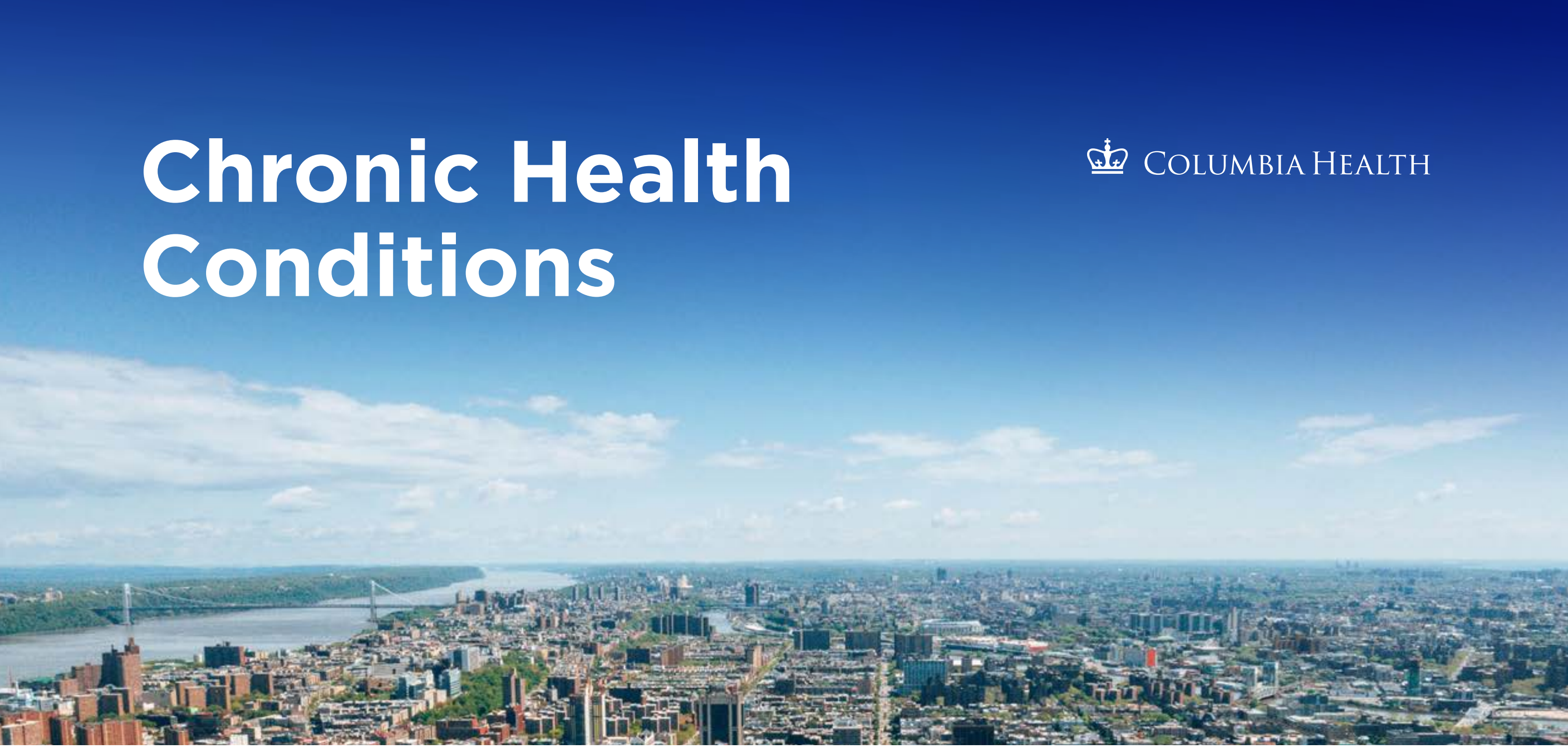
Chronic Health Conditions

COLUMBIA HEALTH



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What are chronic health conditions?

A chronic health condition is a long-lasting disease or health problem usually lasting more than six months. These conditions often require regular visits with a healthcare provider to manage them. Chronic health conditions include heart disease, diabetes, epilepsy, Alzheimer's, and some types of cancer.

Mental illnesses can also be chronic health conditions. These can include depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

Chronic health conditions often require active management strategies. Some symptoms of chronic health conditions may be improved through behavioral changes like diet, physical activity, stress management, or reducing smoking or drinking.

Additionally, having a dedicated team of healthcare providers can help support you in managing the condition and responding to periods where the symptoms get worse, often called flare-ups. Medicine, surgeries, and other types of care can be just as important as lifestyle changes for managing chronic health conditions.

I'm having a flare-up or urgent problem. What can I do?

Please call Medical Services at **(212) 854-7426** and request to speak to the on-call provider, available 24/7. They can help you by scheduling a same day visit or directing you to other resources.

How do I access care on-campus?

Students who are on the Student Health Insurance Plan or who have been charged the full-time Health and Related Services Fee are eligible for health services through Medical Services and Counseling & Psychological Services.

Both departments have providers with experience in navigating and supporting students with chronic health conditions. Students can schedule an appointment with either department through the Patient Portal.

Part-time students or students with general questions about health services can book a Health Promotion Appointment to discuss getting connected to care on- or off-campus.

Are all chronic health conditions a disability?

Many chronic health conditions can be a disability, especially when the symptoms are uncontrolled and disrupt your daily life. When the symptoms are managed well, the impact on your day-to-day life may be reduced or go away entirely. This may be called remission or recovery by your healthcare providers.

Some chronic health conditions can last your entire life. Even when you don't have symptoms, it's important to continue routine appointments with providers. This helps ensure treatments are working correctly and manage concerns before they become more serious.

Am I eligible for academic or housing accommodations from the University?

Start by contacting Disability Services. Note that you may need documentation from a healthcare provider as part of the registration process. Review the guidelines for disability documentation for specific information.

I have providers off campus. How can I stay connected to them?

If you're on the Student Health Insurance Plan: Before you can see an off-campus specialist, you need to request a referral from an on-campus provider. You should also confirm with your off-campus provider that they accept your new insurance before scheduling an appointment with them.

If you have another health insurance plan: You may choose whether you'd like to establish care on- or off-campus. If you already have off-campus providers you like, you may continue to see them.

For support with insurance concerns or accessing insurance information, including outside insurance plans, contact the Columbia Health Student Insurance Office.

Not sure how to get started? Schedule a Health Promotion Appointment to explore and get connected to services.

How can chronic health conditions affect my insurance?

Under the Affordable Care Act (also known as the ACA or ObamaCare), health insurance plans are no longer able to deny someone's coverage based on a pre-existing condition. This includes chronic health conditions. So, you will continue to have insurance options even after being diagnosed.

Here are things to keep in mind when considering an insurance plan:

- Is this plan accepted by your current healthcare providers?
- What is your ***deductible***, or the amount you have to pay before your insurance will cover the cost?
- Is there a ***maximum coverage amount***, or the amount of money an insurance plan will cover before you have to pay the remainder?
- How much will you have to pay for any of your regular prescription medicine?
- If you need regular treatment, what's the ***copay*** or ***coinsurance*** that you have to pay at each visit?

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