

Health Issues

Registering with a GP / Doctor

If you have just moved into the area, one of the first things you should do is register with a GP as soon as possible. This may be obvious advice but many students contact the Advice Unit for information about GPs only once they have become ill. If you are registered before you become ill, you will save a lot of worry and time if you need to see a GP quickly.

There is no University or Union service which can provide an alternative to registering with a local GP.

Your family GP can still see you as a temporary resident if you become ill at home during the holidays. If you are receiving regular treatment/medication we suggest that you submit these details to your GP as soon as possible.

To register with a GP, it is useful but not essential to have your NHS medical card or number. If you don't have one the receptionist should give you a GMSI form to complete. You will need to provide the surgery with the full name and address of your current GP and evidence of your address in the Bolton area.

To find a Doctors surgery near to where you are living in Bolton, Please have a look at www.nhs.uk/england/doctors

Dentists

If you want to find a dentist near you, go to www.nhs.uk/ and search for your nearest dentist. If you need treatment urgently and have been unable to find a dentist who can see you, please contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647. They can direct you to the most appropriate local service.

International Students please note: If you are on a course which lasts more than six months, you are also entitled to free health care under the National Health Service (NHS) so the information given here equally applies to you. However, if you need emergency dental treatment at any of the above centres, you will be charged a fee

Counselling Services

The University's counselling service is available to all students. It is strictly confidential and appointments can be made by contacting the Student Services on Extension 3734/3737/3738.

Help With Health Costs

If you are under 19 and in full time education then you are entitled to free health care. Once you reach 19 you will have to apply for help with health costs by completing form HC1 available from the Students' Union reception desk. Your student income will be taken into account when assessing your claim. You can apply at any time and will need to submit a copy of your financial assessment.

Meningitis

You may be aware that universities across the country have experienced cases of meningitis. Although the risk is small we feel it necessary to raise your awareness about meningitis. Students are strongly encouraged to get the Meningitis C vaccine from their GP before arriving at University.

What is Meningitis?

Meningitis is an infection of the lining of the brain and spinal cord. It can be potentially fatal, particularly if the individual develops blood poisoning or septicemia. It can be caused by bacteria, viruses or even fungi.

How do I recognise Meningitis?

Meningitis is not easy to identify at first because the symptoms are similar to those of flu or a hangover. However, it can develop rapidly, sometimes within hours, to a very serious illness. Because someone with meningitis may not be aware of how serious their condition is, it is important to look out for friends who may have flu-like symptoms and check for any of the following signs or for a rapid deterioration. If someone does not come out of their room, check to see if they are OK.

Anyone with the following symptoms should consider getting medical advice:

- Severe headaches
- Fever
- Vomiting
- Stiff neck
- Back or joint pains
- Get immediate medical help if the following develop:
- Inability to tolerate lights
- Disorientation
- Drowsiness or lethargy
- A rash of red or purple spots that does not fade on pressure with a glass.

What should you do?

If you think you have Meningitis, you should contact your GP. If your symptoms occur outside of normal surgery hours, you should ring the NHS Direct on 08454647.

Mumps

Mumps is a viral infection. It mainly affects the salivary glands, but sometimes other parts of the body are affected. Mumps normally affects children, but can occur at any age.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of cases of mumps at colleges and universities. This is because mumps may be spread more easily where lots of young people are living together. If you are unsure whether you have been immunized, we would ask that you check with your own GP. If you have not been vaccinated or if you have not received the two doses of the MMR vaccine, we recommend that you request a vaccination from your doctor before arriving at University.

What Are The Symptoms of Mumps

In mumps, one or both of the parotid (salivary) glands swell up and become painful. This creates the characteristic 'hamster' appearance of a swollen face, particularly just below and in front of the ear. The swelling lasts for between 4 and 8 days. Other symptoms may include:

- Pain when chewing and swallowing
- Sore throat
- Fever
- Feeling tired
- Loss of appetite
- Mild abdominal (tummy) pain
- Dry mouth, and
- Headache.
- What should you do?

If you think you have mumps, you should contact your GP, if your symptoms occur outside of normal surgery hours, you should ring the NUS Direct on 0845 4647.

Should people with mumps keep away from others?

Mumps is very infectious. It is passed on by coughing and sneezing the virus into the air. You should avoid contact with as many people as possible for at least five days from the onset of swollen glands.

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