

# THE STUDENT HEALTH MARKET

*Understanding students is a key component to successfully serving schools*

## Health and college students

College is a transitional period for students and their parents. Based on recent research, here are some of the common health issues college administrators are facing on their campuses.

## Mental health

Mental health issues often surface for the first time during these formative years. Twenty percent of college students reported suffering a mental health issue during their college years. In fact, almost one-half of college students reported feeling overwhelmed in the past two weeks; and almost one-third reported feeling depressed over the past 12 months.<sup>1</sup>

## Alcohol and substance abuse

College is often a time for experimentation, and alcohol and substance abuse remains a high-ranking issue. Binge drinking is fairly common, and alcohol abuse is often cited as the root cause for poor academic performance or absenteeism.<sup>1,2</sup>

## Sleep deprivation

Sleep deprivation is a national epidemic and is more apparent on college campuses.<sup>1</sup> More than 19 percent of college students said lack of sleep had negatively affected their academic performance.<sup>1</sup> Almost 50 percent reported feeling exhausted in the past two weeks, and almost three-quarters reported feeling sleepy during daytime activities.<sup>1</sup>

## Communicable disease

Densely populated college campuses and dormitories are a potential breeding ground for communicable diseases — whether it's the common cold, flu, or meningitis outbreaks. Both Princeton University and the University of California at Santa Barbara had meningitis outbreaks that made national headlines.<sup>3</sup>

## Diet and exercise

As in the general population, weight gain and obesity also affects college-age students. Poor diet, lack of exercise, and eating disorders are cited as some of the root causes.<sup>1</sup>

Interested in offering a student health plan to local colleges and universities?  
Contact AmeriHealth Administrators for details about its turnkey student product offering for insurers.

## Student health services include:

- student-focused plan designs;
- online hard waiver process;
- care coordination with campus resources;
- school-specific reporting;
- URAC-accredited health utilization and case management;
- dedicated student customer experience center;
- behavioral and mental health resources;
- 24/7 nurse help line.

<sup>1</sup> Statistics from the American College Health Association National College Health Assessment II: Reference Group Data Report, Spring 2013.

<sup>2</sup> National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

<sup>3</sup> The Washington Post, "Meningitis outbreaks at Princeton, UC Santa Barbara prompt concern, vaccine efforts," Health and Science section, December 3, 2013.

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