



News Release

American Academy of Otolaryngology—Head and Neck Surgery

Working for the Best Ear, Nose, and Throat Care

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ENT Doctors Offer Tips for a Healthy New Year

Alexandria, Va. – As 2008 approaches, the American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) would like to offer some helpful tips to start the New Year off right.

“Ear, nose, and throat health problems are some of the most common ailments that Americans face,” says Jeffrey Spiegel, MD, associate professor of otolaryngology – head and neck surgery at the Boston University School of Medicine. “From colds and the flu in the winter to allergies in the spring, a few simple tips can help people enjoy a more productive, healthful 2008.”

More than 37 million adults suffer from the common condition sinusitis and 45 million children and adults suffer from recurring seasonal and perennial allergies. Each season can bring a variety of ear, nose, and throat maladies.

To stay on top of these everyday health issues, otolaryngologists, the only medical doctors trained to treat all conditions of the ear, nose, and throat, recommend following these simple tips:

- **Track your symptoms:** Each winter, many people assume they are only suffering from a one-time bout with a cold or flu when they develop symptoms like a stuffy nose or watery eyes. But in reality, they may have a chronic condition like sinusitis or allergies that can be easily controlled with proper treatment. If you suffer from the same symptoms time after time, or they occur at the same time every year, see an otolaryngologist for a diagnosis.
- **Enjoy leisure time, but be aware:** During the summer and fall, kids are at their most active. After a day at the pool, check with your kids to make sure they aren't suffering from symptoms of swimmer's ear. It's easy for water to get trapped in the ear canal after a quick swim or even after a bath. Likewise, after children have been outside playing, check to see if they have had any injuries to the head and neck. Even a minor bump could result in major damage to sensitive areas like the ears and nose.
- **Turn the volume down:** Most people are exposed to noise 365 days a year, but they can help their hearing health by turning down the volume when they listen to music, watch television, or use their cell phones. Over 20 million Americans already have suffered permanent damage to their hearing from excessive noise exposure. To gauge what noises can damage your hearing, go to the AAO-HNS website to try an interactive loudness scale - <http://www.entnet.org/healthinfo/hearing/Loudness-Scale.cfm>.

Taking care of your ear, nose, and throat health can make a big impact on your 2008 health forecast. For more information and tips on monitoring these everyday health concerns, and for free patient education materials on otolaryngologic diseases, visit www.entdoctors.org.

Reporters who wish to speak with an ENT expert on ear, nose, and throat health topics, and on New Year's health resolutions, contact Jessica Mikulski at 703-519-1549, or at newsroom@entnet.org.

About the AAO-HNS

The American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (www.entnet.org), one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, represents more than 12,000 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The Academy serves its members by facilitating the advancement of the science and art of medicine related to otolaryngology and by representing the specialty in governmental and socioeconomic issues. The organization's mission: “Working for the Best Ear, Nose, and Throat Care.”

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