

## BROADCAST-Summer Health Hazards-When to Get Urgent Care

It took a while getting here but summer is in high gear and with many people enjoying the outdoors over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July week, there are hazards that create problems that might go beyond what you should treat at home. How do you know when to seek medical treatment?

Months of rain and flooding have created conditions ripe for floodwater mosquitoes, gnats and there are the usual bites and stings. Most bug bites and stings are minor but Melinda Cooling, OSF HealthCare vice president for advance practice and Urgo urgent care says clean the area but seek medical care if redness or swelling persists.

### **SOT-Melinda Cooling, OSF HealthCare vice president for advance practice and Urgo urgent care**

**“If you get a bug bite that is getting red, swollen, tender starting to ooze a lot or causing you more discomfort, then those are things that are best to get evaluated by a health care professional.” (:10)**

Most spider bites are not harmful but if possible, make sure to identify the type of spider responsible because a bite from a brown recluse, common in the Midwest, can be serious.. Stay calm to prevent the venom from spreading and seek medical attention.

It takes only 15 minutes to get a sunburn. Cooling suggests medical attention if the skin is more than just hot to the touch.

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**“It’s blistering, it’s oozing, you find that you’re having fevers, you’re really nauseated, you’re having other symptoms that seem to be more extensive than sort of the normal burn; those are things you should seek medical attention for.” (:14)**

At OSF Urgo urgent care, several patients who have come in with sun poisoning are also dehydrated. Cooling advises to keep drinking water in hot weather, even if you don’t feel thirsty. Many children and adults suffer from swimmer’s ear. Cooling suggests when you have ear pain, make sure there’s nothing else causing it.

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**“We never know has something flown into the ear? Have they put something in their ear that could be causing a problem? So, actually visualizing the ear and the ear drum is very helpful for a health provider to offer guidance.” (:13)**

## **ADDITIONAL MATERIAL FOR WEBSITE**

### **Cuts and Wounds from Working Outdoors**

We’ve all heard the warnings about wearing protective eyewear, footwear and earplugs when running the lawnmower, chain saw, weed eater or even pruning trees and shrubs but not everyone heeds the advice. Even with some gear, cuts happen.

Cooling says you should seek urgent care if the wound is gaping so that you can't gently press sides together and stop the bleeding, if it is a result of an animal or human bite, or if it is a result of being impaled by an object. Also, you might want to seek medical attention if it is on a cosmetically significant place such as your face or near a sensitive area.

There are some general rules that can help in most situations:

- Don't attempt to remove foreign objects
- Clean and elevate wounds (don't use hydrogen peroxide)
- Apply direct pressure to bleeding wounds
- Bites and dirty wounds require special treatment
- When in doubt, seek medical attention

[OSF Urgo](#) urgent care can handle most minor injuries and ailments with the ability to provide x-rays, common prescriptions, and to serve walk-in patients.