

## Student Medical and Mental Health Care at MIT

Wednesday, August 19 at noon (EDT)

Participants chatted with Medical Director William Kettyle, M.D., Mental Health Service Chief Alan Siegel, Ed.D., and Kim Carroll, R.N., MIT Medical's care manager, about everything from filling prescriptions to dealing with serious illness or injury.

mitpa_alycen_a(P)	Dear parents: On behalf of the Parents Association, I'd like to thank you for joining us for this hour-long chat with representatives from MIT Medical. I believe we are just about ready to begin.
mitpa_alycen_a(P)	First, a few notes about the question and answer process: Questions will appear in the chat dialogue along with their answers.
mitpa_alycen_a(P)	Any questions that we're not able to get to in this time period will be answered after the chat. These questions and answers will be published along with the transcript of this chat at the end of the week on the Parents Association Web site.
mitpa_alycen_a(P)	Now, I'm pleased to introduce Kim Schive, the communications coordinator for MIT Medical.
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	Hi, I'm Kim Schive, MIT Medical's communications coordinator, and I'm going to be moderating today's discussion, which will focus on questions about medical care and mental health services at MIT Medical. With me today are Medical Director William Kettyle, M.D., Mental Health Service Chief Alan Siegel, Ed.D., Care Manager Kim Carroll, R.N., and Performance Improvement Coordinator Ruth Fishbein. Well, actually, Dr. Kettyle is on his way... he was with a patient and is running a little late. But he'll be here soon!
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(P)	Hi all. Nice to be here.
mitmed_kim_carroll(P)	Hi, Glad I could join you
mitmed_alan_siegel(P)	Hello! Alan Siegel from the Mental Health Service - welcome!
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	Okay, Dr. Kettyle is here now and just logging in....
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	Some of you submitted questions in advance; those questions will be identified when we post them during today's chat. Of course, we're also looking forward to answering your "live" questions. When you type a question during today's chat, it will first come to me, and then I'll direct it to one of our participants. If you have a question in mind, feel free to start typing and submit it at any time!
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	Today's discussion is intended for general questions about medical services and mental health care at MIT Medical. We

	can't discuss very specific individual situations in this forum, but we will be happy to answer those questions privately.
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	Let's begin with one of our pre-submitted questions.
pre-submitted (Q)	Do you encourage students to get flu vaccinations?
mitmed_kim_carroll(A)	Yes, we do. Immunizations for seasonal flu should begin toward the end of September (we're waiting to be told the arrival date for our vaccines). We will be holding several flu clinics at Medical and will also have vaccination clinics at the Student Center and other convenient areas for the students. We did this last year and got a great response. Some time in November, we hope to be able to begin H1N1 flu vaccines for priority groups and, as more vaccine becomes available, for the entire community. Our MIT Medical website at <a href="http://medweb.mit.edu">http://medweb.mit.edu</a> will have a schedule for the flu clinics. If students have any questions, they can always call 617-253-4481 and speak to someone. We look forward to keeping your child healthy.
pre-submitted (Q)	With medical privacy issues I am concerned about getting information from MIT Medical about my son's condition if he is ill or has an accident. Is there a form I can fill out in advance so you can release information to me over the phone in the case of illness or an accident?
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(A)	I really understand this question. I worried about this when my kids went off to college, too. However, there is no form for routine release of health/medical information for your child. MIT students are not considered minors, regardless of age. This means parents and other family members are not given information about a student's medical care unless the student wants them to be or the family must be, such as in the case of a life-threatening medical condition or a condition that renders the student unable to make decisions about their own health care. I would encourage you to discuss your concerns with your son or daughter. If you want to speak with your child's health care provider about a specific concern, ask your child to let their provider know this is ok. Your child can always give a provider verbal permission to speak with you. But even with your child's approval, there is no way to arrange a waiver from your child in advance so that you can have direct or unimpeded

	access to medical information. And your son or daughter must sign a written release to authorize you to have access to his or her medical records.
pre-submitted (Q)	Our son had a serious leg injury. He was supposed to live in distant frat. Is there any housing that helps out students with crutches and transportation, or should he just sit out the term?
mitmed_kim_carroll(A)	We do have on-campus housing in the dorms that are handicapped accessible, and we would be able to assist in finding him suitable accommodations. We also have Campus Police that assist with on-campus transport of injured students when needed. We work with our disability office as well and will connect him for any other accommodations he may need. The best thing to do is to contact me, Kim Carroll, at 617-324-6040, and Kathleen Monagle in the disability office at 617-253-1473. Doing this sooner than later will ensure the best accommodations and give us time to obtain equipment, if needed, and make transportation plans. I look forward to hearing from you.
pre-submitted (Q)	Do you provide meningitis vaccination? Is the vaccine good for 3 or 5 years?
mitmed_william_ketty(A)	Although we do administer meningitis vaccine, we strongly urge that students have this immunization prior to arrival at MIT. It is required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts--although the requirement can be waived for religious reasons or if the risk for an individual is deemed greater than the benefit. Personally, I strongly recommend that incoming students receive this immunization. One aspect of dormitory living is an increased risk for development of certain infections. Flu is one example, but much more devastating is bacterial meningitis--something that can be prevented with vaccination. Depending on the type of vaccine used, the length of protection can vary. But most students need only one shot to protect them during the dorm-living phase of their life! If a student were to receive the meningeal vaccination at MIT Medical, a \$20 fee would apply.
pre-submitted (Q)	My son wants to have his health physical done at MIT and has medical insurance. Does he need to select a primary physician and will you need his medical records?

mitmed_william_ketty(A)	<p>We would like your son to have already had his "physical" for college before he arrives here. This helps us identify potential issues or needs prior to his arrival on campus. However, we are available for exams and evaluations. The MIT Student Health Plan, which is included with tuition, covers most care provided at MIT Medical although there may be a charge if the service is for something (for example an immunization) that is required for matriculation. We do recommend that students choose a primary care provider. Identifying and meeting a primary care clinician is an ideal way to facilitate care while here. Getting a medical record is especially helpful if there is an ongoing health issue or a chronic care process (for example, diabetes, asthma, inflammatory bowel disease or orthopedic issues). Otherwise, the basic health forms usually provide the information we need.</p>
pre-submitted (Q)	<p>I'm a physician. I have a supply of Tamiflu for my son in case he gets swine flu. Should he bring it to school this fall or will MIT have a supply for all infected students?</p>
mitmed_william_ketty(A)	<p>MIT has a supply of Tamiflu. In addition, we are closely allied with local, state and federal agencies that will be able to supply adequate additional amounts of Tamiflu if needed. Your son can certainly bring Tamiflu, but we are concerned about the judicious use of antivirals and want to avoid a situation in which self-prescribed Tamiflu substitutes for evaluation and care. We are here 24/7 during the school year and are ready, willing, able and anxious to see members of our community.</p>
pre-submitted (Q)	<p>What are you doing to educate the students re: swine flu?</p>
mitmed_kim_schive(A)	<p>MIT Medical maintains the Institute's influenza information page at <a href="http://medweb.mit.edu/about/news/flu.html">http://medweb.mit.edu/about/news/flu.html</a>. That page includes links to a lot of information about prevention, symptoms, and treatment. It also has downloadable resources, including brochures and posters (many of which were seen around campus last spring and will be back again this fall). The MIT Medical website at <a href="http://medweb.mit.edu">http://medweb.mit.edu</a> is continually updated with the latest information we have about both seasonal flu and H1N1. For example, we should have a new FAQ document online by the end of this week. We also provide information to</p>

	students in their dorms and living groups through RAs and MedLinks (members of our peer health counseling program).
pre-submitted_Q(Q)	Will MIT be vaccinating students against swine flu?
mitmed_william_ketty(A)	Yes, indeed. We are organized and ready to immunize; all we need is the vaccine! We expect to have sufficient amounts of the H1N1 vaccine for our entire community eventually. Initially, however, it's likely that the vaccine will be available in limited quantities, and the government requires us to vaccinate certain priority groups first. The current CDC recommendations call for two inoculations separated by at least four weeks. We will be having flu immunization sessions here at our facility, at the Stratton Student Center and very likely at other locations. We will advertize, mobilize and immunize actively! We will also be providing immunizations for seasonal flu. Although we don't yet know the exact date when that vaccine will arrive, we are planning a massive effort to get everyone immunized against seasonal flu very early in the season. This will allow us to focus our efforts on vaccinating people against H1N1 as that vaccine become available.
ep(Q)	What encompasses your mental health service? In what sort of situations should a student seek mental health service?
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	The Mental Health Service provides evaluations, brief treatment (both psychotherapy and psychopharmacology), referrals, urgent care, and consultations. We can help with such issues as: stress, anxiety, and depression; exam anxiety; relationship problems; homesickness or loneliness; insomnia; or concentration problems. Our services for individuals and groups can be found on our web page at <a href="http://medweb.mit.edu/mentalhealth">http://medweb.mit.edu/mentalhealth</a> . People contact us when any student is in acute distress. But, students contact us when they are worried about something. Sometimes, in talking with their friend, faculty member, or Graduate Resident Tutor, they decide that someone on our Service could be useful. Sometimes students contact us when they are curious about things like concentration, managing stress, sleep, and other ordinary things. If your student has any questions, please do not hesitate to have them email me at <a href="mailto:sieg@med.mit.edu">sieg@med.mit.edu</a> , or call 617-253-2916.

pre-submitted (Q)	What counseling is available for students struggling with first year college issues (social, academic or emotional)?
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	Hello, and thanks for your question. Adjusting to college life is a complicated process for students--there are many new challenges, concerns, opportunities, and aggravations. MIT has created a network of supportive resources for students covering most, if not all, of the departments and services at MIT. If someone comes to us with a concern that is not something we routinely deal with, we will make sure that the student is put in touch with the right person or office. At MIT Medical's Mental Health Service, we deal with all areas of adjustment to college life. Through visits to residences, ads in The Tech, and through other networks, we inform students about our services and how to access them. If you think your student will be struggling with a particular concern or problem, it always helps to let me know. You should feel free to send me an email at any time (sieg@med.mit.edu).
ga1234(Q)	What preparations are being made for the upcoming flu season especially H1N1?
mitmed_william_kettyle(A)	Some of the recently posted info describes some of our plans and our approach. We, like the rest of the world around us, are making plans to deal with flu -- both the "regular," seasonal flu and the H1N1 version. We are prepared -- when we have the vaccines -- to immunize; we have planned and practiced immunizations of large numbers of people and are poised and ready. Here are some of our guiding thoughts: Sneeze thoughtfully and carefully into an appropriate droplet-catching appliance (sleeve, tissue, etc.) Wash hands frequently and often and carefully. Don't come to work/school if you are sick Get vaccinated -- for both regular flu and H1N1 -- Sneeze with droplet-catching poise and style Wash hands often and frequently. Watch our web site for more info; that's <a href="http://medweb.mit.edu">http://medweb.mit.edu</a> . Although we expect that the frequency or rate of infection will be high, the virulence of this virus -- so far -- is relatively low. Students, staff and others may return to work, school, and usual activities after going 24 hours without fever or other flu symptoms.
njmom(Q)	What might constitute "brief treatment" and when do you

	make mental health referrals outside MIT?
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	We do not have specific session limits for mental health care provided to students. Usually a dozen visits each year is sufficient to sort out students' concerns (about 80% of students). For about 20% of students, we provide as many visits as needed to help the student get back on their developmental track and engage with life here at MIT. We rarely refer undergraduates to outside providers unless they ask and it makes sense. However, for some problems that we think are best treated by someone with special training, like ongoing, resistant eating problems, we refer to specialists in the community.
ga1234(Q)	Our son has drug allergies to several antibiotics. This information was submitted to MIT Medical when his medical records were transferred. Is this kind of information flagged in a special way so it is readily known to the physician in the case of an emergency?
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(A)	Yes, allergies are flagged in our electronic medical record and are readily available to the physician in an emergency.
Elizabeth_G(Q)	You say that you are available 24/7 -- who is available? Student Health? Or is there another number? My son called us in the middle of the night with an ear infection but waited until the morning to seek treatment.
mitmed_kim_carroll(A)	We have a physician and nurses available 24/7, so if your child is ill, he can call and speak to a nurse or come in at anytime to be seen by a physician. The number to call is 617-253-4481 to contact our Urgent Care Service. For medical emergencies, students can dial 100 from any campus phone or (617) 253-1212 from a cell phone.
Young(Q)	Do you have any statistics on number of students seeking psychological or mental health care due to the rigorous academic program or pressure or other issues? Are there many at MIT?
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	Most colleges/universities like MIT (Ivy League, other science/technical schools), see about 15% of the total student body each year. We have seen 15-16% of students over the past several years. Over the course of four years of a class matriculation, we usually see about 35% of the total number of students. Academics are one important presenting

	<p>problem. However, we find that a feeling of pressure from the student's own expectations for herself or himself for achievement, or what she/he imagine parents expect is a significant motivator to come by to talk. Another issue that brings students in is relationship problems; many times our students have not had much experience with dating and feel a bit uncertain or confused about what it's all about.</p>
ML_in_Va(Q)	<p>There are rumors that the H1N1 vaccine has not been adequately tested. Your comments please.</p>
mitmed_william_ketty(A)	<p>Given the short time frame, producing and testing the new H1N1 vaccine presents a number of issues. It will not be tested in the usual, relatively rigorous way new drugs and vaccines are. However, the vaccine is being produced with the same technology, by the same companies that make the seasonal flu vaccine. The purification processes are the same, and the assumption is that the risks will be relatively small. Clearly, there are important risk/benefit assessments that will need to be made. I doubt, however, that we will have as much info as we would like to make these decisions. We will be looking to the CDC and our state Public Health Department for advice and guidance.</p>
Dee_W.(Q)	<p>I would like to add a "comment" to the question regarding the student with an existing leg injury. My daughter had a leg injury while she was a student at MIT three years ago, and I recall that at that time there was a limit on the number of trips per day that she was permitted to have with the MIT police; I believe it was twice per day. This may be a factor that should be considered by students in this situation, since it means that they may need to remain on campus for longer periods during each day.</p>
mitmed_kim_carroll(A)	<p>Yes, there are limitations to the availability of Campus Police for transport, especially if there is an emergency on campus, but there are also shuttles on campus that may be available for use depending on your child's circumstances. The disabilities coordinator, Kathleen Monagle can be of assistance with this.</p>
ga1234(Q)	<p>Will the parents be informed if our student has to be admitted due to the swine flu?</p>
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(A)	<p>We are parents, too! Your child will be encouraged to be in</p>



	touch with you, and we will assist them with this.
Tish(Q)	Would you please describe specific outreach programs that you have in the dorms. Are there workshops on stress, anxiety? Are students able to arrange appointments with MIT Medical counselors in the dorm? I know some students are hesitant to see someone at MIT Medical unless it is really serious. I think outreach is very important
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	Hi- I agree that outreach is essential. Each clinician on the Mental Health Service is assigned to be the "doc in the dorm" for specific residences, fraternities, sororities, and living groups. We do workshops, participate in study breaks, and come to dinners and other events. Outreach is tailored to the particular residence hall/living group. We also have frequent contact with Housemasters and Grad Resident Tutors, either for check ins or to provide training, and we hear from them regularly about students they are worried about. It is not uncommon for them to walk a student over to walk-in hours at the Mental Health Service, or at least help them set up an appointment. Staff in Mental Health are also "connected" to academic departments through faculty and administrative officers. For example, I am the resource to Math, Chemistry, Architecture and others. We offer workshops on procrastination, test anxiety, relaxation, sleep, and various other topics during the year. We participate in the national Depression Screening Day. As far as seeing students in the residences, in the seven years since I came to MIT, I have repeatedly proposed opening satellite offices in the residence halls; however, the students have been clear that they want the residence halls to be theirs. But I keep asking and using that question as an opportunity to see if they can suggest other ways we can be engaged. There are more outreach activities that we do, but I feel like I'm going on too long!
ga1234(Q)	What process does the student have to follow if they believe they maybe experiencing some of the symptoms of swine flu?
mitmed_william_ketty(A)	We are working to enhance awareness about flu symptoms. We are available 24 hours a day here at MIT Medical for evaluation and care. If a student has symptoms, they are urged to call for advice. In addition, housemasters and

	residential staff are aware of the potential health care needs that students might have -- including H1N1. MedLinks -- students trained by us to give advice about when and how to seek care -- are also available in most living areas. If in doubt, call us. Here is some basic advice..... Wash your hands, carefully and frequently. Sneeze and cough with droplet-catching poise. Stay out of class if you are sick. Call if you have questions. We are here 24/7
cyndi(Q)	Wondering about H1N1 and didn't see any mention of this on your website: Is there a period of quarantine for students who have traveled to countries with a high number of infections?
mitmed_kim_schive(A)	I can answer this one. No, people who may have been exposed to H1N1--whether in this country or another--do not have to be quarantined. It's probably also important to note that just being exposed to H1N1 does not mean you'll contract the virus. I was at a meeting yesterday where we were being updated on the latest information about H1N1, and we were told that only about 25-30 percent of people who are exposed actually become ill.
Cathy(Q)	Your reply re health info release: "But even with your child's approval, there is no way to arrange a waiver from your child in advance so that you can have direct or unimpeded access to medical information. And your son or daughter must sign a written release to authorize you to have access to her or her medical records." Does that mean my child has to approve and sign a release form each and every time she obtains medical service? What if she is in an accident and is unconscious?
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(A)	Let's back up a little. Our clinicians are always trying to work with students to bridge communication with parents. In non-emergency situations, our clinicians talk with students and encourage communication. If your child is injured and unconscious or otherwise unable to make his/her wishes know, we will certainly be in touch with you. Regarding signed releases: Your child may sign a release for any care he or she has already had; there is no need for a signed release for each contact.
ep(Q)	How accessible is the help for mental health services, i.e.,

	does the student need to make an appointment in advance, or can he/she walk in to just have a talk?
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	Students certainly can make an appointment. Our intake process works so that a clinician will talk with them the same day, usually by phone, to find out what the concerns are so we can "match" the student for a consultation with a staff member we think will be best able to help them sort things out. However, we also offer walk-in hours each weekday afternoon from 2-4 for urgent matters, or if the student has just decided that it's time to talk about something and does not want to wait. We also have clinicians on call 24/7, and will meet with the student nights and weekends for urgent difficulties. I e-mail any incoming student who answered "Yes" on any of the mental health questions on their student health form, and either provide more information about services, or invite them in to talk with me. We try to make it easy for students to engage with us.
Cathy(Q)	If a student has an accident or serious illness and becomes unconscious, and is unable to authorize release of medical information, how do you deal with that, given there is no pre-authorization forms for parents to be notified/ informed?
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(A)	We will be in touch with you. There is no authorization needed in case of a life-threatening medical condition or a condition that renders your child unable to make decisions about their own care.
ga1234(Q)	In an earlier response you have mentioned that "your son or daughter must sign a written release to authorize you to have access to his or her medical records." Is there a standard release form?
mitmed_ruth_fishbein(A)	Yes. There is a standard release form. You or your child can access this form on line at the MIT Medical website: <a href="http://medweb.mit.edu/pdf/mr5007.pdf">http://medweb.mit.edu/pdf/mr5007.pdf</a>
Elizabeth_G(Q)	How can we/students obtain more information about the "workshops on procrastination, test anxiety, relaxation, sleep, and various other topics during the year."
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	We will advertise them in The Tech at different times of the year, post notices in the residence halls and let Housemasters/Tutors/Advisors and faculty know about these opportunities. We do individual work on these topics, too. If

	<p>your student thinks that she/he might benefit from these sorts of workshops, it's a good idea for them to check in with us early in the year, to develop a relationship with a clinician, so that if problems arise, we can be ready to help out. If you send me your student's name, I'd be glad to e-mail him/her early in September, say "hello" and see if they'd like to come in and get acquainted.</p>
cyndi(Q)	<p>You mentioned MedLinks in one of your answers. Could you talk more about these students? I think it's great to have a peer support program, if that's what this is.</p>
mitmed_alan_siegel(A)	<p>It is a great peer support program. These students are the link between the Medical Department and students in residence. They provide health information, and assist students in accessing services in the Medical Department. Kim is posting the URL for Medlinks so you can learn more about this group. There is also a peer-listening group called "Nightline" that provides support by phone during the night. You can find their website on the MIT page.</p>
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	<p>The URL for the MedLinks webpage is <a href="http://web.mit.edu/medlinks">http://web.mit.edu/medlinks</a> The URL for Nightline is <a href="http://web.mit.edu/nightline">http://web.mit.edu/nightline</a></p>
mitpa_alycen_a(P)	<p>Everyone, it seems as though our hour is up! I'd like to thank MIT Medcial for participating in these chats. I know I've learned a lot today. If parents have questions that come up later, to what email should they send these?</p>
mitmed_kim_schive(P)	<p>I can handle questions. If I don't know the answer, I'll forward the question to the correct person. My email is <a href="mailto:schk@med.mit.edu">schk@med.mit.edu</a></p>
ep(C)	<p>Not a question. I just wanted to say thank you for providing this open session for questions and answers, and keeping the parents informed of the available services.</p>
mitpa_alycen_a(P)	<p>Thanks to all of you for joining us! Again, look for the transcripts to be posted online at <a href="http://alum.mit.edu/parents">http://alum.mit.edu/parents</a></p>