

Humboldt County Referral Form – Specialty Guidelines

ST JOSEPH HEALTH EAR, NOSE & THROAT

- **Please ask your patient to contact us within 5-10 business days after sending the referral, to schedule the appointment.**
- **All patients must have a referring physician and when appropriate, documentation of treatments tried and failed.**
- **Appointments are currently being scheduled 2-4 months in advance. However, if this is an urgent referral, and the patient needs to be seen in less than one week, please have the referring provider call our physician directly.**

Reason for Referral (Clinical Question)	“Required” Clinical Testing & Documentation	“Preferred” Additional Clinical Testing & Documentation
EAR		
Cerumen Impaction	Patients should avoid using Q-tips in the ear canal. You may refer patients who failed OTC kits and office lavage, or have had prior surgery or a tympanic membrane perforation.	
Exotoses/Surfer’s Ear	Refer if patients are having hearing loss, water trapping, or recurring infections.	
Hearing Loss	Try to clean the ear canals of cerumen. Request an audiogram and tympanogram with the referral if not done.	Audiogram & tympanogram
Otitis Externa	If patients fail topical therapy, please perform a culture, at least 48 hours off of topical therapy screening for bacteria, yeast and fungus and then use culture directed therapy. Refer for significant persistent otalgia, hearing loss, inability of topical therapy to penetrate the ear canal and/or clean the canal adequately, and complications of facial cellulitis and facial paralysis.	
Otitis Media, Recurrent	Children with 4+ ear infections/year or w/ persistent fluid & hearing loss lasting 6 months in one ear & 3 months in both ears, and/or speech & language delay may be referred. Children less than 6 years of age, consider audiometrics w/ audiology. Older children can have hearing testing in our office at the time of their appt..	Audiogram & tympanogram
Sudden Sensorineural Hearing Loss	Confirm with an urgent audiogram. This can be conducted in our clinic or with an Audiologist. These patients may benefit from 60mg of prednisone P.O. for 2 weeks. *** (Speak to our on call physician to expedite the referral.)	Audiogram & tympanogram

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Tinnitus	This is often due to an underlying high frequency hearing loss. Request an audiogram and tympanogram with the referral if not done	Audiogram & tympanogram
Vertigo	Check for Benign positional vertigo with the Dix-Halpike Maneuver. Request an audiogram and tympanogram with the referral if one not done.	Audiogram & tympanogram
NOSE		
Allergic Rhinitis	Patients need to be tried on allergy medicines in the form of nasal steroids, antihistamines, and Singulair separately or in combination for at least six weeks.	
Chronic Sinusitis	For adults failing medical management of sinusitis lasting greater than 12 weeks or recurring at least 4 times per year, if able to obtain insurance authorization and not pregnant, order a sinus CT without contrast and if abnormal place a referral	Sinus CT without contrast
Nasal Deformity	Please refer patients who would like to change the appearance of their nose. (Dr Barkdull)	
Nasal Fracture	Nasal X-rays are not necessary. Place an urgent referral now for the patient to be seen 7-10 days after the injury. (3-5 days for Dr Lennard)	
Nasal Mass	For patients with a suspected significant sized intranasal mass, tumor or polyps, if able to obtain insurance approval and not pregnant order a sinus CT without contrast and if abnormal, place a referral	Sinus CT without contrast
Nasal Obstruction	Patients who have nasal obstruction despite medical treatment, either due to a deviated septum, severe allergies or hypertrophic turbinates.	
THROAT		
Dysphagia	Consider PPIs for reflux as well as ordering a modified barium swallow before the appointment to expedite the evaluation.	
Hoarseness	Please refer for hoarseness lasting greater than 1 month in duration	
Tonsil and Adenoid Hypertrophy	Refer patients who are symptomatic, including snoring & sleep apnea, mouth breathing or recurring ear infections	Sleep study if age 7 or older

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Tonsillitis, Recurrent	Please refer to consider surgery with 7 or more infections in 1 year, or more than 5 per year in the past 2 years or 3 each year for 3 years, or with a peritonsillar abscess.	
Vocal Cord Paralysis	Please refer patients for additional diagnostic workup and surgical treatment.	
OTHER		
Dermatochalasis	Please refer patients who are bothered by excessive eyelid skin. (Dr Barkdull)	
Hyperparathyroidism	Order a serum Calcium and parathyroid hormone and refer if both are elevated. Consider a sestamibi Tc99 scan and parathyroid ultrasound to expedite their care	
Neck Masses	If not short term inflammatory problem that could respond to antibiotics, consider an ultrasound for children and a neck CT with contrast for adults who are not pregnant and be able to obtain insurance authorization, then refer if abnormal.	
Oral Cancer	Lesions or ulcerations present for more than 2 weeks	
Salivary Gland Disease	Refer patients with salivary stones that fail to pass with conservative measures.	
Salivary Gland Masses	If not presenting as a short term inflammatory condition that could respond to antibiotics, consider CT or MRI with contrast if not pregnant and can obtain insurance authorization, then submit a referral.	
Skin Cancer	Consider a punch biopsy for pigmented lesions and a shave biopsy for non-pigmented lesions if visually the type of tumor is not obvious.	
Snoring & Apnea	Please order a sleep study if high index of suspicion for significant apnea. Refer for surgical management for snoring and mild apnea if CPAP not tolerated. If significantly hypertrophic tonsils are present, then surgery may also help more sever apnea	
Thyroid Nodules	Order thyroid ultrasound. Refer nodules greater than 4cm, 1cm or greater with abnormal FNA results, and patients with FNA positive for thyroid cancer.	