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What is "College Health"?

Barbara Bloomer

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Health and Wellness Services, located in the lower lever of Main Hall, is there for your student.

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What Is "College Health" ?

Barbara Bloomer, BSN, RN, PHN

When parents ask their children, "How is school going?", many will hear, "I'm so tired, I have so much to do, and I'm stressed all the time!"

What is a parent to do when answers like these leave them feeling helpless, inadequate and concerned for their sons' and daughters' overall general health?

First, remember that college is a time of transition. Your student is developing as an individual, learning to manage all the demands that are placed on him or her in a residential academic setting. You don't want to derail that process by letting them rely on you for responsibilities they can accept themselves. Not only is it not feasible for you to bring them home, let them rest and make them chicken soup, it's not advisable.

With that said, you do want your student to stay safe and healthy. That starts by making sure they (and you) know



Barbara Bloomer, A senior director of health and wellness services



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about the supportive resources available at the college to help them take charge of their health.

Stress and lack of sleep are the top two reasons students identify as causing impediments to their academic success (America College Health Association, National College Health Assessment Survey, 2011). Both can result in physical, mental and emotional symptoms, including headache, loss of appetite (or an insatiable appetite), stomach and digestive difficulties, fatigue, inability to concentrate, irritability and apathy.

Many of these can also be symptoms of other things, however, including mono, gastritis, and anemia, and it is important that your student does not ignore them.

As you may recall from orientation, the St. Norbert College health and wellness service is staffed by professionals who will provide a student a general health assessment at no charge. During this visit, your student will have the opportunity to discuss the difficulties they may be having and receive guidance on appropriate steps to take.

On another health-related front, the realities of living in a community of people from many geographic areas, as well as the transient nature of college life, increase the chances of students coming down with a cold or the flu. While many of the basic hygiene practices we all taught our students as children – such as washing hands, not sharing eating or drinking utensils, coughing into one's sleeve – will reduce the likelihood of these illnesses, few students will escape college without at least the occasional head cold. Here again, the health and wellness service staff is ready to assist your student in treating and coping with their illness, as well as developing strategies and practices to prevent future maladies.

It is always difficult for a parent to resist the temptation to act on their child's behalf, but college is the time to let your student identify and explore aspects of life that heretofore were reserved for parents. This may mean the next time you hear, "I am so tired, I am so stressed, I'm overwhelmed," you can swallow hard and refer them to health and wellness services. We'll take good care of them, just like you would.

The health and wellness services is located in the lower level of Main Hall in the center of campus. Appointments can be made throughout the day, 8 a.m.- 4 p.m. Monday



through Friday. Numerous resources are available to parents on the [health and wellness website](#), including the parents' edition of Student Health 101 e-magazine.

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