



THE KEY TO A GOOD LIFE IS A GREAT PLAN

Health TALK



DID YOU KNOW?

The American Academy of Pediatrics says parents should start reading to their babies starting at birth. Early reading helps babies' brains develop.



Is it the flu?

Know the symptoms.

Colds and the flu share some symptoms. But people usually feel much worse with the flu. And the flu can come on quickly.

Flu symptoms include:

- fever and chills
- headache and body aches
- fatigue
- cough

Some people may also get an upset stomach or a runny or stuffy nose. The flu can be very dangerous. It can cause severe illness or even death, even in healthy people.



Flu season is coming. Protect yourself and your family. Get vaccinated every fall. Everyone 6 months of age or older should get a flu shot. A nasal mist is also an option for some people. Flu vaccines are a covered benefit.

Quality matters

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan has a Quality Improvement program. It works to give our members better care and services. Each year we report how well we are providing health care services to our members. Many of the things we report on are major public health issues.

HEALTH RESULTS

In 2013, our goals included increasing the number of members who had:

- infant, child and teen well visits.
- pap smears.
- breast cancer screenings.
- cholesterol screens.

In 2014, we found that more babies were getting well visits. Also, more women were getting mammograms. Plus, many more members were having their BMI measured. (BMI is part of screening for obesity.) However, we found that not enough teenagers were having annual well visits.

In 2014–2015, we will keep encouraging our members to get needed services. We want to see more:

- annual well visits for teenagers.
- annual eye exams and HbA1c testing for diabetic members.

MEMBER SATISFACTION RESULTS

We also do member surveys each year. They show how well we are meeting our members' needs. Our 2014 surveys showed improvement in several measures. These include how our members rated their specialists, their health care and their health plan. We are trying to improve our customer service. We now have specific people who help members who call more than once about a problem. We are looking at new ways that we can better address all of our members' needs.



Get it all. If you would like to know more about our Quality Improvement program and our progress toward meeting goals, please call toll-free **1-800-504-9660 (TTY 711)**.

Your best shot

You can prevent two common diseases.

Immunizations are not just for children. Adults need them, too. If you are over 60, talk to your doctor about the following vaccines:



Talk to your doc. See your primary care provider (PCP) once a year for a checkup. Ask about vaccinations and tests you may need. Need to find a new PCP? Visit **MyUHC.com/CommunityPlan** to use the provider directory. Or call Member Services at **1-800-504-9660 (TTY 711)**.

SHINGLES

WHAT IT IS

Shingles is caused by the herpes zoster virus. This is the same virus that causes chickenpox. It causes a rash that can lead to painful nerve problems.

WHO SHOULD GET IT

The vaccine is recommended for adults aged 60 and older. Even people who have had shingles or chickenpox in the past should get the shot. People with weakened immune systems should not get the vaccine.

PNEUMOCOCCAL

WHAT IT IS

Pneumococcal disease is caused by the *Streptococcus pneumoniae* bacterium. It can result in severe infections like some types of pneumonia (a lung infection) and meningitis (a brain infection).

WHO SHOULD GET IT

The vaccine is recommended for all adults aged 65 and older. Younger adults who smoke or have asthma should also get the shot. It's also important for people with certain health problems.



You can quit

Know the benefits.

Nearly 47 million people in the United States smoke. But more than 48 million people have kicked the habit. There are many reasons to stop smoking. Some of the benefits of a smoke-free life include:

- better smelling breath, hair and clothing.
- whiter teeth.
- lower risk of cancer.
- lower risk of heart and lung disease.
- saving money.
- improving overall fitness.

The Great American Smokeout may be a good day for you to stop smoking. This annual event asks smokers to make a plan to quit. This year's date is Nov. 20.



You can do it. Quitting smoking is not easy. Talk to your doctor about medications that can help. You can also increase your chances of success with support. Call your local Quitline at **1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)**.

Ask Dr. Health E. Hound

Q: Why doesn't the doctor want to give my child antibiotics?

A: Since antibiotics were discovered, many lives have been saved. Antibiotics kill bacteria that cause certain illnesses and infections. However, experts say sometimes they are used too much. This makes some bacteria resistant to antibiotics. When this happens, the medicine does not help when it is needed. People get sicker and can even die.

Most illnesses are not caused by bacteria. Antibiotics do not help with these illnesses. Only time will make them better. This includes colds and flu, which are caused by viruses. Many ear infections, bronchitis and sinus infections are also caused by viruses.



Ask the doctor. Talk to your child's doctor about what is making him or her sick. Keep in mind that antibiotics often won't help. Ask how you can help your child feel better while he or she recovers.



Preteen vaccines

When your child turns 11 or 12, it's time for another round of shots. They are given at your preteen's annual checkup. These vaccines help protect your children, their friends and your family members from serious diseases. Next time you take your middle-schooler to the doctor, ask about the following shots:

- **HPV:** Prevents human papillomavirus
- **MENINGOCOCCAL CONJUGATE:** Prevents bacterial meningitis
- **TDAP:** Prevents tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis

If your child missed any of these shots, it's not too late to make them up.



It's your best shot.

Learn more about vaccines for every member of your family at CDC.gov/vaccines.



Resource corner

Member Advocate Hotline Get local assistance for your concerns (toll-free).
1-888-246-8140 (TTY 711)

Member Services Find a doctor, ask benefit questions or voice a complaint, in any language (toll-free).
1-800-504-9660 (TTY 711)

NurseLine Get 24/7 health advice from a nurse (toll-free).
1-866-827-0806 (TTY 711)

Healthy First Steps Get pregnancy and parenting support. Join the Baby Blocks rewards program (toll-free).
1-800-599-5985 (TTY 711)
UHCBabyBlocks.com

Twitter Pregnant Care Get useful tips, info on what to expect and important pregnancy reminders.
@UHCPregnantCare
@UHCEmbarazada
bit.ly/uhc-pregnancy

Our website Use our provider directory or read your Member Handbook.
MyUHC.com/CommunityPlan

National Domestic Violence Hotline Get free, confidential help for domestic abuse (toll-free).
1-800-799-7233
(TTY 1-800-787-3224)

Smoking Quitline Get free help quitting smoking (toll-free).
1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)

Know the signs

Could you have diabetes?

Diabetes is getting more and more common. Nearly one in 10 Americans now has it. That's more than 29 million people. However, 8 million of those people don't know they have it. That's why testing is important.

SYMPTOMS OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

- urinating often
- feeling very hungry or thirsty
- being very tired
- having blurred vision
- healing slowly from cuts and bruises

RISK FACTORS FOR TYPE 2 DIABETES

- having a family member with diabetes
- being overweight
- being inactive
- being Native American, African American or Hispanic
- having diabetes during pregnancy



Get checked. Some people with diabetes have no symptoms or risk factors. It's important to have your blood sugar checked at annual checkups. Need to find a doctor? Visit **MyUHC.com/CommunityPlan**.



The waiting game

As our member, we want you to get the right services at the right time — in the right place. When you call to make an appointment, it's important to tell the office why you need to be seen. This will help them know how soon they need to make the appointment. You should be able to get appointments in the following time frames.

- **EMERGENCY:** immediately
- **URGENT PCP VISIT:** the same day
- **ROUTINE PCP VISIT:** within 30 days
- **SPECIALIST VISIT:** within 30 days



Need help? If you are having trouble getting an appointment with a provider or need a ride to an appointment, let us know. Call Member Services toll-free at **1-800-504-9660 (TTY 711)**.