

**Stay
well.
Stay
healthy.**

NHS services for students

Top tips for students

It's important to look after your health when moving away from home for the first time. This includes registering with a new GP and finding out where to go when you are ill.

Here are our five health tips for new students:

1 Register with a local GP

If, like most students, you spend more weeks of the year at your university address than your family's address, you need to register with a GP near to you as soon as possible.

That way you can receive emergency care if you need it, and access health services quickly and easily while you're at university.

This is especially important if you have an ongoing health condition, particularly one that needs medication, such as asthma, diabetes or epilepsy.

If you need regular prescription items, consider registering for the electronic repeat dispensing service (eRD) as you will be able to pick up from any pharmacy you nominate which can be easily changed if you are at home or at university when you need a further supply.

You can find your nearest GP practice by using Health Help Now on the web:

▶ kent.healthhelpnow.nhs.uk

or by downloading the Health Help Now app.



Getting ill during the holidays

If you become unwell or need other medical treatment when you're at home or not staying near your university GP, you can **contact your nearest practice** to ask for treatment.

You can receive emergency treatment for 14 days. After that you will have to register as a temporary resident or permanent patient.

Find out **how to register as a temporary resident with a GP**.

You can also visit a **minor injury unit** anywhere in the country. These can provide treatment for minor injuries or illnesses such as cuts, bruises and rashes.

However, they are not designed for treating long-term conditions or immediately life-threatening problems. You don't need to be registered and you don't need an appointment.

Other health services available

You don't need to see a GP for all medical conditions. Many common issues, such as colds, sore throats, hay fever or conjunctivitis, can be dealt with by a pharmacist.

You also don't need a prescription for medication which is available to buy in the shop. Many shops and pharmacies sell a wide range of medication at low cost. You also don't need to buy branded items as non-branded is just as effective and usually cheaper.

Help with prescription costs

You may be eligible for free prescriptions. See if you are eligible for the NHS Low Income Scheme or think about a pre-payment card: www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcosts/

Minor injury

Visit a minor injury unit if you have a suspected broken bone or fracture, a sprain or a strain, minor cut, burn or scald. You don't need an appointment and they are open 8am to 8pm, seven days a week in Canterbury, Herne Bay, Whitstable, Faversham, Deal, Dover and Folkestone.

Not sure where to go?

You can check Health Help Now online www.healthhelpnow.nhs.uk or download the app from the app store. You can also call NHS 111, 24 hours a day.



2 Register with a dentist

Dental problems can't be dealt with by doctors, so make sure you register with a local dentist.

Not all treatment is free, even under the NHS. You may be able to apply for help with health costs, including prescriptions and dental care.

➤ Find an NHS dentist

➤ Get help with dental costs

3 Check your vaccinations



Men ACWY vaccination

Students are now routinely offered a vaccination to prevent meningitis W disease.

The **Men ACWY vaccine** protects against four different causes of meningitis and septicaemia: meningococcal (Men) A, C, W and Y diseases. It replaces the separate **Men C vaccine**.

All 17 and 18-year-olds in school year 13 and first-time university students up to the age of 25 are eligible as part of the **NHS vaccination programme**.

GP practices will automatically send letters inviting 17 and 18-year-olds in school year 13 to have the Men ACWY vaccine.

But if you're a student going away to university or college for the first time, contact the GP you're registered with to ask for the Men ACWY vaccine, ideally before the start of the academic year.

This is because you'll be at particularly high risk in the first weeks of term, when you're likely to come into contact with many new people of a similar age.

Mumps vaccination

Universities and colleges also advise students to be immunised against **mumps** before starting their studies.

The **MMR vaccine** (for mumps, measles and rubella) is part of the routine NHS childhood immunisation schedule. This means most young people who've grown up in England will have had two doses of it in childhood and will have full immunisation.

If you're not sure you've had two doses of the MMR vaccination, ask your GP for a catch-up vaccination.

Flu jab

Get an annual **flu vaccination** if you have asthma and take inhaled steroids. You should also get a flu vaccination if you have a serious long-term condition such as **kidney disease**.

If you fall ill with flu-like symptoms check with Health Help Now about where to go. In many cases, you can treat symptoms with medication which can be bought from a supermarket or pharmacy, without the need to see a GP or have a prescription.

4 Get contraception

Even if you don't plan to be sexually active while you're a student, it's good to be prepared.

Contraception and condoms are free to both men and women from any GP – it doesn't have to be your own – or family planning clinic.

All pharmacists offer emergency contraception, so you don't need to book a GP appointment for this.

➤ Find your local sexual health service

➤ Find your nearest pharmacy

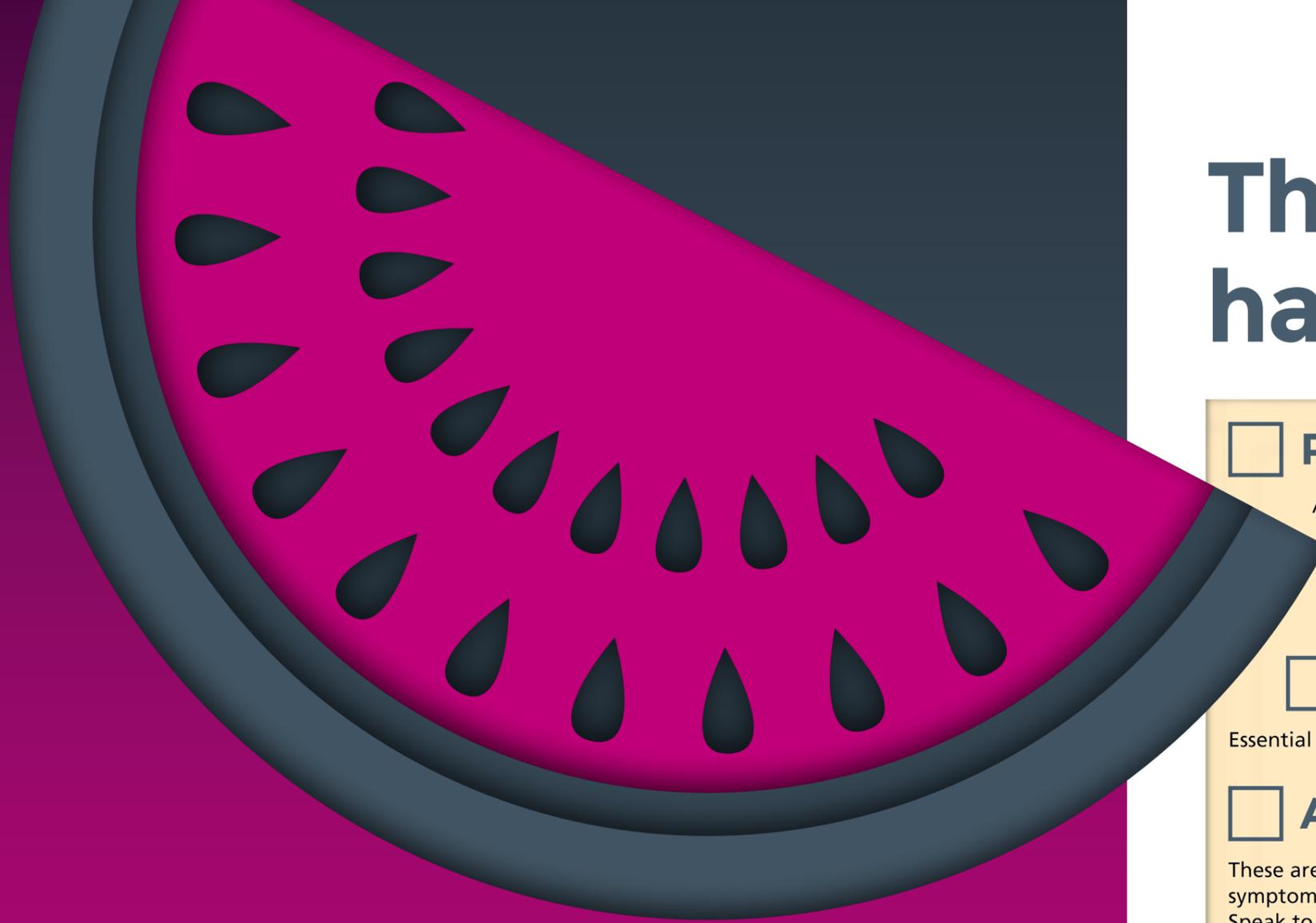


Safe sex

Many STIs have no symptoms at all, like HIV. The only way to know for sure is to get tested. If you're worried you've got an STI, go for a check-up at a sexual health clinic as soon as you can.

STI symptoms

- unusual discharge from the vagina, penis or anus
- pain when peeing
- lumps or skin growths around the genitals or anus
- a rash
- unusual vaginal bleeding
- itchy genitals or anus
- blisters and sores around the genitals or anus



5 Rest and eat healthy food

Prevention is better than cure, as the saying goes, so you'll greatly increase your chances of avoiding your GP's waiting room by taking care of yourself in the first place.

Student life may not be renowned for early nights and **healthy eating**, but getting enough sleep and eating well will mean you have a better chance of staying healthy.

You'll feel more energetic and be better equipped to cope with studying and exams.

Remember to:

- eat **five portions of fruit and vegetables** a day
- buy wholemeal bread and pasta instead of white
- keep fast food to a minimum

Eating well doesn't have to cost a lot and is often cheaper than takeaways. Taking the time to cook simple meals instead of eating out or buying ready meals is also healthier.

Buy a student cookbook for affordable **healthy recipe** ideas. You might also want to try downloading the free **One You Easy Meals app**.

Read more about **healthy eating on a budget**.

Things you should have at home:

Painkillers

Ask your pharmacist for advice. Paracetamol and ibuprofen can be bought from a supermarket or pharmacist. There is no need to ask your GP for a prescription.

Contraception

Essential to avoid surprises.

Antihistamines

These are medicines often used to relieve symptoms of allergies, such as hay fever. Speak to your pharmacist about what is suitable. You do not need a prescription.

Thermometer for fevers

It is good to be able to check your temperature if you feel unwell. A high temperature (fever) above 37.5 degrees can suggest there might be an underlying issue. Keeping yourself cool and taking paracetamol or ibuprofen is usually all that's needed to help reduce a fever.

Plasters

Most cuts and grazes are minor and can be easily treated at home. When the wound has stopped bleeding, wash it under tap water. Avoid using antiseptic as it may damage the skin and slow healing. Pat it dry and apply a plaster. Minor wounds should start to heal within a few days.

Oral rehydration sachets

For diarrhoea. These replace the salt and water lost from your body.

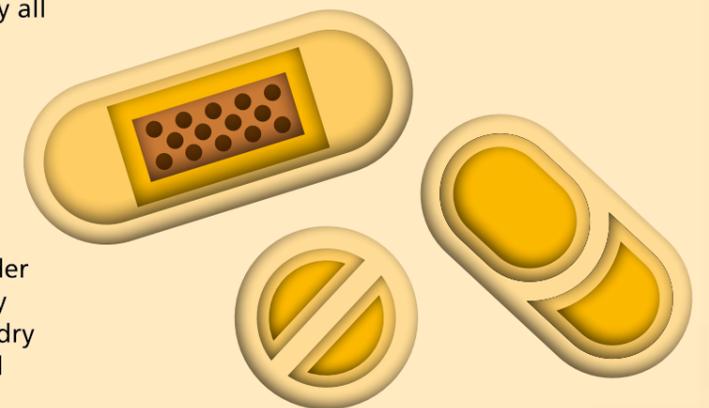
Health Help Now

Download it to your phone – avoid panic when you get ill and don't know where to go.

What to do when you are ill

Check out Health Help Now for advice. The app and website will tell you if you need a pharmacist, GP or minor injury unit. You can also call NHS 111.

If someone is seriously ill or injured and their life is at risk call 999. Medical emergencies can include: loss of consciousness, persistent and severe chest pain, fits that are not stopping, serious head injuries, severe burns, breathing difficulties, severe bleeding, heart attack or stroke.



Other places to go for help and information:

Live Well Kent – Provides help to improve your mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Telephone: **0800 567 7699** or
online: **www.livewellkent.org.uk**

Frank – Friendly, confidential drugs advice.

Telephone: **0300 123 6600** or
online: **www.talktofrank.com**

The Canterbury Christ Church Disability Service support students who are facing, or potentially facing, disabling barriers to higher education. They support students with a range of long-term conditions or disabilities, including dyslexia. The Student Disability Service can provide advice on specialist funding and support and help students to access useful resources.

Telephone: **01227 922576** or
email: **disability@canterbury.ac.uk**

For other information on the support available at and outside the University go to www.canterbury.ac.uk/support

Good Mental Health

It's normal to feel down, anxious or stressed from time to time, but if these feelings affect your daily activities, including your studies, or don't go away after a couple of weeks, get help.

Canterbury Christ Church University Mental Wellbeing Team

Our Mental Health Practitioners can help with general mental health-related queries and emotional distress. They have a range of services they can offer including self-help resources and techniques to help with anxiety, stress and depression. They can also refer individuals for counselling both within the University and externally.

Telephone: **01227 923056** or
email: **mentalwellbeing@canterbury.ac.uk**

