IMPORTANT HEALTH INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENTS

Students can be more vulnerable to the infections, listed here, because they are living in close social contact in halls of residence or communal housing, sharing working spaces in lecture theatres and study areas, and in meeting new people they can be exposed to bacteria and viruses they have not come across before.

The early symptoms of some of these infections can disguise themselves as other things so it is vital that you take preventative measures before you reach university and are aware of the symptoms of ill health.

HEALTH ADVICE FOR ALL NEW STUDENTS

Students are advised to store NHS advice line 111 in their mobile for quick access to health information and advice as they prepare to live away from home for the first time.

Contact Bay Patient Care if you have an urgent medical problem when your GP surgery is closed – 0300 123 1144 (Lancaster and Morecambe)
Or Cumbria Health on Call – 03000 247 247 (Ambleside and Carlisle)

Register with a doctor either before you arrive or soon after – do not wait to become unwell.
All students should register with a GP local to where they will be living during term time, so please make this a priority when you arrive.
A list of all local GP’s is available from the Occupational Health Department.

Get the vaccinations you need before you arrive or as soon as possible

Bring with you some standard flu remedies, such as paracetamol and a thermometer. High temperature is a key indicator for flu and if you seek advice from health services, you may be asked what your temperature is.

Get to know your flatmates and agree to support each other if you are unwell, e.g. by collecting medications/general provisions for each other.

Look after yourself! Take care of yourself by eating well, getting enough sleep and keeping alcohol consumption within reasonable limits.

www.nhs.uk/livewell/studenthealth

NHS symptom checker: www.nhs.uk/SymptomCheckers/Pages/Symptoms.aspx
Meningitis/Septicaemia (Meningococcal Infection)

**Why is it important to know about Meningitis and Septicaemia?**
These are rare, but extremely serious illnesses. Early recognition of the symptoms could be life-saving as the illness can develop very quickly and sometimes the patient can be seriously ill within a few hours.

**What can I do to prevent it?**
If you have not been vaccinated contact you doctor to get advice about immunisation. You should be aware of the symptoms and be prepared to take immediate action.

**What are the symptoms?**
The symptoms of Meningitis and Meningococcal Septicaemia are very similar to those of flu. Possible symptoms are listed below but they may not all appear at the same time:

- Vomiting
- High temperature/fever
- Cold hands/feet
- Violent or severe headache
- Stiff neck
- A dislike of bright lights
- Drowsiness/difficult to wake
- Severe muscle pain
- Convulsions/seizures
- Confusion
- A rash - tiny spots or bruising under the skin, which does not fade when pressed under a glass.

**Where can I find more information?**
The Meningitis Trust: [www.meningitis-trust.org](http://www.meningitis-trust.org) (download their iPhone app for symptoms)

MMR (Mumps, Measles and Rubella)

**Why is it important to know about MMR?**
There have recently been outbreaks of Mumps and Measles among young people. All these illnesses can have serious complications.

**What can I do to prevent them?**
The Department of Health recommends that all young adults who have not had the MMR vaccine as infants should be immunised. All students should check their vaccination history through their family doctor and seek advice on vaccination.

**Mumps**
Generally Mumps is a mild illness but can be unpleasant, and serious complications occur in a small number of cases.

**What are the symptoms?**
Symptoms begin with a headache and fever for a day or two before the disease is characterised by swelling of the neck glands.
Measles

Measles can be a serious illness causing serious complications and sometimes death.

**What are the symptoms?**
These include fever, coughing and distinctive red-brown spots on the skin. Click here for more information on measles.

Rubella (German measles)

In most cases, rubella is a mild condition, but it can have serious consequences in pregnant women as it can harm the unborn baby.

**What are the symptoms?**
Rubella causes a high temperature/fever and a distinctive red-pink rash.

**Where can I find more information?**
Department of Health webpage.

Flu (Influenza)

Outbreaks of flu occur regularly, tend to peak during the autumn and winter and can spread quickly in a campus community.

**What can I do to prevent it?**
Those who are considered at risk should get an annual flu vaccination. If you have been in contact with someone who is confirmed or presumed to have flu and you are experiencing the symptoms it is very important that you stay at home to limit contact with others and seek medical advice by contacting NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or contacting your GP by phone.

**What are the symptoms?**
The symptoms can include:
- the rapid onset of fever (38 °C/100.4°F)
- cough or shortness of breath
- headache
- sore throat
- tiredness
- aching muscles
- chills
- sneezing
- runny nose
- loss of appetite
What should I do if I think I or a friend is unwell?

1. Contact your doctor or the NHS advice line on 111.
2. Explain why you are concerned and describe the symptoms carefully and ask for advice.

What else can I do?

1. Be familiar with the symptoms.
2. Look after your fellow students and tell somebody if you feel unwell.