

THE KEY TO THE GOOD LIFE IS A GREAT PLAN

# health TALK

SUMMER 2008



## safe house

Are you a victim of domestic violence? Have you ever been emotionally or physically abused by a partner? Are you afraid of your partner? You are not alone.

Help is available. Speak up. Talk to your doctor. AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare can help, too. Call our Domestic Violence Coordinator, Lissa Grossman-Truhlar, at 212-898-8394, from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. You can also call us at 866-604-3267, 24 hours a day.

If you need help fast, call 800-621-HOPE. If you are in immediate danger, call 911.



▼ ABOUT YOUR PLAN ▼

## step ONE

LET US HELP YOU THROUGH YOUR PREGNANCY

**Are you pregnant? Do you have questions about your pregnancy?** AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare has nurses who can help you.

When you join the Healthy First Steps program (HFS), we will give you information about your pregnancy and how to prepare for your baby's arrival. The HFS staff can help you find a doctor and arrange transportation and referrals. The HFS nurses are there for you whenever you need them.

It is important to have a postpartum visit within six weeks after delivery. That's why, as an HFS member, you'll get a free gift after your postpartum visit. We can even help you schedule this visit.

A PUBLICATION JUST FOR YOU FROM

# AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare

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## Healthy First Steps



**EXPECTING?** AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare is excited for you!  
Please call the Healthy First Steps hotline at 800-559-9071 to enroll today!

▼ PREVENTION



## the secret to survival

### MAMMOGRAMS SAVE LIVES

**Breast cancer can be cured — if it is found early.** There are more than 2 million breast cancer survivors in America. What is their secret? Early detection. If every woman examined her breasts monthly and got regular mammograms (X-rays of the breasts), about 15,000 lives would be saved in the United States each year.

Women should have their first mammogram when they turn 40. After that, they should have mammograms every 1–2 years. Mammograms can find breast cancer up to two years before you can feel a lump.



**TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR** Learn about your breast cancer risk factors. If you are at risk, you may need a mammogram at a younger age.

▼ SEXUAL HEALTH

# teens AND STDs

## WHAT THEY DON'T KNOW CAN HURT THEM

A recent study found that at least one in four teenage girls has an STD. STD stands for sexually transmitted disease. About half the girls in the study admitted having sex. Among these girls, 40 percent had an STD. Rates were even higher among African-American girls.

The most common STD was HPV. HPV can cause cervical cancer and genital warts. There is now a vaccine that can prevent HPV infection. Chlamydia was the second most common. It can be treated with antibiotics. But if it is not detected early, it can cause infertility and other problems.

The study also found that many girls did not know enough about STDs. Many did not know they could get an STD without having intercourse. Some girls also believed they could prevent STDs using methods like withdrawal or douching, which is not true.



**PLAY IT SAFE** When your daughter is 11–12 years old, talk to her doctor about HPV shots. If she is older, she can still get the vaccine. The doctor can also talk to your daughter about preventing STDs.

▶▶ 3.2 MILLION GIRLS HAVE AN STD.



▼ SICK DAYS

# allergies AND asthma

 **1 out of 4 people have allergies or asthma.**

## 4 STEPS TO FEELING BETTER

### If you have allergies or asthma, join the club.

About 20 million people in the U.S. have asthma. Allergies affect more than 50 million people.

Allergies happen when your body overreacts to something. It thinks something you eat, breathe or get on your skin is dangerous. Common causes include pollen, molds, animal dander and certain foods. In some people, allergies can lead to asthma attacks.

## SYMPTOMS OF AN ALLERGY

- itchy, watery eyes
- sneezing, or a stuffy or runny nose
- coughing or wheezing
- rash, hives or inflamed skin

## SYMPTOMS OF ASTHMA

- wheezing or coughing
- difficulty breathing
- tightness in the chest





# On Target

THE BEST SHOT AT STAYING HEALTHY

Years ago, many children died from common diseases. Today, those diseases are rare. This is because children now get vaccines to keep them from getting sick.

It's important for all children to get the right shots at the right time. You have to get some shots more than once. There may be three or four shots in the series. Your child should get the following shots before he or she is 6 years old:



## NEWBORN-1 MONTH

- Hepatitis B #1

## 2-3 MONTHS

- Hepatitis B #2
- Hib #1
- Pevnar #1
- DTaP #1
- Polio #1
- Rotavirus

## 4-5 MONTHS

- DTaP #2
- Polio #2
- Rotavirus
- Hib #2
- Pevnar #2

## 6-8 MONTHS

- Hepatitis B #3
- Hib #3
- Pevnar #3
- DTaP #3
- Polio #3
- Rotavirus

## 9-11 MONTHS

- Make up any shots your child missed.

## 12-15 MONTHS

- DTaP #4
- Chicken pox vaccine
- Pevnar #4
- Hib #4
- Polio #3 (if not already done)
- Hepatitis A (2 doses, 6 months apart)
- MMR #1

## 4-6 YEARS

- DTaP #5
- Polio #4
- MMR #2



### TAKE THESE STEPS TOWARD CONTROLLING YOUR ALLERGIES AND ASTHMA

- 1 Find out what your triggers are.
- 2 Avoid things that cause your allergies.
- 3 Pay attention to how you feel.
- 4 Take your medicine.

**WHAT TO DO** Many allergies can be treated at home. You can avoid some triggers. Over-the-counter medicines can help. See your doctor if your allergies are bad, last a long time or cause asthma symptoms.



**KEEP TRACK** Keep a record of what shots your child gets and when. Share this list with any new providers you see. Learn more about immunizations at [www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org).



## BABY teeth

### 6 TIPS FOR A HEALTHY SMILE

**When should you start taking care of your baby's teeth?** Before he or she has any! Here's a timeline for starting a lifelong habit of good dental care.

- 1 **BEFORE TEETH COME IN**, gently rub a clean, damp washcloth over your baby's gums from time to time.
- 2 **WHEN FIRST TEETH COME IN**, brush with a dry, soft child's toothbrush or wipe with gauze once a day. When there are two teeth next to each other, start flossing.
- 3 **WHEN YOUR BABY TURNS 1 YEAR OLD**, it's time for a visit to the dentist. Choose one who specializes in children.
- 4 **WHEN MOST BABY TEETH ARE IN**, ask the dentist about fluoride treatments.
- 5 **WHEN YOUR CHILD IS ABOUT 2 YEARS OLD**, you can use a pea-sized amount of toothpaste. Make sure he or she spits out the toothpaste. Help your child brush twice a day and floss regularly.
- 6 **WHEN PERMANENT TEETH START COMING IN**, talk to the dentist about applying sealants.

 **SMILE** AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare provides two dental checkups a year, plus sealants and fluoride as needed. If you need to find a dentist for your child, call 800-493-4647.



## quitting time

### DOUBLE YOUR CHANCES OF GIVING UP TOBACCO

**It isn't easy to quit smoking.** Without help, it can take 8 to 10 tries before you quit for good. But with the right help, you can more than double your chances of quitting for good the first time you try.

When you quit, you have to deal with your body's reaction to giving up nicotine. And you have to deal with the stress you feel when you give up a habit. Both can be hard to do. Support, nicotine replacement and medications can each help. Together, they work even better.

- **SUPPORT** from a counselor can be given by phone, one-on-one or in a group.
- **NICOTINE REPLACEMENT** helps relieve withdrawal symptoms. Choose from gums, patches, sprays, inhalers or lozenges.
- **MEDICATIONS** work on chemicals in the brain to break your addiction.



### KIDS AND SMOKING

The health risks of smoking are well known. Yet kids are still picking up the habit. Talk to your children about smoking. Set clear rules. You can help keep them from starting. Some facts:

- **Nine out of 10** adults who smoke started as kids.
- Every day **more than 4,400** kids become regular smokers.
- The age to start talking to kids about smoking is when they are **5 or 6**.
- **15 percent** of 9- to 13-year-olds have tried tobacco.
- **23 percent** of teens say no family member has ever talked to them about smoking.
- **Six million** of today's young smokers will eventually die due to smoking-related illnesses.

 **QUITTING TIME** Set a good example for your kids. If you smoke, AmeriChoice can help you quit. We can provide support and medications. Call 800-QUITNOW to start quitting today. Materials on how to quit smoking are available from the Quality Member Advocate Line at 877-674-3133. Ask to speak to David Cha.