Coronavirus (COVID-19) Updates

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.

The below services are available to students:

MEDICAL CLINICS

- **Medical Clinic**: The Medical Clinic is now separated into a respiratory clinic and a general clinic.
  - To make an appointment at SHS, visit us online at [https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments](https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments). If you are experiencing any high-risk symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste/smell, diarrhea), you may web book a telemedicine appointment with a clinician or call SHS at (979) 458-8310 to schedule a telenurse screening appointment.
  - Telemedicine appointments are available for students who are physically located in the state of Texas. Telemedicine appointments are available for a variety of patient complaints, and can be scheduled online by visiting the SHS Appointment page. Telemedicine appointments do not require a nursing pre-screening appointment.

- **Women’s Clinic**: Services remain the same, including IUD and Nexplanon placement; however, there are limited clinicians available for procedures so scheduling may be delayed. If students need prescription extension to accommodate this delay and are physically located in the state of Texas, schedule a telemedicine visit. Students may also send a secure message to their treating clinician.

ADDITIONAL SERVICES

- **Laboratory**: Services remain the same. Students interested in receiving a self-referral lab test must utilize the main clinic entrance.
  - COVID-19 antibody testing is available by self-referral. Results will typically be available within 48-72 hours after testing. Cash pay price is $100. Contact the Lab at (979) 458-8333 for any questions. To expedite the testing process, please fill out the COVID Antibody Testing form available on the SHS Coronavirus website ([https://shs.tamu.edu/coronavirus](https://shs.tamu.edu/coronavirus)). Testing is only available on Monday-Friday, 8:15am-4pm. Please present at the main entrance to gain access to the Lab for this testing.

- **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 main clinic entrance. If a student is only visiting the pharmacy for medication pick-up, they will be screened at the main clinic entrance. 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.
  - Prescription mailing is available for a minimal charge (average cost is less than $5). Prescriptions will only be mailed as long as the following conditions are met:
    - Recipient is located in the state of Texas
    - Prescription total is less than $100
  Prescriptions typically arrive within two business days and tracking information will be provided to the recipient. Refrigerated items are not able to be mailed. To inquire regarding prescription mailing, please contact the Pharmacy at (979) 458-8292 or pharmacy@shs.tamu.edu.


- **Physical Therapy**: Services remain the same.
- **Preventive Medicine**: Services remain the same. For students who have their allergy serum at SHS, please contact Preventive Medicine at (979) 458-8345 to coordinate pick-up.
- **Radiology**: Services remain the same.

**RESOURCES AVAILABLE**

- For general clinic questions, please contact Patient Services at (979) 458-8310 or patientservices@shs.tamu.edu.
- For general medical advice, 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. Please see the latest announcements here: [https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/](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 cough, shortness of breath, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell.

**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.
- Depending on your primary complaint, telemedicine may be available for you. Telemedicine enables you to consult a provider from home. Check with your health insurance provider, or visit the SHS Appointment page to schedule an appointment.
  - If you are a student enrolled in the TAMU Student Health Insurance plan, MD Live is available for you (a medical visit copay applies).
- 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 if they are sick with COVID-19 or believe they may have COVID-19.

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

- Stay home and avoid contact with others. Do not leave your home except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas. Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work.
• Take your temperature with a thermometer two times a day and monitor for fever. Also watch for cough or trouble breathing.
• Do not take public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares during the time you are practicing social distancing.
• 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, you are advised to stay off campus, monitor your symptoms, remain home, and follow the guidelines below. Find the most up-to-date information at https://gov.texas.gov/coronavirus.

Do not go to campus including work, residence halls and apartments, classes, athletic events or other social/public gatherings, including those 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 are able to call SHS Patient Services at (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.
• 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. 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?

FOR PERSONS WITH COVID-19 UNDER ISOLATION:

The decision to discontinue home isolation for persons with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 should be made in the context of local circumstances. Options include a symptom-based (i.e., time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery strategy) or a test-based strategy. Of note, there have been reports of prolonged detection of RNA without direct correlation to viral culture.

1. **Symptom-based strategy**

   **Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms** and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:
   
   - At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); and,
   - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

2. **Test-based strategy**: Previous recommendations for a test-based strategy remain applicable; however, a test-based strategy is contingent on the availability of ample testing supplies and laboratory capacity as well as convenient access to testing.

   **Persons who have COVID-19 who have symptoms** and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:
   
   - Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
   - Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), and
   - Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

FOR PERSONS WHO HAVE NOT HAD COVID-19 SYMPTOMS BUT TESTED POSITIVE AND ARE UNDER ISOLATION:

Options now include both a 1) time-based strategy, and 2) test-based strategy.

1. **Time-based strategy**

   **Persons with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms** and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:
   
   - At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test assuming they have not subsequently developed symptoms since their positive test. If they develop symptoms, then the symptom-based or test-based strategy should be
used. Note, because symptoms cannot be used to gauge where these individuals are in the course of their illness, it is possible that the duration of viral shedding could be longer or shorter than 10 days after their first positive test.

2. **Test-based strategy**

Persons with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:

- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized COVID-19 molecular assay for detection of SARS-CoV-2 RNA from at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected ≥24 hours apart (total of two negative specimens).

The symptom-based, time-based, and test-based strategies may result in different timeframes for discontinuation of isolation post-recovery. For all scenarios outlined above, the decision to discontinue isolation should be made in the context of local circumstances.


**What should I do if I came into close contact with an individual who has a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19?**

If you have had close contact with an individual with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case, follow the below CDC guidelines to manage your health at home:

- Stay home from work, school, and away from other public places. If you must go out, avoid using any kind of public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.
- Monitor your symptoms carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider immediately.
- Get rest and stay hydrated.
- If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.
- For medical emergencies, call 911 and notify the dispatch personnel that you have or may have COVID-19.
- Cover your cough and sneezes.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. If you need to be around other people in or outside of the home, wear a facemask.
- Avoid sharing personal items with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.
- Clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.
What preventive actions can students take at this time?

It is highly recommended that students continue to practice preventive actions to avoid illness. See below for recommended preventive actions:

- 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.
- Wear a cloth face covering when in public. Learn how to properly wear a face covering and how to make one here: cdc.gov/coronavirus. Cloth face coverings can help protect you and those around you.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid sharing food, beverages, and utensils.
- 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.

What additional resources are available for students at this time?

- Academic HealthPlans is offering a Student Assistance Program (SAP) to all Texas A&M University System students, regardless if they are enrolled in the TAMU student health insurance plan. The SAP provides a 24/7 Care Center staffed by qualified and experienced professionals, life and wellbeing resources, and a variety of health/wellness resources and tools. Access the SAP here: https://myahpcare.personaladvantage.com/portal/welcome/sso. Company code is AHP1.
- The Division of Student Affairs departments have a multitude of resources available. Find more information here: https://studentaffairs.tamu.edu.

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