## Advice



A view of the Health Center

## Get Sick at College? Never Fear, the Student Health Center is Here!

I arrived on the beautiful Loyola campus my freshman year with an abundance of emotions: excitement, nervousness, uncertainty. But to be completely honest I never really thought about what would happen if I got sick at college. Getting sick at college was the farthest thing from my mind. However, that changed quickly!

Fast forward to week two on campus. I settled in, got to know my roommates and professors, and was a student-athlete with my schoolwork. I was very happy but also very overwhelmed. I noticed I had a rash on the side of my back but did not think much of it. The next day I had shooting pain down my arm. I figured I did something to myself at swim practice. Being a Division I athlete did not leave much time to think about it. When the pain got worse and the rash spread, I knew something was wrong. I did what most freshmen would do and called my parents crying. After calming me down, they suggested I head over to the Student Health Center the next morning. So let me tell you about the Loyola Maryland Student Health Center...

The Loyola Maryland Student Health Center is on the West Side of Campus in Seton Court. Since you may have no idea where Seton Court is, it is number 7 on the Evergreen Campus Map and the address is 4502A N. Charles Street. The Health Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 5:00pm. Making an appointment during open hours is so easy. Simply call the Health Center at 410-615-5055. It is not a bad idea to put that number in your contacts on your phone. Having it handy when you are not feeling well saves you from having to look it up! Most times you can get an appointment that same day. You also have the option of walking into the Health Center without an appointment but, if possible, it is better to call so you know you can be seen, and the waiting time will be shorter.

What do you do if you need to go to the Health Center, but it is not open? Do not worry, you have many options! Loyola has a Public Service urgent line (410-617-5911) if you have an emergency and need immediate help. They will call 911 for you and send a first responder over to help you. If it is not an emergency but you cannot wait until the Health Center opens, Loyola provides an on-call service through Sinai Hospital (410-583-9396). Here you can talk to a health care professional who will talk you through your concerns. I know this is a lot of information and may seem overwhelming, but you can easily access it all on the <u>Student Health and Education Services</u> page on Loyola's website.

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Next up, let's meet the staff at the Loyola Health Center. The Health Center is staffed by board certified physicians, nurse practitioners, a registered nurse, a medical assistant and administrative assistants. You will be in good hands with highquality caregivers if you ever need to visit the Health Center. You may be met at the front desk by Tahirah Canty, who has worked at the Health Center at Loyola for over nine years. Tahirah has some good advice for incoming students: "make sure you understand any medications that may be given to you and don't be afraid to ask questions." The Health Center is there to make you feel better so you should not be afraid to speak up with all of your concerns. I can tell you from experience that when you walk into the Health Center, you will be greeted with a friendly smile and made to feel comfortable.

Loyola students are the best to ask about what they have experienced at the Health Center. Faith Kerr, class of 2026 remarks, "I woke up with my left eye crusted shut and quickly made an appointment. Within 2 hours I saw one of the nurse practitioners and left with eye drops in my hand. It was so easy, and I was better before I knew it!"

Although the Health Center is there for you, one of the most important things you can do as an incoming freshman is pack the essentials needed if you ever get sick. Don't forget Advil, Tylenol, cough medicine, a thermometer, and even ice packs and a heating pad! All of these will make you so much more comfortable if you do get sick at college. What is also great about the Health Center is they are there for you in so many ways. They not only treat you when you are not feeling well but also do blood work, give immunizations, and can put you in touch with a specialist if needed.



Faith with her eye drops

Back to my own story...I took my parents' advice and went to the Health Center. I was seen by Marlena Waugh, who is the Assistant Director and Senior Clinician at the Health Center. After a thorough exam, she diagnosed me with shingles. Who would have thought I could possibly get shingles in my first two weeks at college? She prescribed me medicine and reassured me I should be feeling better soon. I am so grateful for the care I received. Being so far from home, this was a very difficult experience, but Loyola's Health Center made it so much easier!

So, rest assured that if you ever need medical attention at Loyola, the resources are readily available. From the wonderful, kind and caring staff to the knowledgeable clinicians, you will be in good hands. Appointments are easy to make and there are services in case of an emergency. Leaving home and calling a new place home can cause some anxiety along the way. Knowing that you will be well taken care of by Loyola's Health Center, if ever needed, will hopefully give you some comfort. Welcome to the Loyola Family!

The staff at the Health Center are not only extremely qualified but kind, dedicated, and, most importantly, good listeners.