

Student Survival Guide



The field guide to staying healthy and accessing support at university

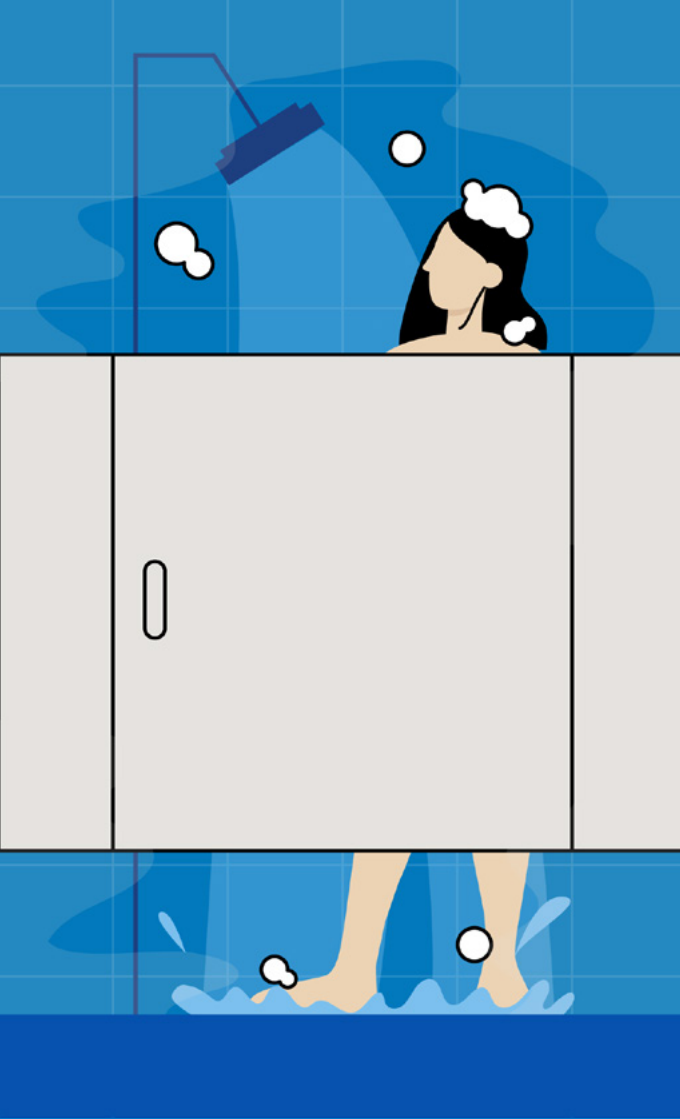


Leaving home can be a daunting time for young people and their families. As the journey towards independence unfolds, so do the responsibilities that accompany it.

At Bupa, we understand that this transition can be both exciting and challenging. That's why we've created this handy Student Survival Guide, designed to help you navigate this new chapter of your life with confidence and ease.

In the pages that follow, you'll find valuable information on where to turn for support, important tips to keep in mind and practical advice to download and keep at your fingertips. Most importantly, this guide is a reminder to take care of yourself and those around you as you embark on this new adventure. With the right knowledge and resources, you'll be better equipped to make the most of your new-found independence while ensuring your wellbeing is still a priority.

Welcome to the next chapter of your life, filled with endless opportunities and challenges. Let's make sure you're equipped with the tools you need to succeed.



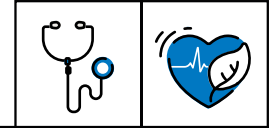
Day-to-day

Having a healthy routine at university is vital to your overall health.

This chapter covers

- Health
- Wellness

Day-to-day



Having a healthy routine at university is an important way to look after yourself.

Making time for **exercise**, which can be as simple as walking to class or joining a gym or uni sports team, will boost mood, fitness, self-esteem, sleep quality and energy.

Try to keep a **healthy balanced diet** with plenty of fruit and veg to fuel your body. Cooking meals in bulk and having them over a number of days or stored in the freezer can be a cost-effective way to eat healthily. If you're buying ready meals, check the nutritional labels on the packet. And make healthy choices when eating out or ordering in.

A healthy routine which includes **plenty of sleep** will keep your immune system strong and help you fight off colds and fresher's flu! It can also reduce your **stress levels** and help you look after your **mental wellbeing**.

Search 'Bupa healthy eating' for meal ideas.



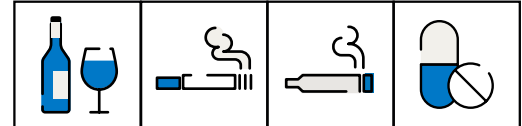
Going out

University involves a new chapter filled with new choices and experiences.

This chapter covers

- Alcohol
- Smoking
- Vaping
- Drugs

Going out



For many, going to university involves a new chapter filled with new choices and experiences, including **going out, smoking, drugs** and **alcohol**. Amidst these experiences, it's essential to address any issues when they arise.

Excessive drinking and experimenting with drugs may seem socially acceptable, but this lifestyle can quickly cause problems. It can harm your physical and mental health, as well as your studies and friendships.

If you're struggling, it's important to seek help. Support is often available from **student wellbeing services** and you can also talk to your **GP**. If you need treatment, there are many different types of **talking therapy**, so even if counselling isn't for you then there are other options you could try.

Find support from Bupa's experts online.



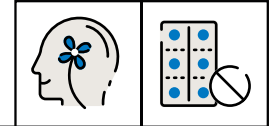
Mental health

Being away from home provides new challenges in regards to your mental health.

This chapter covers

- Therapy
- Medication

Mental health



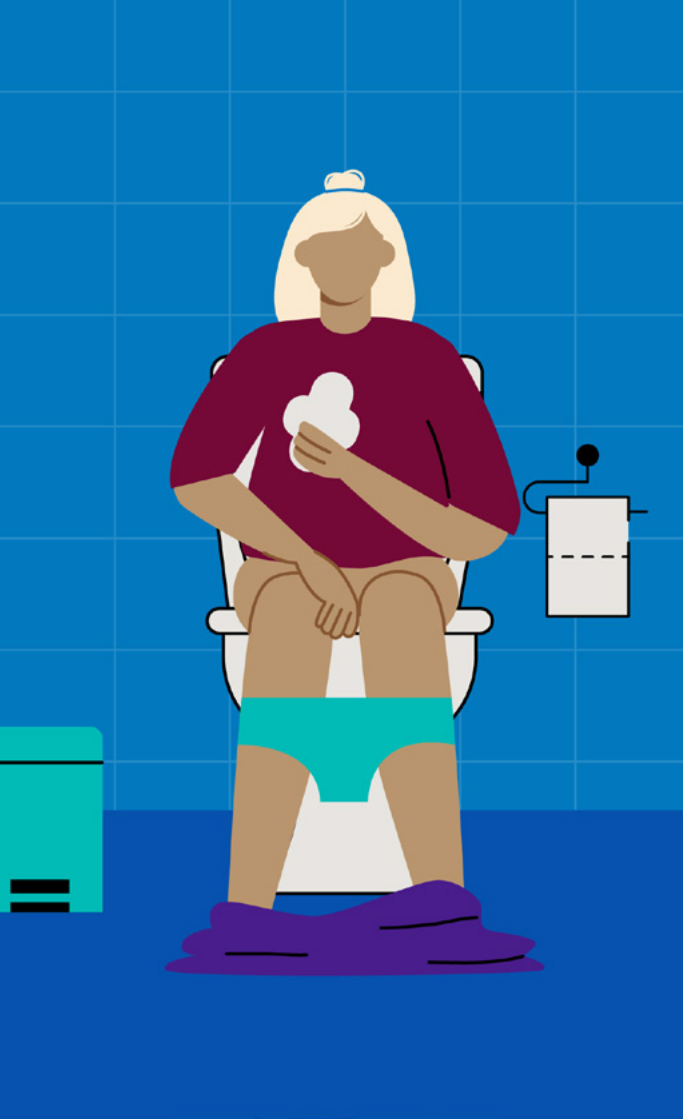
Taking care of your own mental health is essential, and it's equally important to keep an eye out for those around you.

In a 2022 survey 57% of students self-reported a mental health issue. You might face challenges such as being homesick, meeting new people, finances and course deadlines.

We all have good days and bad days, but when negative thoughts and feelings start to affect your daily life and stop you doing the things you enjoy, this means you probably need some support.

It's important to be **open with your university** if you're struggling with things like stress, anxiety or a lack of support. They will guide you to **counselling services**.

Your **GP** can refer you to local services or help you to get treatment for your mental health. This might include **talking therapy**. For free information and advice, search 'Bupa mental health hub'.



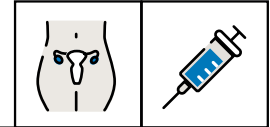
Women's health

Empowering young women with knowledge and resources.

This chapter covers

- Periods
- Contraception

Women's health

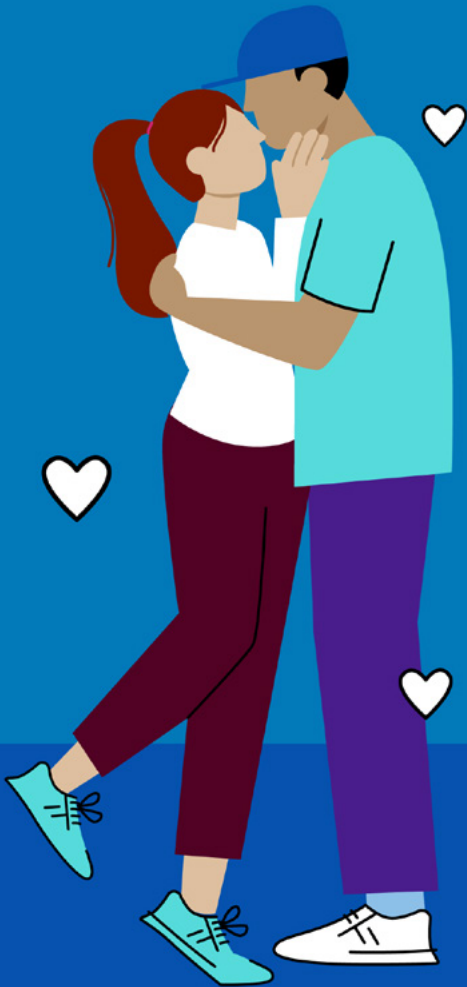


Suffering with painful or heavy periods can be daunting when going to university. From living with new people to starting your course, periods can negatively impact both of these.

Other symptoms which accompany your periods can include bloating, lack of energy, mood swings and skin breakouts, which might mean you won't feel like socialising or studying. **Exercising regularly**, following a **healthy diet** and **reducing stress** are all ways to help with symptoms. If you feel like it's impacting your day-to-day life, seek help from your GP.

You might also want to think about **contraception** which is free on the NHS. You can speak to your GP or pharmacy about the different types, or how to get the "morning after pill".

You can also find a wide range of support for women's health online. There are videos, quizzes and downloads plus helpful guides. Search '[Bupa Women's Health Hub](#)'.



Sexual and reproductive health

Let's get real and explore what you need to know to stay safe and make informed choices...

This chapter covers

- Contraception
- STIs

Sexual and reproductive health



When it comes to student life, taking care of your sexual health is a big deal. Let's get real and explore what you need to know to stay safe and make informed choices.

In nearly every case, **condoms** will help protect you against this risk of getting a **sexually transmitted infection (STI)**.

After unprotected sex, you may need to wait to get accurate results. Most bacterial infections need two weeks, while bloodborne ones may take 90 days. If you have symptoms of an STI, **get tested right away**. Even without symptoms, you can pass an STI to someone else. So, it's important to get tested if you think you're at risk.

If you think you're at risk of an STI, you can go to a **sexual health** or **genito-urinary medicine (GUM) clinic**. If you can't go to a sexual health clinic, call your **GP** for advice.



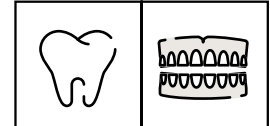
Dental check-ups

Admit it - the dentist has never been your favourite thing!

This chapter covers

- Teeth
- Gum health

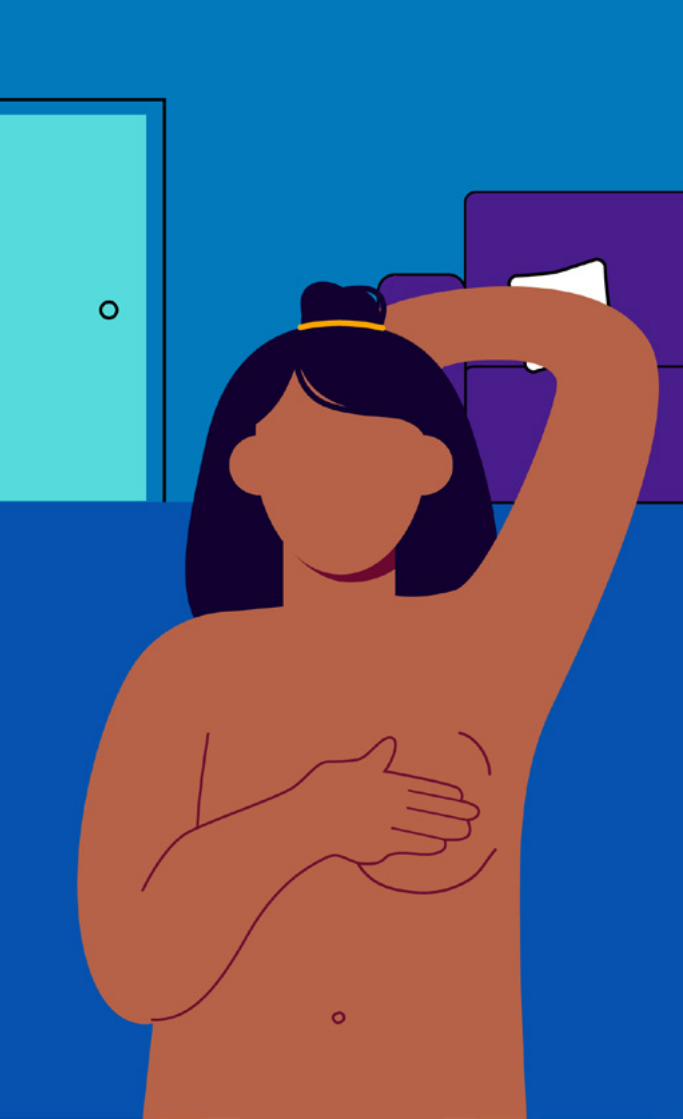
Dental check-ups



Admit it - going to the dentist has never been your favourite thing! We should all keep up with appointments **every six months**, so you may decide to keep your dentist at home. Otherwise...

Find a dentist near you and learn about different payment options. You can get treatment on a pay as you go basis, a pay-monthly dental subscription, or with dental insurance.

If you have **pain** or **discomfort** in your teeth, mouth or jaw, you should see a dentist. Most dentists offer emergency appointments if you need one.



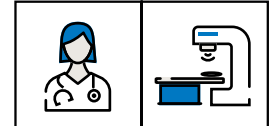
Bigger stuff

What to look out for when it comes to more serious issues.

This chapter covers

- Checking for lumps
- Cancer

Bigger stuff



We don't want to scare you, but there are big things out there that can affect your long-term health...

Cancer can be diagnosed at **any age**, so it's important to understand the signs and take advantage of the support available.

Be aware of what's normal for you and check for a change that is **unexplained** or **persistent**.

Although there's a good chance you won't have cancer, don't put off speaking to a GP if you discover a **lump or bump**, or notice something else unusual. Spotting cancer at an early stage saves lives.

Health information

Get clear information and expert guidance on conditions, treatments and procedures at www.bupa.co.uk/health-information

More resources

- www.youngminds.org.uk
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.samaritans.org

Crisis support

You should visit an A&E department for life-threatening emergencies.

If you're feeling distressed and need urgent support contact your GP surgery to request an emergency appointment. If your GP surgery isn't open, call the free NHS out-of-hours medical line on 111 for help accessing the right services.

