Idioms with parts of the body

- **Arm, back, blood and bone**
  - To give one’s right arm to … (Dar lo que fuera por…)
    I’d give my right arm to have that wonderful job.
  - To keep someone at arm’s length (Mantenerse alejado de alguien)
    He’s a weird man. You’d better keep him at arm’s length.
  - With open arms (Con los brazos abiertos)
    They welcomed her with open arms.
  - Behind someone’s back (Sin conocimiento de alguien)
    He was furious when he discovered they had insulted him behind his back.
  - To see the back of something (Ver algo terminado).
    I’m looking forward to finishing all this work. I’ll be glad to see the back of it.
  - To get someone’s blood up (Ponerse de los nervios, odiar algo)
    It gets my blood up to see how bad behaved those children are.
  - To be in someone’s blood (Llevar algo en la sangre)
    She’s really good at dancing. It must be in her blood.
  - To make no bones about something (Decir algo que puede ser desagradable directamente y sin rodeos)
    He didn’t make any bones about it and told his wife he had met another woman.
  - To have a bone to pick with someone. (Tener una cuenta pendiente con alguien)
    He’s got a bone to pick with her since she refused to help him with the report.

- **Brain, chest, ear and elbow**
  - To be wet behind the ears  (No tener experiencia)
    He’s just finished his degree and is still wet behind the ears.
  - To go in one ear and come out the other (Entrar por un oído y salir por el otro)
    I’ve told him a million times but it goes in one ear and comes out the other.
  - To keep one’s ear to the ground (Mantenerse atento)
    I’ve heard they’re selling that house very cheap, so keep your ears to the ground.
  - To be up to one’s ears (also eyes or neck) (Estar hasta arriba de …)
    I’m up to my ears in all this work.
  - To play something by ear (improvisar)
    I haven’t planned anything for the weekend. Let’s play it by ear.
  - To get something off someone’s chest (quitarse algo de encima, confesar)
    I’ve been worried since we argued, so I’ll tell her the truth and get it off my chest.
  - To rack one’s brains (devanarse el cerebro)
    I’ve been racking my brains for hours but at last I’ve come up with a solution.
• Eyes and fingers
  - To be up to the eyes in something (estar hasta el cuello de…)
    I´m up to the eyes in work today.
  - To catch someone´s eye (atraer la atención de alguien)
    She fancies him and keeps on trying to catch his eye.
  - To turn a blind eye to something (ignorar algo)
    He prefers turning a blind eye to his debts and not worrying about them.
  - To keep one´s fingers crossed (cruzar los dedos)
    I´m taking my driving test for the fourth time. So, fingers crossed!
  - To have a finger in every pie (estar involucrado en muchas actividades)
    She has a finger in every pie: she does yoga, heads several associations…
  - To be all fingers and thumbs (tener poca habilidad con las manos)
    I broke three glasses and two plates today. I´m all fingers and thumbs!

• Neck, nose and shoulder
  - To be neck and neck (estar a la misma altura)
    The cyclists were neck and neck up to the last minute.
  - To be up to the neck in something (estar gasta el cuello)
    They´re up to the neck in housework.
  - To pay through the nose for something (pagar demasiado por algo)
    They paid 500 euros for an old TV set. Definitely, they paid through the nose!
  - To give someone the cold shoulder (ignorar a alguien, dejar de hablarle)
    After they argued, she´s been giving him the cold shoulder.
  - To rub shoulders with someone (codearse con alguien)
    Now that she is managing director she rubs shoulders with important people.
  - To breathe down someone´s neck (observar/leer por encima del hombro de alguien)
    I wish she´d stop breathing down my neck when I´m reading.

• Tongue and tooth
  - To have a sweet tooth (ser goloso)
    Children usually have a sweet tooth. They love sweets.
  - To hold one´s tongue (callarse algo)
    I thought her outfit was awful but I hold my tongue.
  - To have something on the tip of one´s tongue (tener algo en la punta de la lengua)
    I had the word on the tip of my tongue but couldn´t remember it.
  - To bite one´s tongue off (morderse la lengua)
    I knew he was lying and I wanted to tell the others, but I bit my tongue off.