



THE KEY TO A GOOD LIFE IS A GREAT PLAN

HealthTALK



DID YOU KNOW?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, adults who get a flu vaccine are 71 percent less likely to be hospitalized from the flu.

71%



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; and
- 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; and
- 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 would like to see more:

- annual well visits for teenagers; and
- 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 areas. 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 **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.

You have the power

6 ways to prevent heart disease

According to the American Heart Association, heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States. One in three people will die from it. But you have the power to prevent it. Here are six ways to a healthy heart.

- 1. EAT RIGHT:** Eat fewer calories than you burn. Choose a variety of nutritious foods. Limit saturated fat, sugar and salt.
- 2. BE ACTIVE:** Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate activity most days.
- 3. DON'T SMOKE:** Also avoid other forms of tobacco and secondhand smoke.
- 4. KNOW YOUR NUMBERS:** Ask your doctor to check your cholesterol and blood pressure. If they are high, work with your doctor to lower them.
- 5. WATCH YOUR WEIGHT:** Maintain the right weight for your height.
- 6. LIMIT STRESS:** Avoid it when you can. Learn methods of coping with stress when you can't avoid it.





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:

| SHINGLES | PNEUMOCOCCAL |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> | <p>WHAT IT IS Pneumococcal disease is caused by the <i>Streptococcus pneumonia</i> bacterium. It can result in severe infections like some types of pneumonia (a lung infection) and meningitis (a brain infection).</p> <p>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.</p> |



You can quit

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; and
- 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)**.



Talk to your doctor. See your primary care provider (PCP) once a year for a check-up. Ask about vaccinations and tests you may need. Need to find a new PCP? Visit UHCommunityPlan.com to use the provider directory. Or call Member Services at **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.

Time for a check-up?

Seniors benefit from a yearly exam.

As you get older, you may notice changes in your hearing, vision and memory. You may find you move more slowly. You may have more pain. Many of these changes are normal, but some changes are signs of a problem. Some may put your safety at risk.

If you are age 66 or older, you should have a yearly wellness exam by your primary care provider (PCP). A wellness exam can help prevent disease or catch disease early, when it is more easily treated. It lets your doctor know if you might benefit from other health services. And it can help you plan your future care. Here are some of the important topics your doctor will discuss at your yearly wellness exam:

- a review of your medications;
- any changes in your ability to do your daily activities such as shopping, transportation, housework and self care;
- your pain level, checking all areas of your body;
- your cognitive activity, such as memory; and
- decisions about advanced care planning.



Make the time. Make an appointment for a FREE yearly wellness exam. Need to find a new PCP? Visit [UHCCommunityPlan.com](https://www.uhc.com/communityplan) or call **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.

Brush up

Healthy teeth and gums allow you to eat well, enjoy your food and feel more confident. Without proper care, teeth can decay and gums can get infected. Over time, these problems can lead to tooth loss.

Dentists are tooth and gum experts. They can help you prevent tooth and gum disease and fix problems you may already have. Be sure to visit your dentist every six months for a check-up and cleaning. And take these steps toward good dental health:

- Brush your teeth twice daily with fluoride toothpaste.
- Floss every day.
- Eat a variety of healthy foods.
- Tell your dentist about your medications. Many drugs cause dry mouth and cause dental problems.
- Quit smoking. Smoking increases your risk of gum disease.



Smile brightly. For more information about your dental benefits, please call **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.





WE SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE

Does your doctor speak your language? UnitedHealthcare Community Plan wants to help members of all cultures and languages get the care they need. Let your primary care provider (PCP) know what language you are most comfortable reading and speaking. Tell him or her if you have any special cultural needs.

If you need to receive care in a language other than English, UnitedHealthcare Community Plan can arrange translation services over the phone. We can also have an interpreter meet you at your doctor's office. We can provide signers for the deaf, and we have Braille and large print materials for members with visual impairment.



Get help. To receive care or information in a language other than English or in another format, call Member Services at **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.

Message to men

The prostate is a gland that is located just under the bladder in men. Prostate problems are common in men over 50 years of age. As men age, the prostate often gets bigger. When this happens, you may have trouble urinating or difficulty with sex.

Most of the time, prostate problems are not caused by cancer. But prostate cancer is the second most common cancer in men. When caught early, it is very curable. That is why it is so important for men over 50 to have a prostate exam. African-American men and men whose father, brother or son had prostate cancer should consider getting tested starting at age 40. Ask your doctor if prostate cancer screening is right for you.



Take charge. Talk to your doctor about your prostate cancer risk factors. Ask when you should have an exam.

Avoid bedsores

Are you in bed or a chair most of the day? If so, you are at high risk for bedsores. A bedsore, or pressure ulcer, is damaged skin that's caused by staying in one position for too long.

Signs of bedsores include skin redness, warm areas, or spongy or hard skin. They can be painful and lead to serious infection. If you see or feel a bedsore, contact your doctor right away.

If you are at high risk for bedsores, your body should be checked every day. You (or your caregiver) should reposition yourself every 15 minutes. Here are more ways to prevent bedsores:

- Make sure that there is nothing pressing on your skin, such as zippers or bunched-up clothing and blankets.
- Keep skin clean and dry.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Wash with a gentle cleanser and moisturize your skin.
- If you are in a wheelchair, be sure that it fits properly.



In control of epilepsy

Epilepsy medication works best when you take it on time. When you forget a pill or a dose, a seizure is more likely to occur. But it can be hard to keep track. Some epilepsy medications must be taken many times each day. You may have other medications that you're taking as well.

If you are having a hard time keeping track, you can get help from your doctor or pharmacist. They may recommend a special pillbox that divides the pills by the times of day. They can explain how to use a daily chart to show which medications you've taken that day, and when. A wristwatch or mobile phone can be set for the hours when you must take your pills.

Most importantly, keep in close contact with your doctor. Tell him or her you need help remembering to take the medication. Together, you can find the best methods to keep you on top of your medication and be seizure-free.

Stay on your toes

You can prevent injuries from falls.

Do you know someone who has been injured by a fall? According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one in three people age 65 and older fall each year. In fact, falls are the No. 1 cause of bone fractures, trauma such as head injury, and death among older people in the U.S. Here are some tips to help keep you on your feet:

- **TALK TO YOUR DOCTOR.** He or she can check to see if your medications are making you dizzy or drowsy, and treat you for weak bones if needed.
- **EXERCISE REGULARLY.** Leg-strengthening exercises and balance routines such as Tai Chi can keep you strong and improve balance.
- **GET YOUR VISION CHECKED EACH YEAR.** Wear the right glasses or contact lens prescription.
- **EAT FOR BONE HEALTH.** Get plenty of calcium and vitamin D from dairy products and green vegetables.
- **REMOVE HOME HAZARDS.** Throw rugs and clutter can cause you to trip.
- **TURN UP THE LIGHTS.** Low lighting can hide tripping hazards.
- **ADD HANDRAILS TO STAIRS AND HALLWAYS.** Install grab bars by the tub and toilet.

More than 1.6 million older adults go to the emergency room each year for injuries from a fall.



Is this an emergency?

For most injuries or illness, start by calling your doctor. But sometimes you need care quickly. Choosing the right place to go can help you be seen faster.

WHEN CAN YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER TREAT YOU?

For most illnesses and injuries, your primary care provider's office should be the first place you call. You might get an appointment that day. You may get advice for self care. Your doctor could call in a prescription to your drugstore. If the office is closed, there will be a message telling you how to reach the doctor.

WHEN SHOULD I GO TO URGENT CARE?

If your doctor is not available quickly enough, go to an urgent care center. Many are open at night or on weekends. They take walk-in patients. They perform medical tests. They treat illnesses or injuries such as:

- sprains and strains;
- broken bones;
- mild asthma attacks;
- minor infections;
- small cuts;
- sore throat; and
- rashes.



WHEN SHOULD I GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM?

Emergency rooms are for major medical emergencies only.

Go there if your illness or injury could cause death or disability if it is not treated right away, such as:

- heavy bleeding;
- large open wounds;
- chest pain;
- sudden weakness or trouble talking;
- major burns;
- spinal injuries;
- severe head injuries; and
- difficulty breathing.

Doctor's orders

Make your doctor your partner in health.

It's no secret that patients don't always follow doctor's orders. Doctors know this. If you have trouble following a doctor's instructions, let him or her know why. Maybe you can't afford your medication. You may need transportation to get a lab test. Maybe a medication has side effects that bother you. Maybe you don't understand what your doctor wants you to do.

Your primary care provider and UnitedHealthcare Community Plan want to make sure you stay healthy. You may need a different medication or a lower-cost medication. You may be eligible for free transportation services. Don't be afraid to ask for more instructions. Ask your doctor to help.



Know your benefits. Knowing what's covered and what extra services are available to you can help you get the care you need. Find out more about these benefits and services in your Member Handbook. It's posted online at **UHCCommunityPlan.com**. If you need a copy mailed to you, please call Member Services toll-free at **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.



Know the signs

Could you have diabetes?

Diabetes is getting more and more common. According to the American Diabetes Association, 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. Diabetes is a serious disease. It can cause damage to your heart, kidneys, eyes and other organs if not managed. Early diagnosis can lead to better outcomes. That's why it's important to get tested.

SYMPTOMS OF TYPE 2 DIABETES

- urinating often;
- feeling very hungry or thirsty;
- being very tired;
- having blurred vision; and
- 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; and
- 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 UHCCommunityPlan.com or call Member Services toll-free at **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.

Resource corner

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

1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)

Our website Use our provider directory or read your Member Handbook.

UHCCommunityPlan.com

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)

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 a doctor's 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: within 24 hours
- Routine PCP visit: within 28 days
- Specialist visit (non-emergency): within 4 weeks



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 **1-800-941-4647 (TTY 711)**.