



# Your physical health

**Don't neglect your physical health while you're studying. If you feel unwell, get checked out.**

It's important to look after both your mental and your physical health. Your body can take quite a knocking as a student, especially if you're not getting enough sleep, eating poorly and partying a lot.

**Make sure you register with a local doctor and dentist if you've moved to a new town or city to attend college. Your college or university may have its own medical practice. If not, your student union should be able to give you information about local practices.**

You may have heard people joke about ‘freshers’ flu’. It’s not unusual for students, especially first years, to feel out of sorts in the first few months of college. There’s a lot of new stuff to get used to and your initial routine may not be the healthiest. Listen to your body, take time to rest and get checked out if you’re worried about any aches, pains, lumps or bumps.

## **REGISTERING WITH LOCAL HEALTHCARE**

Make sure you register with local healthcare, especially a local doctor.

Find out what the arrangements are for emergency care in your area. Where is your nearest out of hours surgery or emergency care hospital? How do you access care here?

Don’t leave registering with healthcare services until you’re in urgent need of assistance. Do it as soon as you move to a new area.

## **PRESCRIPTIONS**

If you’re moving to a new town or city to study, make sure you have enough of any prescriptions to last until you’re either back home again or registered with a new doctor.

## **VACCINATIONS**

Find out what vaccinations you've had and when you had these. You may need to provide this information to your college, especially if you're going to be living in halls of residence provided by your university or college.

## FIRST AID AND CONTRACEPTION

Have some basic first aid items in your room or flat. You can get a basic first aid kit online or from most large chemists. Make sure it has painkillers, plasters, dressing, antiseptic spray and scissors.

Check if your college or university provides any free first aid training for students. This knowledge can be lifesaving in an emergency.

Make sure you have enough supplies of your preferred method of contraception. It's better to be prepared. You may be able to get free condoms, pills or other contraception from sexual health clinics or your doctor.

## BE AWARE OF RISKS

Students are at higher risk of harm from certain illnesses or situations. Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of

- meningitis
- sexually transmitted infections
- drink spiking

## SEXUAL HEALTH

Find out where your local sexual health or genitourinary medicine clinic is and when it opens. Some colleges and universities have clinics operating on campus.

Don't be embarrassed about going to a sexual health clinic. They're staffed by medical professionals who are there to help you, not to judge you or your lifestyle.

A sexual health checkup is a good idea if you are or have been sexually active. Not all STIs have obvious symptoms so getting a clean bill of health will put your mind at ease.

## GET TO KNOW YOUR BODY

Get familiar with your body. If you notice that something looks, feels or smells funny get it checked out. There's no point hoping things will go away on their own. This will only cause you more anxiety in the long run.

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