

TEXAS PARENTS



Health and Academic Performance

Academic performance is influenced by a number of factors in students' lives, including their health status. That's why it is University Health Services' (UHS) mission to support students in reaching their optimal health, so they can achieve their academic and personal potential.

Each year UHS conducts the National College Health Assessment, a representative study of UT students, which measures health behaviors, protective strategies, and factors that affect the ability of college students to perform at their best. According to survey results, the three factors that affect UT students' academic performance most are stress, sleep, and cold/flu/sore throat.

Sleep

Students who don't sleep enough or whose sleep habits are very irregular may have difficulty completing assignments, paying attention in class and doing well on exams. Experts recommend getting 7 to 9 hours of sleep a night and going to bed and waking up at roughly the same times every day to improve sleep quality. To help students get better sleep, UHS has [tips for sleeping better](#), including a Nap Map of great places on campus to catch a few ZZZ's (found in the Helpful Links).

Stress

Stress produces a physical reaction that can make it harder to focus, sleep, and do well academically. Recurrent physical and psychological stress can diminish self-esteem, decrease interpersonal and academic effectiveness, and create a cycle of self-blame and self-doubt. UT's Counseling and Mental Health Center has resources to learn more about stress and interactive online stress-reduction tools. [Click here](#) to learn more.

Cold/Flu/Sore Throat

Upper respiratory concerns are one of the main health-related reasons students miss class. There are a couple of things you can do to help your student prevent colds and flu.

First, UHS recommends flu shots for students, so please encourage your student to get one. The UHS Flu Shot campaign begins in late September, and UHS will hold flu shot clinics all over campus for a month to reduce barriers to getting vaccinated and to immunize approximately 10,000 students, faculty and staff. Check the [UHS website](#) in September for the flu shot campaign schedule.

Second, keep your student supplied with hand sanitizer, preferably in containers small enough to carry in a purse or backpack, so they'll be more likely to use it. Stress the importance of using it frequently throughout the day.

Read more about UHS' [National College Health Assessment](#) results.

Read more about [Campus Wellness Data](#) from the UT Wellness Network.