

THE KEY TO THE GOOD LIFE IS A GREAT PLAN

# health TALK

FALL 2008



## expecting?



AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare has nurses who can help you when you join our Healthy First Steps program. We'll give you information, advice and referrals and help with transportation and other arrangements. We'll make sure you have your postpartum visit within six weeks of delivery. Call the Healthy First Steps hotline at 800-559-9071 to enroll.

Healthy First Steps 

A PUBLICATION JUST FOR YOU FROM

# AmeriChoice by UnitedHealthcare

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## MENTAL HEALTH

# FEELING blue

YOU DON'T HAVE TO

**Depression is more than feeling blue for a few days.** It is a serious medical condition that affects more than 10 million Americans every year. Some symptoms include:

- persistent sad mood
- loss of interest or pleasure in activities that once were enjoyed
- significant change in appetite or body weight
- difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
- loss of energy
- difficulty thinking or concentrating
- recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

Fortunately, depression can be successfully treated with medication and/or psychotherapy. Lifestyle changes such as exercise, getting enough sleep and eating healthy may also help.

 **NEED HELP?** Call United Behavioral Health at 888-481-9413, seven days a week, 24 hours a day. An intake worker will help you find a mental health provider.



## HIV protection

### STAY SAFE FROM AIDS

**HIV is the virus that causes AIDS.** There is no cure for HIV, but a mix of drugs called the “cocktail” has helped patients have healthier lives. Exercising, eating a healthy diet, getting lots of rest and getting immunizations like the flu shot can also help. But the virus can still be passed on, so it’s important to be responsible and honest.

HIV is spread through bodily liquids like blood and semen. It is most often spread through sex and used needles. A mom can also give her baby the virus when she gives birth or breastfeeds, but a doctor can help keep this from happening. Sharing food, holding hands or sharing bathrooms will not spread HIV.

To protect your health, always use a condom during sex. Have sex with only one partner and get tested for STDs. Do not use illegal drugs and don’t share any medical supplies or razors.

**GET TESTED** Protect the ones you love. HIV testing is a covered benefit. Ask your doctor for a test. Or, call your health plan to find out where you can get tested.

# QA

**Q** What happens if my baby has an ear infection?

**A** Ear infections happen to many young children, and can be very uncomfortable. The good news is that they usually go away by themselves and most children stop getting them by age 5 or 6. Babies with an ear infection might pull at their ears, cry more, have trouble sleeping, be fussier or get a fever. Call your doctor if your baby shows these signs for more than a day, or if you see blood or pus coming from your baby’s ear. Doctors may prescribe medicine if your baby has ear infections a lot. For healthy, older children, doctors may wait to see if the infection clears up by itself.



### GET IMMUNIZED THIS YEAR

**You don’t want to get the flu this winter.** At best, it makes you feel lousy. Plus, it can lead to serious complications. Protect yourself by getting a flu vaccine every year. The vaccine is available in shot and nasal spray form. Flu shots are even more important for people at higher risk for complications:

- adults over 50 years old
- children 6 months to 5 years old
- pregnant women or women planning to get pregnant
- people who have chronic conditions such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease
- people who live with or care for any of the above



**YOUR BEST SHOT** Ask your doctor for a flu shot. Flu shots are FREE with your health plan.



# Get with the Beat

## LIVING WITH HEART DISEASE

Having a heart attack or heart disease changes your life. But you can take control of these changes, and your health. Here are some little things you can do that make a big difference.

### RECOVERY

- Get lots of rest, but begin moving around to exercise your heart.
- Pace yourself. It's okay to do things more slowly. Rest when you feel tired.
- Take your prescribed medicine.
- Call your doctor if you have questions or feel sick.



### 5 REASONS WHY ADULTS NEED SHOTS, TOO

Many of the vaccinations you got as a child will protect you for life. But you still need some shots as an adult, because:

- 1 BOOSTERS** Some vaccines stop working over time.
- 2 NEW** Some vaccines were not available when you were a child.
- 3 MISSED** You might have missed some vaccinations.
- 4 AGING** As you get older, some illnesses are more dangerous.
- 5 LIFESTYLE** Your lifestyle may put you at risk for some diseases.

Talk to your doctor about shots you might need.



### EXERCISE

- Take a walk every day, or get at least 30 minutes of physical activity. If you can't, break it down into three 10-minute segments.
- Warm up and cool down for 10 minutes when you exercise.
- Do different types of exercise, like cycling or lifting weights.
- Check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.



### DIET

- Eat oily fish such as salmon, trout or herring at least twice a week for omega-3 fatty acids.
- Cut back on meat.
- Add more servings of veggies.
- Snack on fresh fruit.



Other lifestyle changes can also help. You may be able to avoid having another heart attack. You can also slow the progression of heart disease. Quit smoking. Join a cardiac rehabilitation program. Talk to someone if you feel depressed. Manage your stress. You can also try meditation or yoga, or talking to an expert.



**TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR** about your heart disease risk factors. If you are at risk, take care of your heart now.



PREVENTION

## IMMUNIZATIONS FOR TEENS

### Do you have a middle or high school student?

If so, it might be time to take him or her for another round of vaccinations. Some shots given to babies wear off over time and need to be given again. Some shots were not available when today's teens were babies. Some shots now come with new recommendations. And other shots are meant for teens.

#### SHOTS FOR MOST TEENS

Most teens will need these shots when they turn 11 or 12.

- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (Tdap)
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Meningococcal (MCV4)

#### SHOTS FOR HIGH-RISK TEENS

Teens at high risk for certain diseases or complications might need these shots. Ask your child's doctor about them.

- Pneumococcal (PPV)
- Influenza (yearly)
- Hepatitis A

#### CATCH-UP SHOTS FOR TEENS

Your child should have completed these series of shots earlier. If not, he or she can catch up on them now.

- Hepatitis B (HepB)
- Poliovirus (IPV)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Chicken Pox (Varicella)

**STAY ON TRACK** Ask your teenager's doctor about the shots that he or she needs. Make copies of your child's vaccination record so you can give them to schools, camps, sports programs or new doctors that need them.



## GOOD news

### HEALTH CARE FOR MORE UNINSURED PARENTS

**Governor Corzine recently expanded the NJ FamilyCare Program.** Now, uninsured parents with incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level may be eligible. This means parents living in a family of four with an annual income of up to \$42,400 may now qualify for insurance under NJ FamilyCare. This change started September 2008.

**CAN YOU JOIN?** The State of New Jersey estimates that almost 28,000 parents will now qualify. Are you one of them? Call 800-701-0710 to find out if you qualify.



### IS IT TIME TO GET YOUR PROSTATE CHECKED?

**Prostate problems are common in men over 50.** As men age, the prostate often gets bigger. This can cause trouble urinating. Some men may have difficulty with sex.

Most of the time, prostate problems are not caused by cancer. However, prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men. That is why it is important for men over 50 to be checked for prostate cancer. African American men and men whose father, brother or son had prostate cancer should get checked starting at 40. When caught early, prostate cancer is very curable.

**CHECK IT OUT** Talk to your doctor about your prostate cancer risk factors. Ask when you should get a digital rectal exam and a PSA blood test.