

## **FAQ -- Health and wellness questions**

Updated 12:19 pm 3/13/20

### **What steps is the College taking to prevent or slow the spread of COVID-19?**

In light of rapidly changing circumstances driven by the spread of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), we have made the very difficult decision to transition all coursework to remote instruction for the remainder of the term, beginning Monday, March 30th. This measure was guided by our unwavering commitment to the health and safety of this community, and the growing need to take extraordinary preventative measures to assist in this unprecedented public health crisis—and weighed heavily against the major disruption we know this change will bring.

Additionally, our housekeeping staff have been trained in the cleaning protocols and products recommended by the CDC for preventing the spread of COVID-19. These consist of a routine disinfection of surfaces utilizing approved products, which are consistent with our normal cleaning products. Housekeeping staff are increasing sanitation for high-touch areas, including countertops, stair handrails, doorknobs, and computer labs.

We have instituted new practices and/or self-swiping readers for ID cards at the dining hall, Rec Barn, and Crossett Library.

The Usdan Gallery and Crossett Library are closed to the public.

### **How do I get tested for COVID-19?**

Testing continues to be available only at Southern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC), but it is now possible to get testing in “drive through” fashion. It must be ordered by a physician in consultation with the Vermont Department of Health. If students have symptoms and questions, they should reach out to [Health Services](#) on campus. If they meet the requirements for testing, they will be referred to SVMC. Health Services has seen an increase in people coming in with symptoms they may not normally come in with—which is good. We would rather have people calling to talk if they are concerned as well.

### **How much does the test cost? What if local providers aren’t in-network for my insurance?**

The State of Vermont is not charging for the test. You will not incur Emergency Department charges.

**Is the Bennington College Health Service in possession of test kits for COVID-19?**

No, this is not a test that our Health Center is able to order. Currently testing is available at SVMC. As the availability of testing expands in the near future, this may change.

**What about students who are ill from the flu?**

If you feel ill, please practice social distancing and do not attend class. Be in touch with Health Services if you have any questions or concerns. Influenza symptoms unfortunately overlap significantly with COVID-19, so if you have fever, cough, or shortness of breath, you should consult a healthcare provider. You may benefit from antiviral medicines if taken within 48 hours of symptom onset. It is always recommended that you be immunized against influenza (flu can be severe and lead to death); it also reduces confusion in the current environment and frees up resources to deal with COVID-19. If you haven't already had a flu shot this season, you should get one as soon as possible. We are not able to provide them on campus, but they are still available at local pharmacies.

**Will Psychological Services provide counseling remotely to students when they leave campus?**

Psychological Services will continue to be open and operate on their spring term schedule. Students should talk with their and their on-campus therapist about options for continued care when they leave campus. Depending on the location of the student, continued individual therapy may be available or a referral to a student's local community providers can be made.