain and swelling, especially in the knees, wrists, and ankles. Cardiac and neurological symptoms occur less frequently. Although a blood test exists for Lyme disease, diagnosis is often made based on clinical signs and symptoms. Early treatment with antibiotics usually halts the progression of the disease.

Prevention, however, is the best way to avoid problems in the first place. Ticks exist worldwide in wooded areas, high grasses, and brush. They are

most prevalent during spring and summer. When outdoors, the use of an insect repellent containing DEET can be very effective in warding off ticks. Wear long pants and tuck them into your socks in areas where ticks are plentiful. Keep shirttails tucked in. Avoid sitting or lying on the ground or placing clothing on the ground. Light colored clothing allows easier visualization of the ticks. Check your body when you return from an infested area because you usually do not feel the tick bite.

If a tick becomes imbedded in your skin, prompt removal is important. Avoid handling it. Wear gloves if possible. To remove a tick, use tweezers to grasp the tick at the skin surface, below its head, and pull. Do not use nail polish, a hot match, or Vaseline to smother the tick—this may cause it to inject a spirochete into the victim’s circulation. Once the tick has been removed, wash the site with antibacterial soap and apply an antibiotic ointment. If possible save the tick, recording the date and time of the bite. The tick can be identified and treatment begun if necessary.

Despite your best efforts at prevention, ticks may pay you a visit. Be aware and seek medical attention when needed. Don’t let these bugs bug you.

MARCH IS NATIONAL
NUTRITION MONTH