Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES ACTIVATING RESPIRATORY CLINIC
Respiratory Clinic announcement released March 13, 2020, 12:30 p.m.

With students returning to Aggieland from Spring Break, Texas A&M University’s Student Health Services (SHS) is immediately activating a respiratory clinic with a separate dedicated entrance at the A.P. Beutel Health Center.

In support of current CDC guidelines and Texas Department of State Health Services recommendations, we are asking all students to pre-screen regardless of health concern, to decrease the spread of respiratory illness.

To arrange a pre-screening, please visit the SHS patient portal to schedule a nurse consultation and be provided with an appointment time. The pre-screening process is also designed to allow SHS to see the maximum number of students possible.

When students arrive for their scheduled appointment, the clinic will have a dedicated entrance for respiratory patients and a separate entrance for all other patients. Students will be given these directions during their pre-screening consultation. Signs will be clearly marked at the center.

Safety is always our primary consideration and these dedicated entrances will help ensure the safety of all students and staff in our facility. Students presenting at each entrance will be screened again and ensure entry to the correct clinical area.

SHS anticipates limited walk-in availability as a result of students using the pre-screening process. Walk-in students must still utilize a pre-screening process before being seen. However, we strongly encourage all students to use the SHS patient portal pre-screening process as those students with appointments will have first priority.

During this time, students will still be able to utilize the Laboratory, Nutrition Services, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Preventive Medicine, and the Women’s Clinic.

Please note that the above information is subject to change. For the most accurate information, please visit https://shs.tamu.edu/coronavirus.

SHS is pleased to be able to offer this service to our students and appreciate in advance their pre-screening efforts. Any questions should be directed to Patient Services at (979) 458-8310 or info@shs.tamu.edu.
Frequently Asked Questions

What services are offered at Student Health Services during this time?

At this time, SHS is still operating under normal business hours: Monday – Friday, 8am – 5pm. Hours and availability of certain services may be limited or change depending on staff availability during the COVID-19 response.

Students will still be able to utilize the Laboratory, Nutrition Services, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Preventive Medicine, and the Women’s Clinic. See below for pertinent information regarding select units:

- Nutrition Services: All appointments are via phone until further notice. Currently, appointments are restricted to initial consultations and follow-up appointments. To schedule a Nutrition Services appointment, please email mwindham@shs.tamu.edu. Students do not need to go through the pre-screening process for these appointments.

- Pharmacy: The Pharmacy is available to fill/refill prescriptions. To access the Pharmacy, students must utilize the ramp door adjacent to the parking lot. If a student is only visiting the pharmacy for medication pick-up, they will be screened at the ramp door. If a student wishes to have their medication brought outside to them as they wait in the parking lot, please call the Pharmacy at (979) 458-8292.

The Medical Clinic will also be available for students, but will be separated into a respiratory clinic and a general clinic. Students must utilize the pre-screening process to speak with a nurse and be given appointment options, prior to visiting the clinic. The pre-screening process can be accessed by visiting https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments.

For general clinic questions, please contact Patient Services at (979) 458-8310.

If general medical advice is needed, please contact SHS Dial-A-Nurse at (979) 458-8379.

What is the latest information regarding the Coronavirus as it relates to Texas A&M University?

Texas A&M University continues to work with governmental agencies, professional health and security organizations, and our academic partners to monitor world-wide coronavirus developments. At this time, the Brazos Valley is considered low risk. Please see the latest announcements here: https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/.

What are symptoms of the Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

- For the vast majority of people who have had the illness, symptoms were mild (like a cold or flu) and they resolved after several days. COVID-19 symptoms can include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

If I’m concerned that I may have COVID-19, should I go to Student Health Services?

- Call your healthcare provider in advance. Please do not show up at a clinic, urgent care or other healthcare facility without calling first. Your provider may need to take special measures to protect other people in the clinic.
• Telemedicine may also be available, enabling you to consult a provider from home. Check with your health insurance provider. If you are a student enrolled in the TAMU Student Health Insurance plan, MD Live is available for you (a medical visit copay applies). Dial-A-Nurse is available for students who need general medical advice, and can be reached at (979) 458-8379.

• If you have symptoms such as a cough, fever, or other respiratory problems, contact your primary care doctor first. Do not go to an emergency room. Emergency rooms need to be able to serve those with the most critical needs.

What does it mean to self-monitor?

According to the CDC, individuals should self-monitor and stay home for 14 days if they left an area with widespread, ongoing community spread (Level 3 Travel Health Notice countries) and practice social distancing.

Take these steps to monitor your health and practice social distancing:

• Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also watch for cough or trouble breathing.
• Stay home and avoid contact with others. Do not go to work or school for this 14-day period. Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work.
• Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares during the time you are practicing social distancing.
• Avoid crowded places (such as shopping centers and movie theaters) and limit your activities in public.
• Keep your distance from others (about 6 feet or 2 meters).

To download the CDC Check and Report Every Day (CARE) Booklet which helps you understand how to self-monitor your health and how to check your symptoms daily visit: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19_CAREKit_ENG.pdf.

What does it mean to self-isolate?

If you are not experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 and are asked to self-isolate after returning from a country listed on the CDC’s COVID-19 travel advisories page as Level 2 or Level 3, you should stay off campus and remain home.

Do not go to campus including work, residence halls and apartments, classes, athletic events or other social gatherings until 14 days after leaving the Level 2 or 3 country in question. Likewise, avoid public places and gatherings in the community.

Please follow these guidelines for self-isolation:

• Report any symptoms of COVID-19 immediately to your medical provider – preferably by calling to get advice and instructions. TAMU students may call (979) 458-8310. For after-hours contact/inquiries, call the Dial-a-Nurse program at (979) 458-8379.
• Stay in your room or apartment. Do not go to work, classes, athletic events, or other social or religious gatherings until 14 days after your return to the United States from the country in question.
• Limit contact as much as possible. This also means limiting close contact with others including persons living in your residence.
• Wash your hands with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand rubs after coughing or sneezing or throwing a used tissue in the garbage.
Avoid sharing household items. Do not share drinking glasses, towels, eating utensils, bedding, or any other items until you are no longer asked to self-isolate.

Keep your surroundings clean. While the virus is not spread very well from contact with soiled household surfaces, try to clean surfaces that you share with others, such as door knobs, telephones, and bathroom surfaces (or any other object that you sneeze or cough on), with a standard household disinfectant wipe. Wash your hands after cleaning the area.

Monitor yourself for symptoms at least daily including measuring your temperature. Any symptoms of COVID-19 should be reported to your physician. To download the CDC Check and Report Every Day (CARE) Booklet which helps you understand how to self-monitor your health and how to check your symptoms daily visit: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/COVID-19_CAREKit_ENG.pdf.

Cover coughs and sneezes with your upper sleeve or a tissue. Never cough in the direction of someone else.

Discontinuing home isolation should only be followed if you meet the criteria provided by the CDC. Guidelines for discontinuing home isolation can be found below.

When should I discontinue home isolation?

People with COVID-19 who have stayed home (home isolated) can stop home isolation under the following conditions:

- **If you will not have a test** to determine if you are still contagious, you can leave home after these three things have happened:
  - You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
  - AND
  - other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)
  - AND
  - at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared
- **If you will be tested** to determine if you are still contagious, you can leave home after these three things have happened:
  - You no longer have a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers)
  - AND
  - other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)
  - AND
  - you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart. Your doctor will follow CDC guidelines.

What preventive actions can students take at this time?

- Practice social distancing. Social distancing means remaining out of congregate settings (crowded public places where close contact with others may occur), avoiding mass gatherings, and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others when possible.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing food, beverages, and utensils.

Updated March 23, 2020, 10:45 a.m.
Avoid close contact with those who may be ill.
Stay home when you are sick or have flu symptoms.
Cover cough/sneeze with a tissue or cough/sneeze into your elbow.
Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects or surfaces.
Get your annual flu shot.

Where can I find updated information?
- Texas A&M University updates: https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/
- Brazos County Health District updates: http://www.brazoshealth.org/node/87
- Department of State Health Services updates: https://dshs.texas.gov/coronavirus/
- World Health Organization (WHO) updates: https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
- Texas A&M University International Student Services travel updates: http://iss.tamu.edu/Current-Students/Traveling-and-Coronavirus

It is highly recommended that students continue to practice preventive actions as flu season continues. If you are feeling ill, call your healthcare provider. Students wanting to be seen at SHS should utilize the pre-screening process. The pre-screening process can be accessed online at https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments.