Health TALK

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Teen time

Checkups help keep kids healthy at any age. Even pre-teens and teenagers should see the doctor for a well visit each year. These visits make sure your child is maturing well. The doctor and your child can discuss risky behaviors. And your child will get any shots or tests he or she needs.

When the pre-teen years start, it’s time for another round of shots. Tdap, HPV and meningococcal vaccines are recommended for most 11- to 12-year-olds. In addition, teens need a booster of the meningococcal vaccine at age 16.

Get guidance. Preventive guidelines for your whole family are available. This document says what tests and shots are needed and when. See UHCCommunityPlan.com or call 1-800-587-5187 (TTY 711) to get a copy.
We care about quality

Each year, UnitedHealthcare Community Plans report how well we are providing health care services. Many of the things we report on are major public health issues.

In 2011, we saw increases in the number of adult members who had their body mass index (BMI) screened for obesity. More members also had follow-up visits following hospitalizations for mental illness and diabetic HbA1c and LDL testing on time. For 2012, we want to improve the number of well visits children aged 3–6 get and the number of timely prenatal and postpartum visits our members have. We also want more members with asthma to use the right medications.

We also conduct member surveys to make sure we are meeting our members’ needs. In 2011, we improved how our members rate their personal doctor, the specialists that they see most often and their overall health care. Our members told us that they want it to be easy to get approvals for tests and treatments. In 2012, we are improving processes in our prior authorization center.

Get it all. If you would like to know more about our Quality Improvement program and our progress toward meeting goals, please call 1-800-587-5187 (TTY 711).

Talking to your teen

Eight tips for teaching sexual responsibility

The teen birth rate is the lowest it has ever been. Rates keep falling for all age groups and ethnicities. Parents can help continue this trend. If you are a parent of a teenager, it’s important to talk to him or her about sex. Here are eight tips from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy:

1. Be clear about your own sexual values.
2. Talk about sex with your children early and often. Be specific!
3. Know where your kids are, what they are doing and whom they are with.
4. Discourage early, frequent and steady dating.
5. Don’t let your daughter date older boys. Or let your son date younger girls.
6. Give your children options for the future that are better than teen parenthood.
7. Tell your kids how much you value education.
8. Build a strong, close relationship with your children from an early age.

Get the facts. Read more about these tips at thenationalcampaign.org. A good pregnancy prevention website for teens is stayteen.org.
Ask Dr. Health E. Hound

Q. How can I protect my family from the flu?

A. The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated. Everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu shot every fall. Healthy children over the age of 2 can get a nasal spray instead of a shot.

   Every member of your family can also do things to keep from being exposed to the flu virus. Help your child:
   ■ wash his or her hands often with soap and water. Or, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
   ■ learn not to touch his or her eyes, nose or mouth.
   ■ eat well, exercise, drink plenty of water and get enough sleep.

Be flu free. UnitedHealthcare Community Plan pays for flu vaccines. There is no cost to you. The best place to get one is at your child’s primary care physician’s (PCP) office. Your child can also get one at any clinic that accepts UnitedHealthcare Community Plan.

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Resource corner

**Member Services** Find a doctor, ask benefit questions or voice a complaint.
1-800-587-5187 (TTY 711)

**Healthy First Steps** Get pregnancy and parenting support.
1-800-599-5985 (TTY 711)

**State Smoking Quitline** Get support to quit smoking.
1-800-QUITNOW (1-800-784-8669)

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

**Our website** Use our provider directory or read our member handbook.
UHCCommunityPlan.com

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**food for thought**

**EATING WELL ON A BUDGET™**

UnitedHealthcare and Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit organization behind *Sesame Street*, have teamed up to develop *Food for Thought: Eating Well on a Budget* to help families make food choices that are affordable, nutritional and set the foundation for lifelong healthy habits.

It can be challenging to talk about food with your children. But children may feel worried or anxious if food is sometimes limited in your home. Listening to and talking openly with your children can reassure them and help your family find solutions together.

Children may have many questions, some of which might be hard for you to answer. That’s all right. As you begin to talk with children, here are some tips to keep in mind:

- **TALK ABOUT FEELINGS.** Encourage children to use words to talk about their feelings. Comfort them by talking about specific things you are doing to help your family.
- **IT’S FINE TO SAY “NO.”** Try to remember that it’s all right if children don’t always get what they want. You’re working to get them the things they need. In fact, it’s valuable to set limits for children.
- **REASSURE OLDER SIBLINGS.**
  You may notice big brothers or sisters making sacrifices without being asked. Offer ideas for positive ways they can help the family instead.

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**Have fun.** Visit [sesamestreet.org/food](http://sesamestreet.org/food) for more *Food for Thought* information including videos, a children’s storybook, a caregiver guide and healthy recipes.

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