

HOLYOKE PEDIATRIC ASSOCIATES, LLP

Summer News Letter

Swimmer's Ear

Swimmer's ear is caused by water that has bacteria in it going into the ear canal. The bacteria multiplies in the ear canal and causes inflammation of the skin lining the canal.

To determine if your child has swimmer's ear, vigorously pull down and back on the ear lobe. If painful, contact the doctor's office.

Prevention of swimmer's ear (not treatment): Make up a bottle for the summer of ½ rubbing alcohol & ½ white vinegar, and put three (3) drops into each ear every night after swimming.

Sunburn

The best preventative measure is to stay out of the sun during the peak hours of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and keep well covered (including wearing a hat, one with a dark brim underneath is better, since a white brim will reflect the sun into your child's eyes and face). Don't forget the sunglasses. They should protect your child's eyes from both ultraviolet A (UVA) and ultraviolet B (UVB) rays. If your child is planning to be in the sun, use of a sunscreen with SPF 30 or over is recommended.

Infants under 6 months of age should have total skin coverage with clothing not sun screen. Total sun avoidance is recommended for this age.

Most sunburns are first degree, which is when the skin turns pink or red. Prolonged exposure to the sun can cause a second degree burn with blistering. The pain and swelling peaks in 24 hours and improves in 48 hours. If the child is older than 6 months, Advil or Motrin can be given for pain. Applying 1% hydrocortisone cream also reduces pain and swelling. It is helpful to put 2 ounces of baking soda in cool bath water. Encourage fluids to prevent dehydration. Trim dead skin from any broken blisters to prevent infection and then apply an antibiotic ointment two times a day.

Call the doctor's office if there is severe pain, the area looks infected, or the child becomes worse.

Insect Bites

Most itchy insect bites are from mosquitoes and fleas. To help relieve the itch, apply calamine lotion or baking soda paste. For severe itch, use 1% hydrocortisone cream (over the counter). Also, applying firm direct pressure to the bite for 10 seconds can help.

If the bite is still very itchy after local treatment, try an oral antihistamine (Benadryl).

Most insect bites itch or hurt for 1 to 2 days. The swelling may last a week.

Call the doctor's office if severe pain persists more than 2 hours after taking pain medicine, the bite looks infected (redness, red streaks, increased tenderness), or your child becomes worse.

Tick Bites

A tick is a small brown bug that attaches to the skin. A wood tick is the size of a watermelon seed. The deer tick is the size of a pin head and can possibly transmit Lyme disease. Tick must be imbedded for at least 24 hours to be infective. Most tick bites are harmless and the spread of disease by a tick is rare.

To remove a wood tick, use tweezers and grasp the tick close to the skin. Pull straight upward without crushing or twisting. Maintain steady pressure until it releases its grip.

Tiny deer ticks need to be scraped off with a knife blade or the edge of a credit card. After removed, clean the skin with antibacterial soap and apply an antibiotic ointment to the bite area. Once the body has been removed, the head or remainder of the tick does not need to be removed. Your body will naturally get rid of it over time.

Call the doctor's office if you are unable to remove the tick or tick head, the child gets a fever or rash in the next 2 weeks, or the bite appears to be infected.

Summer Safety Tips

Always wear a bike helmet.

Never swim alone.

**Always wear a seat belt
or use a car seat.**

**Never leave a child unattended in a
grocery cart.**

Frequent hand washing helps prevent the spread of viruses.

Studies show physical activity helps build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints.

Summertime Virus

Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease

This is a usually mild, highly contagious illness that is caused by the Coxsackie Virus. It occurs most often between June & September. Children under 10 are most affected but the virus can "go through the family". Incubation period is 4-6 days. It starts with 1-3 days of fever, decreased appetite, fatigue and sore throat. Those symptoms may be followed by a rash on the hands, feet and sometimes buttocks. The rash looks like single red bumps that sometimes fill with fluid. This lasts 3-4 days. It may be itchy. The most bothersome part of the illness is apt to be the rash that occurs in the mouth 1-2 days before the rash on the hands and feet. Spots that look like canker sores form on the inside of the mouth and can last up to 1 week. Children may have any combination of these symptoms.

Treatment is symptomatic. Benadryl may be used for itching. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil) may be used for pain or fever. Eating may be painful. Urge fluids such as weak juice, herbal tea, milk, Instant Breakfast, soups, Popsicles, and Jell-O. Avoid spicy, salty, acidic, or greasy foods. Avoid overheating as this may cause more itching. Keep bath water luke warm. Keep fingernails short and clean. Scratching can cause superficial infection and scarring. If a child seems very uncomfortable, complains of other discomforts, has a persistently high fever, etc., call your doctor.

Appointments

Holyoke 536-8411

South Hadley 536-2101

**Always call to cancel an
appointment that you cannot
keep!**

Medical Advice: Holyoke: 536-2393 - 7:30 a.m. So. Hadley : 532-0300 – 8:00 a.m.