



Parent & Family Guide



Student Health is dedicated to caring for the health care needs of students during their time at ECU so they can optimize their academic experience. Parents and families play a vital role in student success, particularly in the first semester away from home. This guide will help navigate specific information and questions that family members often have, so that we can work together to optimize health and wellness for all of our campus community.

Care of Students Under Age 18

The [Parental Consent for Treatment of Student Under 18-Years](#) is required to be on file for any student under 18 years of age to receive treatment in our clinic. Be sure to include your student's name and ECU Banner number on the form.

What to Send with Your Student

Students should keep a list of their current medications as well as any known allergies. A good idea is to have them enter the information into a note on their phone so they are never without it.

Many do not know their insurance carrier or any basic information about how to use their policy. Make sure they have a basic understanding of their coverage and that they possess a copy of their current insurance card or a picture of the front and back of the card.

Student Health offers a variety of over the counter items for purchase, and we strongly recommend that students keep some basic health care supplies on hand. A good “first aid kit” would include:

- Digital thermometer
- Band-Aids
- Topical antibiotic ointment
- Pain reliever (Tylenol or ibuprofen)
- Over the counter medications for minor illness symptoms such as upset stomach, cough, sore throat, and runny nose
- Gatorade/bottled water
- Soup or other easy to make meal
- Cleaning wipes, for sanitizing commonly used surfaces like door knobs, keyboards and telephones

Keeping Healthy on Campus

Communicable diseases such as influenza and COVID can spread quickly on college campuses and vaccination is the best way students can protect themselves. Encourage your student to get an annual flu shot and keep COVID boosters updated as directed. Student Health offers several on campus flu clinics in the fall months, both at our health centers and out on campus, and also by appointment into the spring while supplies last.

The meningitis vaccines, while not required for enrollment, are strongly advised particularly for freshmen and students living in residence halls. Meningitis can be life altering or even fatal; although rare, cases can spread quickly, and the results can be devastating. Student Health offers vaccines for both serotypes ACYW and B by appointment or you may prefer to have your student vaccinated at your home healthcare provider office prior to coming to campus.

For more information on meningitis, visit the [Centers for Disease Control](#).

Encourage students to practice good hygiene practices to help control germs and keep themselves healthy. College environments can provide for easy transmission of many viral, bacterial, and other communicable diseases such as colds, staph infections (MRSA), noroviruses (e.g. “stomach flu”), scabies infestations, and many others. The best prevention for these types of

problems is through good hand washing, avoidance of shared utensils/cups/towels/linens, and cleaning of commonly touched surfaces.

Antibiotic Prescribing

Antibiotics can only treat illnesses caused by bacteria. Colds, the flu, COVID, most sore throats, bronchitis, and many sinus and ear infections are caused by viruses, not bacteria. If your student has a viral infection, antibiotics will not help them feel better or get well sooner...they may even cause harm.

Taking antibiotics when they are not needed is fueling an increase in drug-resistant bacteria, which cause infections that are more difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to cure. Almost all types of bacteria have become less responsive to antibiotic treatment. Heard of MRSA? These “superbugs” can quickly spread to family members, schoolmates and coworkers, and threaten our communities with illnesses that were once easily treatable. Combatting antibiotic resistance is a priority for CDC with estimates of more than 2 million resistant infections occurring annually in the United States alone. Antibiotics can also lead to side effects, such as diarrhea or an upset stomach. Some side effects can be quite serious, or even life-threatening.

Antibiotics only treat bacterial infections. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics. When an antibiotic is not prescribed, ask your healthcare professional for tips on how to relieve symptoms and feel better.

Illness	Usual Cause		Antibiotic Needed
	Viruses	Bacteria	
Cold/Runny Nose	✓		NO
Bronchitis/Chest Cold (in otherwise healthy children and adults)	✓		NO
Whooping Cough		✓	Yes
Flu	✓		NO
Strep Throat		✓	Yes
Sore Throat (except strep)	✓		NO
Fluid in the Middle Ear (otitis media with effusion)	✓		NO
Urinary Tract Infection		✓	Yes

When antibiotics are used for viral infections, your student is not getting the best care. A course of antibiotics will not fight the virus, help your student feel better, or lead to a quicker recovery. It may even be harmful. If your student is diagnosed with a viral illness, SHS providers will give advice on what your student can do to feel more comfortable while the immune system does its work. Suggestions might include drinking plenty of fluids, rest, taking over the counter medications, using a cool mist humidifier, or gargling with salt water.

Please help SHS continue its commitment to safe and smart antibiotic use by educating your student about antibiotics. If an antibiotic is prescribed for your student, they should take it as directed and complete the entire course of medication, regardless of when they start feeling better. Partial doses of antibiotics should not be saved “for next time”—this increases resistance and allows the bacteria to possibly come back stronger. Students should also be discouraged from taking medication prescribed for others—even if they have similar symptoms as their roommate or think they have the same illness as a friend, it is NEVER okay to share prescriptions or take a dose of antibiotics from another person.

As always, if your student has ANY questions about their diagnosis, treatment plan, or how to help their symptoms, encourage them to call us at 252-328-6841 or email us at gotquestions@ecu.edu. For more information about the right way to use antibiotics, visit [the CDC](#).

Article adapted from CDC's educational materials for U.S. Antibiotic Awareness week.

Class Excuses

Short-term illnesses and other medical conditions are not eligible for a university excused absence. Based on syllabus language and departmental policy, instructors should use their discretion to honor written medical excuses from a licensed health practitioner that states that student was too ill or injured to attend class and provides the specific date(s) for which the student was unable to attend class due to the medical problem. Student Health Services does not issue official written excuses for illness or injury, but will, upon request at the time of the visit, provide a note confirming that the student has received medical care. In the event that the student is seriously ill or injured at the time of final examinations, the Student Health Service or the Center for Counseling and Student Development, on request of the student, may refer a student to the Dean of Students office to discuss an incomplete or other options.

For chronic medical conditions or short-term injuries which do not require hospitalization, but may impact student course performance, students may work with ECU Disability Support Services (DSS) to help coordinate the required classwork with the participation of the course instructor. In each case, DSS must have documentation in order to verify the circumstance, take action, and advocate on behalf of the student. Each request is determined on an individual basis collaboratively between the students, the instructor, and with a review of the documentation provided.

For general questions regarding University Excused Absences, please contact the Office of the Dean of Students by telephone at (252) 328-9297 or by e-mail at dos@ecu.edu.

A student who believes they have been treated unfairly concerning absences or has been misinformed by the instructor regarding that instructor's absence policy has the right to appeal. The appeal shall be in writing to the instructor's department chairperson or school director. In the event the resolution is not satisfactory to the student, the final decision rests with the [academic dean](#).

Privacy & Confidentiality

Student Health Services (SHS) respects and preserves the privacy and confidentiality of all patient information. Information whether written, spoken, recorded electronically, or printed will receive the highest level of confidentiality.

We are committed to protecting our patients' privacy and maintaining our organization's security of information. At SHS, we continue to comply with state and federal regulations. We strive to

maintain the confidentiality, security, and integrity of our patients' health information. We also know that you also are very interested in the health of your student. We are unable to discuss information relating to a student's health care with anyone without their written permission--including appointments, billing, provider visits, lab test results, etc. if they are 18 years old or older. Except in life threatening emergencies, or unless required by federal, state, or local law(s), your student's health information will not be disclosed without the student's authorization.

On occasion, SHS receives telephone calls from parents about their students' medical care. Our health care providers are unable to disclose or discuss any medical information without the student's written permission. In certain medical situations, SHS is also unable to disclose medical information regarding a minor.

The Buckley Form

FERPA (Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act of 1974) guarantees certain rights to students. A couple of these rights are: the right to inspect and review their educational records, the right to seek to amend their educational records, and the right to limit the disclosure of their educational records.

East Carolina University can only provide confidential information about a student to a third party when the student completes the Buckley Form (accessed from PiratePort), and as long as the parent/guardian presents tax information demonstrating the student is claimed as a dependent. The Buckley Form only authorizes ECU to share information related to the student's academic, judicial, and/or financial records (to a third party). **The Buckley Form does not permit ECU, or specifically Student Health Service, to release any medical or health information about a student/patient.**

Similar to FERPA, HIPAA is the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act which protects patient rights regarding personal health information. Medical records are completely confidential. In most situations, unless a student provides permission, we cannot disclose any health information to anyone, including parents, friends, or professors. There is a specific medical authorization form that must be completed by the patient in order for Student Health Service to provide health information to a third party.

Medical Drops/Withdrawals

Students or others needing information regarding medical course drops or medical withdrawals should contact the Dean of Students office by calling 252-328-9297 or by visiting the [DOS website](#).

Transportation & Parking

Student Health Service does not provide transportation for students. This includes transportation to and from medical appointments, to any off-campus locations, or to and from class.

If a student calls from a residence hall or apartment and feels too sick to walk, drive, or take a

bus to the Student Health Center, we will advise the student to have a friend help transport them or they will need to call 911. Our staff cannot go to students' living spaces to evaluate their condition.

Students with temporary or permanent mobility issues may qualify for transportation assistance program offered through ECU Transit.

Parking is very limited and is controlled by the university's parking and traffic office. At our Main Campus SHS, we do have several designated spaces marked "Urgent Care Parking" that students may utilize during their visit to the health center; a temporary parking permit must be obtained from our front office staff upon arrival. For our Health Sciences SHS there is ECU permit parking adjacent to the student center or a meter lot is available off MacGregor Downs Road.

Students are encouraged to walk or take ECU transportation if possible. A lack of parking spaces is not a valid reason for missed or late appointments. Student Health is not responsible for any fees incurred by a student for parking tickets or towing fees.

Important Appointment Policies

All students are asked to arrive 15 minutes early to allow for registration and any necessary nursing staff assessment prior to seeing the provider.

A valid ECU 1Card or official photo ID is required for all visits to the Student Health Service.

Any student arriving 10 minutes late for their scheduled appointment time will be asked to reschedule.

Students who miss appointments without canceling at least 1 hour in advance will be considered a "no-show/late cancellation" and will be assessed a fee to their university account.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), service animals are permitted in university facilities. Emotional support animals do not meet the definition of a service animal and are not permitted in either SHS facility per university policy.

Mental Health Care

Worried about your student? Is there a history of a mental health issue? Concerned about symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress management, substance abuse, or homesickness? Visit the [Center for Counseling and Student Development](#) for more information on the services they provide.

The Dean of Students office also offers [ECU CARES](#), developed to offer assistance to distressed individuals, connecting them to appropriate campus resources, and reporting concerning behavior to professionals on campus. This can be a critical first step in helping the individual(s) improve and ensuring a safer campus for everyone

ADD/ADHD

Student Health can prescribe refills for students who are on ADD/ADHD medications, provided they agree to and follow the stipulations set out in our Stimulant Medication Policy.

Written documentation must be provided which includes a copy of a formal evaluation or formal diagnosis of ADD/ADHD from a mental health medical provider (e.g. psychologist, psychiatrist, physician assistant or nurse practitioner working in a mental health setting). Student Health Service (SHS) providers **do not** accept clinical notes alone from a primary care physician, family physician, or pediatrician as an acceptable form of diagnostic documentation.

In addition, for SHS providers to prescribe stimulant medication, the student must also provide documentation showing recent treatment for ADD/ADHD. If the student has not had treatment within the past five years, they will be required to be formally reevaluated for ADD/ADHD by a mental health provider and present documentation prior to stimulant medication being restarted by SHS. These records must be received by Student Health prior to a student making an appointment for a medication refill. An evaluation confirming the students' diagnosis must be provided to SHS and be current within the previous 5 years.

Once a student's records have been received and an initial appointment for an ADD/ADHD medication refill evaluation is made, the student will be asked to sign the SHS Agreement for Stimulant Medications. This document outlines the responsibilities of the student receiving the medication prescription.

Stimulant medications are Class II narcotics and as such, they are tightly regulated by state and federal law. There will be NO REPLACEMENT for lost, stolen, or damaged prescriptions or medications.

Random drug testing will be done for students who receive ADD/ADHD prescriptions from SHS providers. The drug testing is done at the patient's expense and may be requested to evaluate compliance to the medication regiment.

Student Health does not test for ADD/ADHD.

Dental, Physical Therapy, & Eye Care Services

Student Health does not offer these services. Many local providers are located in the Greenville area. If a student needs a list of offices, our front desk personnel can provide a list, or office contact information can be found in the local area phone book.

ECU offers several options on campus that students may be interested in utilizing. For dental care, the [ECU School of Dental Medicine's Patient Care Clinic](#) is available. ECU also operates a [Physical Therapy Clinic](#).