



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

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Campus Emergencies.....9-911
 Appointments/Information.....831-2226
 Women's Health.....831-8035
 Sports Medicine.....831-2482
 Comment Line.....831-4898

Chicken soup: A cold remedy?

YoUDee believes that it is more important that soup be nutrient and herb-filled rather than fowl-filled to provide relief of cold symptoms. Chicken soup, served by a caring person, has the benefit of psychological comfort. Because it also helps to break up congestion and replace lost fluids, chicken soup is often sought out by cold sufferers.

In a study where both hot water and chicken soup were sipped through a straw to avoid any vapor effect, only the soup increased mucus flow. What are those ingredients that give chicken soup medicinal qualities? Veggies and sinus-clearing spices including garlic, hot peppers and curry powder. A bowl of chicken soup has vitamins, minerals, and an amino acid called cystine. Cystine is chemically similar to a drug prescribed for bronchitis and respiratory infections.

Colds are caused by viruses and will generally last no longer than a week. If you have a cold, head for a steaming bowl of chicken soup. It is effective, low in cost and has no unpleasant side effects. It may not cure your cold, but it is bound to help relieve some symptoms.

All night long and more

Sometimes you have need of health care in the evening or the middle of the night.

Whether it be a bout with a "stomach bug," a whopper of a migraine, or a need to talk about the stresses of school and life, the Student Health Service not only is there for you during normal office hours but also in the wee hours of the night.

Each night the Student Health Service has two nurses trained to handle student problems. The nurses can consult a Health Service physician and, if needed, care for you in our Inpatient Department. Eight inpatient beds are available to students for treatment and observation, as well as rest and recuperation.

When at home, you had someone to turn to for health care needs or a shoulder to lean on. At college, the Student Health Service is there for you day and night.



Stressed?

You're probably not alone. When your body or mind is called upon to adapt, you experience stress. In your life, you will encounter positive (a new roommate/friend) and negative (a failed exam) challenges, which require adaptation. Humans respond by taking a fight or flight approach to the changes – an increase in heart rate, muscle tension, high blood pressure and an increase in perspiration, glucose, cholesterol and stomach acid.

This is a very old response pattern that worked well to prepare for the attack of a lion, but is not very helpful when roommate conflicts occur, our self-esteem is being attacked or we lose a loved one. This fight or flight response is often not only inappropriate but can actually damage the body. Ulcers, headaches, high blood pressure, digestive problems, memory loss, heart disease and cancer have all been linked to prolonged stress.

Good news – you can Lower your stress level!

Step one – Identify your particular stressors. Relationships, workloads, recent losses, major life changes, a zillion commitments, poor eating habits.

Step two – Ask yourself, how can you eliminate some of the stressors?

- Learn new skills such as assertiveness or time management
- Organize your work load
- Increase support and insight through counseling
- Combine activities (do laundry with a friend)
- Combine activities (do laundry with a friend)
- Cut out unnecessary commitments
- Get enough sleep
- Eat a healthy diet (cut out caffeine)
- Exercise regularly.

Step three – Relax.

Skills such as deep breathing, deep muscle relaxation and imagery work can be learned and, with practice, can trigger feelings of relaxation and well-being. Massage, yoga, prayer and meditation can also help the body cope with stress. These activities are best started before you feel overwhelmed and will require regular use for maximum benefit.

Step four – Tap into campus resources.

The Center for Counseling and Student Development, located above the bookstore in Perkins Student Center, offers an initial assessment meeting if students want help identifying sources of their stress and individual and group counseling to address students' concerns. Wellspring, a wellness program, located in Laurel Hall, has peer educators able to do workshops on stress management, introduction to relaxing massage, or individual meetings to explore stress management strategies.

Will you experience stress in college? Sure. Can you learn to manage it better. Absolutely!



Mono: the Kissing Disease?

You might have mono if you have...

- been dragging for a week or more
- a killer sore throat
- swollen glands
- fever—on and off
- no appetite

But don't let the mere mention of the "dreaded" disease bring to mind the horror of bed rest, quarantine or dropping the semester.

What is it?

Infectious mononucleosis (mono) is an illness caused most commonly by Epstein-Barr Virus. The incubation period is 4-to-6 weeks before an infected person develops symptoms. Early symptoms can include fatigue, loss of appetite and headache. These progress to acute symptoms that may include sore throat, swollen glands, fever, muscle aches and rash. Not all of these symptoms are present in every case.

Who gave it to me?

Mono is spread through saliva, hence its nickname "the kissing disease." Even though this means the disease is almost always spread through intimate contact, don't try to figure out who gave you the infection—it could have been the guy who sneezed in the library.

"My folks want me to be tested for mono?"

If your symptoms are described here, it doesn't necessarily mean you have mono. But you can visit Student Health Service and a health care professional will evaluate your symptoms and possibly test you for mono. It is often necessary to wait until you've been sick a week or so before mono antibodies can be detected in the blood. Even then the test may be negative early in the illness and may need to be repeated.

What is the treatment?

Since mono is a virus, antibiotics are not useful in treating mono. While there's no pill or shot to cure mono, your body should be able to successfully fight the infection if you take proper care of yourself.

Treatment includes:

- Adequate rest
- Pain relievers—Tylenol®, Advil®, Aleve®
- Adequate fluid intake
- Nutritional maintenance
- Avoidance of contact sports and alcohol.

What are some of the complications?

In a small percentage of mono cases, the illness is complicated by strep infection in the throat and is treated with antibiotics.

Another rare complication is inflammation of the liver, possibility resulting in jaundice. Eyes, skin, urine may turn yellow.

Mono also causes enlargement of the spleen and rarely results in rupture. Pain in the left upper abdomen that gets progressively worse may be a sign of rupture and immediate medical treatment is imperative.

How long will I be sick?

The length and severity of illness varies from person to person. If your symptoms keep you in bed, you should be up and around within two weeks. In a few cases, more bed rest is needed due to complications.

Fatigue can sometimes last two or three months beyond the acute stage. Naps are OK if you need them.

Any activity that could cause blows or increased intra-abdominal pressure to chest or abdomen needs to be avoided for six weeks but mild physical activity can be resumed after the acute symptoms have resolved.

Am I contagious?

People who have had mono can still have the virus in their saliva long after the illness is over. In some people, it can appear in the saliva on and off for one year. A majority of cases probably are contracted through contact between a susceptible person and a healthy person who has the virus in their saliva. People who have been infected are immune from getting it again.



Bumps & bruises

School is under way. As underclassmen gather with old friends and freshmen meet new ones, a great deal of socializing occurs during recreational activities.



Whether it is a friendly pick up game or an intramural competition, someone inevitably gets a sprain or strain, a bump or bruise. In the event this happens, be aware of some first aid tips.

The acronym **PRICES** may help you remember:

- P**rotection from further injury
- R**elative rest
- I**ce for 20 minutes three times in the first 24 hours
- C**ompression with an ace wrap or tight garment
- E**levate the injury above your heart
- S**afely return to activity

These are basic guidelines for minor injuries, which you may implement.

For some, the term PRICES many conjure up images of trauma to your checkbook rather than your body. Use of the Student Health Service, which is covered under your Student Health fee, may be a resource if your injury is more than a normal bump. At Laurel Hall, some of the physicians have an interest in sports medicine and care for many of the club and international athletes. So tap into them as needed.

If the clinicians at Laurel Hall feel the need for further consultation, the Sports Medicine Clinic (SMC) is available for any student. Although the SMC's primary responsibility is to care for varsity athletes, the expertise of the SMC physician is available to others. These visits are most welcomed.

X-rays sometimes are part of the evaluation of sports-related "bumps and bruises." The university has its own x-ray department located in Laurel Hall. By having such services on site, you may save a great deal of time, avoiding a trip to the hospital emergency room. The doctors will order an x-ray if they feel it is appropriate. X-ray costs are not covered under your SHS fee.

Other services available at the University include a well-respected athletic training department and a nationally known physical therapy department. Also, local orthopedists, who serve as orthopedic sports medicine consultants for the Athletic Department, have clinic hours at Laurel Hall for all students. If you are ever in need of sports medicine care, please feel free to utilize the network here on campus.

