



THE KEY TO A GOOD LIFE IS A GREAT PLAN

# Health TALK



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## It works!

### The flu shot keeps millions healthy.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently studied how well the flu shot works. They looked at flu data from the past six years. They found that the flu vaccine prevented:

- 13.6 million illnesses.
- 5.8 million doctor visits.
- 112,900 hospitalizations.

Everyone over the age of 6 months should get a flu shot each year. New shots become available in the fall. They protect against the types of flu experts predict will be most common this year. Get yourself and your family vaccinated soon.



**Get yours.** Flu shots are available in many locations. Need to find one that accepts your health plan? Visit **MyUHC.com/CommunityPlan** or call toll-free **1-888-887-9003 (TTY 711)**.

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# Know your numbers

## It's important to control blood pressure.

Almost one in three adults has high blood pressure. It is also called hypertension. This means blood pressure of 140/90 or higher. Blood pressure higher than 120/80 but lower than 140/90 is considered prehypertension.

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms. This makes it easy for many people to ignore. But because it can lead to serious problems, it's important to treat it. Hypertension is a leading cause of stroke, heart attack, kidney disease and congestive heart failure. There are several things you can do to control your blood pressure.

- Limit salt to less than 1,500 mg per day.
- Limit alcohol to one drink a day for women or two for men or less.
- Stay at a healthy weight.
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes a day.
- Do not smoke.
- Manage stress.



**Bring it down.** If lifestyle changes are not enough, your doctor may suggest medication. There are many different kinds of medicines that lower blood pressure. Be sure to keep all follow-up appointments with your doctor. Check your blood pressure often.



## Saving lives

There are more than 2 million breast cancer survivors in the U.S. Screenings can help find the disease before there are any symptoms. Breast cancer can be cured if it is found early. The American Cancer Society recommends:

- **SELF-EXAM:** Start doing monthly breast self-exams at age 20. A doctor or nurse can show you how. Tell your doctor right away if you notice any changes in the look or feel of your breasts.
- **CLINICAL BREAST EXAM:** Your doctor should check your breasts during a regular physical exam. Women ages 20 to 39 should get checked at least once every three years. Exams may be more frequent as you get older.
- **MAMMOGRAM:** Women should get their first mammogram, called a baseline mammogram, between 35–40 years old. Women aged 40 and older should get this specialized breast X-ray every year.



**What's right for you?** Women with a higher risk of breast cancer may need a special screening plan. Talk to your provider about your risk factors. Make a plan for regular screening.



## We care about quality

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

In 2012, our goal was to increase the number of well visits for children ages 3–6 and increase the number of women who saw a doctor early in their pregnancy and had follow-up visits with their doctor after they gave birth. In 2013, we found that more women were going to the doctor early in their pregnancy as well as seeing their doctor after giving birth. The number of well visits for children ages 3–6 was below our goal.

In 2013–2014, we will continue to encourage and try to obtain higher rates of well visits for babies, children and teenagers. We also will try to increase the number of members who have breast cancer screenings, pap screens and cholesterol screens.

We also conduct member surveys each year to see how well we are meeting our members' needs. Our 2013 surveys showed improvement for the third year in a row in how our members rate getting the care they need, how well their doctors talk to them and how our customer service center treats them. We continue to try to improve our customer service center and now have specialists who can work with members who call more than once about a problem.



**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 **1-888-887-9003 (TTY 711)**.



## The last shot

### Teens finish their vaccines at age 16.

Turning 16 is a big milestone for teens. Some learn to drive. Most start planning for life after high school. It's also time for one last childhood vaccine — a meningococcal booster shot.

Meningitis is an infection of the covering of the brain and spinal cord. It is most common in people aged 16–21 years. It spreads easily in places like college dorms and military barracks. It can be deadly or cause permanent problems, even with treatment. The vaccine protects against four common kinds of bacterial meningitis.



**Check out checkups.** Pre-teens and teens need check-ups every year. They will get any shots they need at these visits. Need to find a doctor for your teen? Use the provider directory at **MyUHC.com/CommunityPlan**.



## ALL IN THE TIMING

When you call to make an appointment with a provider, tell the office why you need to be seen. This will help them know how soon they need to make your appointment. You should be able to get appointments in the following time frames.

- Emergency: the same day
- Urgent PCP visit: within 24 hours
- Routine PCP visit: within 14 days
- Specialist visit: within 14 days



**Need help?** If you are having trouble getting an appointment with your provider or need a ride to an appointment, let us know. Call Member Services toll-free at **1-888-887-9003 (TTY 711)**.

# Resource corner

**Member Services** Find a doctor, ask benefit questions or voice a complaint (toll-free).

**1-888-887-9003 (TTY 711)**

**NurseLine** Get 24/7 health advice from a nurse (toll-free).

**1-877-839-5407 (TTY 711)**

**Healthy First Steps** Get pregnancy and parenting support (toll-free).

**1-800-599-5985 (TTY 711)**

**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)**



## Your best shot

### Do you need a pneumococcal shot?

*Streptococcus pneumoniae* is a common bacterium. It is spread by sneezing and coughing. It causes some kinds of serious pneumonia. It kills more people in the United States each year than all other vaccine-preventable diseases combined.

It's very important for at-risk adults to get vaccinated. It's recommended for:

- anyone over 65 years old.
- smokers.
- people with asthma, diabetes or other chronic conditions.
- people with weak immune systems.

Pneumococcal shots can last a lifetime, but some people need boosters after five years. Ask your doctor if it's time for you to get one.



**See your doctor.** Adults need yearly checkups. Do you need to find a doctor? Visit **MyUHC.com/CommunityPlan**.