

COVID-19 Resource Guide for Higher Education

Your campus most likely has disaster preparedness plans and processes in place.

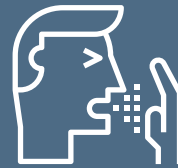
This guide provides institutions with additional considerations specific to COVID-19, widely known as coronavirus.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

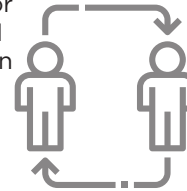


The most common symptoms are fever, fatigue and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea.

How does COVID-19 spread?



People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are spread when the infected person coughs or exhales. The virus is primarily spread through contact rather than air.



Will wearing a mask prevent me from contracting COVID-19?

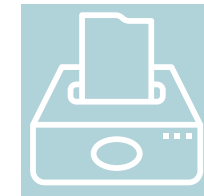


No, wearing a mask will not decrease your chance of being infected. Masks should only be worn by those infected or if you are directly caring for an infected person.

How can I protect myself from COVID-19?



Regularly wash your hands for at least **20 seconds** with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer containing at least **60% alcohol**.



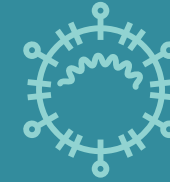
Practice good respiratory hygiene by coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow or tissue.



Social distancing: Avoid crowds if possible. **Stay home** if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical attention after calling in advance.



The potential exists for COVID-19 to make a devastating impact on the physical and mental health of your campus.



College Campuses Face a Unique Situation

Higher education institutions have a unique challenge when addressing the threat of COVID-19. There is significant risk for a virus like COVID-19 to spread quickly due to large numbers of students living and learning in close quarters, and sharing communal bathroom and dining facilities. Universities housing students in residence halls will not be able to adopt the same work-from-home model that a business can.

While the viruses are different, there are similarities between the spread of COVID-19 and influenza. Both can be spread from person to person through coughing, sneezing or talking.

A key difference is COVID-19's potential to rapidly spread. A recent report published by the *New England Journal of Medicine* suggests that each infected person spreads the

virus to, on average, 2.2 persons. It's worth noting the rationale for a public health strategy for higher education institutions to halt the transmission of a communicable disease on a residential campus.

Each infected person spreads the virus to

2.2 others



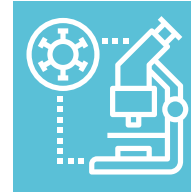
During the 2009 H1N1 pandemic, influenza spread rapidly through a university campus in just two weeks. [1] Just one freshman infected with H1N1 on another campus resulted in 226 laboratory confirmed cases of the illness. [2] The outbreak of an influenza-like illness (ILI) among college and university students is associated with increased use of healthcare services, decreased campus health and reduced school performance. [3]

It is critical that the leadership and healthcare resources of higher education institutions prepare for the worst-case scenario, in the event that

a student on campus contracts COVID-19. How your campus prepares today can make a difference.

Here are suggestions to make sure you, your staff and students are ready and can be protected if COVID-19 impacts your campus:

- Be prepared and informed with appropriate physical resources and accurate information, as well as appropriate coordination with the local health department.
- Maintain clean environments for students and staff, especially high-traffic areas on campus.
- Communicate with students and staff about COVID-19 prevention, with an emphasis on washing hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or using hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Build ILI and COVID-19 prevention and preparedness into the standard operations of your institution.



Sources:

CDC: *Community Mitigation Guidelines to Prevent Pandemic Influenza — United States, 2017*

[1] Source: Iuliano AD, Reed C, Gub A, et al. Notes from the field: outbreak of 2009 pandemic influenza A (H1N1) virus at a large public university in Delaware, April–May 2009. *Clin Infect Dis* 2009;49:1811–20.

[2] Source: Wang L, Chu C, Yang G, et al. Transmission characteristics of different students during a school outbreak of (H1N1) pdm09 influenza in China, 2009. *Sci Rep* 2014;4:5982.

[3] Source: Nichol KL, D'Heilly S, Ehlinger EP. Influenza vaccination among college and university students: impact on influenzalike illness, health care use, and impaired school performance. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* 2008;162:1113–8.

CDC: *Administrators of Institutions of Higher Education - Flu Prevention at Colleges and Universities*

CDC: *Interim Guidance for Administrators of US Institutions of Higher Education - Plan, Prepare and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019*

Is Your Campus Prepared for COVID-19?

Clinic Considerations

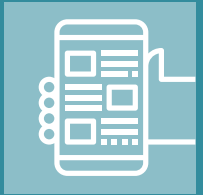
- Does your clinic need to have extended hours to screen students?
- How would your clinic leverage telehealth during surge demand?
- Should you consider a separate clinic entrance for potentially infected students?
- Does your clinic staff have enough PPE (personal protective equipment)?
- Have you connected with local hospitals, ERs and urgent care facilities to understand how each can help with overflow, or as a primary stop for symptomatic students?
- Is administration and/or the counseling center prepared to address increased anxiety and stress on campus?

Communication Considerations

- Have you created a separate communication plan for students, faculty/staff and parents? Communication plans could incorporate a hotline, social media, email, text, website landing page, etc.
- Is your campus equipped with flyers and posters about staying healthy and preventing the spread of the virus?
- What guidelines or restrictions should you put in place for students who may be traveling abroad?
- Do you have a pre-approved media plan, statement and spokesperson who can speak on the institution's behalf if there is a diagnosis, outbreak or death?

Campus Considerations

- At what point would you cancel campus events or activities?
- How would you handle the quarantine of students in residence halls? Consider how quarantine may impact shared bathrooms and community spaces.
- Have you updated medical protocols on campus? For example, who internally and externally needs to be notified of suspected cases?
- Have you considered how to transport an infected student to a hospital? If an ambulance is needed, do you have clear ingress and egress access to residence halls or clinics?
- Do campus police, student affairs, communication and emergency preparedness teams have a coordinated plan?



How Telehealth Supports Campus Resources

- ✓ Virtual consulting assesses symptoms and administers frontline care in a contained environment to limit the spread of illness.
- ✓ Eliminates wait times for students to be evaluated by a medical provider.
- ✓ Treatment plans for symptoms can begin immediately after visits, and if necessary, referrals can be made for in-person care.
- ✓ Keeps a “worried well” from flooding the campus clinic.
- ✓ Provides solutions to supplement mental health efforts already in place on campus.

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