Be careful whom you kiss!

Is kissing harmful to your health? With just one kiss couples can share more than 500 different types of disease-causing germs and viruses, warns the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD).

“Not knowing who you are kissing could be as dangerous to your health as having multiple sexual partners,” says AGD spokesperson Connie White, DDS, FAGD.

Before you pucker up again, White dishes on the most common diseases and viruses that you and your sweetheart can transmit to each other while smooching.

Cold sores
Cold sores are caused by the herpes virus. They appear as tiny, clear, fluid-filled blisters that form around the mouth and lips. The sores are highly contagious, especially if they are leaking fluid. However, even sores that have scabbed over can be contagious.

“A wound near the lips is most often herpes,” says White. “A good rule of thumb is that if a person has any visible sores near his or her lips, avoid intimate contact!”

Colds
If you feel a cold or flu virus coming on, White suggests avoiding a make-out session. Common cold and flu viruses can be transmitted very easily through contact with the saliva or nasal secretions of a sick person (Yuck!).

Mononucleosis
Mononucleosis, also known as the "kissing disease," is easily communicated to others through kissing, as well as sharing food, a cup, or kissing utensils.

Know whom you are kissing, says the AGD. (Photo/Dreamstime.com)

Dentists at risk for hearing loss

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

Everyone knows there are certain jobs that carry a risk for loss of hearing. Rock musicians come immediately to mind. So do construction workers who use jackhammers. And don’t forget the people who use those yellow flashlights to direct planes at airports. According to a recent study, dentists can also consider themselves among those at risk for ear trouble.

Most individuals would not consider a dental office to be a place where noise is a problem, but the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) warns that any workers exposed to noise levels in excess of 85 decibels are at risk.

The exposure to continuous high frequencies from a dental drill can degrade one’s hearing. According to the experts, dental professionals should use protective hearing equipment.