



Simply, the right choice.
COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN

My CHP Connection

A quarterly health publication for Community Health Plan members

Special Issue 2005

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ANTIBIOTICS | when to use them

When you feel sick, you want to feel better fast. But antibiotics aren't the answer for every illness. This information can help you know when antibiotics work — and when they won't.

The risk: bacteria becomes resistant

What's the harm in taking antibiotics anytime?

Using antibiotics when they are not needed causes some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic. These resistant bacteria are stronger and harder to kill. They can stay in your body and can cause severe illnesses that cannot be cured with antibiotic medicines. A cure for resistant bacteria may require stronger treatment — and possibly a hospital stay. To avoid the threat of antibiotic-resistant infections, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that you avoid taking unnecessary antibiotics. Antibiotics aren't always the answer

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria and viruses.

Antibiotics can cure bacterial infections — not viral infections.

Bacteria cause strep throat, some pneumonia and sinus infections.

Antibiotics can work.

Viruses cause the common cold, most coughs and

the flu. Antibiotics don't work.

Using antibiotics for a virus:

- Will NOT cure the infection

- Will NOT help you feel better
- Will NOT keep others from catching your illness

Protect yourself with the best care

You should not use antibiotics to treat the common cold or the flu. If antibiotics are prescribed for you to treat a bacterial infection — such as strep throat — be sure to take all of the medicine. Only using part of the prescription means that only part of the infection has been treated. Not finishing the medicine can cause resistant bacteria to develop.

Commonly asked questions

How Do I Know if I Have a Viral Illness or a Bacterial Infection?

Ask your doctor or health care provider and follow his or her advice on what to do about your illness.

Remember, colds are caused by viruses and should not be treated with antibiotics.

Won't an Antibiotic Help Me Feel Better Quicker so That I Can Get Back to Work When I Get a Cold or Flu?

No, antibiotics do nothing to help a viral illness. They will not help you feel better sooner. Ask your doctor or health care provider what other treatments are available for your symptoms.

For more information, talk to your doctor or visit www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/community.

www.mychp.com

CANCER | preventive screenings and exams important for early detection

Preventive screenings and exams are your best defense against the progression of cancer. Community Health Plan encourages our members to receive routine preventive health care for a variety of cancers. In this issue, we are highlighting breast and prostate cancer.

Many times you may not feel the need to have preventive screenings and exams or you think you just don't have the time, but to safeguard yourself against undetected, progressing cancers and invasive procedures, it's important to visit your health care provider as follows:

Breast cancer

Take preventive action because the earlier breast cancer is detected and diagnosed, the better chance you have of beating it. There are several steps you need to take to help find any breast cancer early. Make sure you perform a breast self-exam on a monthly basis. No woman particularly wants to do a breast self-exam, but that shouldn't stop you. When you first begin, sometimes it

can be difficult to judge if what you're feeling is normal. Women typically have natural lumps, fibrous or grainy areas. The key is to know what your breasts naturally feel like and look like, then when you feel something out of the ordinary, you can alert your health care provider.

Mammography is another key step in catching breast cancer early. It is the best way to detect breast cancer in its earliest stage, an average of one to three years before a woman can feel a lump through breast self-exam.

Early detection is important because you could be eligible for a less invasive procedure, such as a lumpectomy instead of a mastectomy.

Women, age 40 and older, should have mammography every year. If you are in this age group and have not had mammography in more than a year, please contact one of the Community Health Plan participating mammography sites listed on Page 3.

One in seven women have a lifetime risk of developing breast cancer.

Prostate cancer

One in every six men will develop prostate cancer in his lifetime.

There are those men who never seem to go to the doctor for anything ... even an injury ... much less a preventive health screening. If prostate cancer is detected early, certain treatments may offer long-term survival or even a cure. Men, age 50 and older, should

have an annual prostate exam which includes a digital rectal exam and PSA per physician discretion.



CHP Mammography Sites

For mammography, contact one of our participating providers from the list below to make an appointment.

| Facility | Address | Phone number |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------|
| Northwest Medical Center | 705 N. College, Albany, MO 64402 | (660) 726-3941 |
| Harrison County Community Hospital | 2600 Miller St., Bethany, MO 64424 | (660) 425-2211 |
| Cameron Regional Medical Center, Inc. | 1600 E. Evergreen, Cameron, MO 64429 | (816) 632-2101 |
| Hedrick Medical Center | 100 Central St., Chillicothe, MO 64601 | (660) 646-1480 |
| Community Hospital | Highway 59, Fairfax, MO 64446 | (660) 686-2211 |
| St. Luke's Hospital of Kansas City | 4401 Wornall Rd., Kansas City, MO 64111 | (816) 932-2600 |
| St. Luke's Northland Hospital | 5830 NW Barry Rd., Kansas City, MO 64154 | (816) 891-6000 |
| North Kansas City Hospital | 2800 Clay Edwards Dr., Kansas City, MO 64116 | (816) 691-2000 |
| Medical Imaging, Inc. | 9501 N. Oak Trfy., Ste. 100, Kansas City, MO 64115 | (816) 455-0661 |
| Imaging for Women, LLC | 630 N.W. Englewood Rd., Kansas City, MO 64118 | (816) 453-2700 |
| Diagnostic Imaging Centers, PA | 6724 Troost, Ste. 900, Kansas City, MO 64131 | (816) 333-8420 |
| St. Francis Family Health Care | 114 E. South Hills Dr., Maryville, MO 64468 | (660) 562-2525 |
| St. Luke's South Hospital | 12300 Metcalf Ave., Overland Park, KS 66213 | (913) 317-7000 |
| Shawnee Mission Medical Center | 9100 W. 74th St., Shawnee Mission, MO 66204 | (913) 676-2000 |
| Heartland Women's Health | 802 N. Riverside Rd., Ste. 200-A, St. Joseph, MO 64507 | (816) 271-1200 |
| Heartland Mammography Center | 802 N. Riverside Rd., St. Joseph, MO 64506 | (816) 271-1278 |
| Wright Memorial Hospital | 701 E. First St., Trenton, MO 64683 | (660) 359-5621 |



COMMUNITY
health
LINE

If you would like more information about breast or prostate cancer or cancer screenings, contact Community Health Line at (816) 271-4000 or (800) 455-2476.

NEW | local disease management service

Community Health Plan is pleased to announce that we have transitioned our disease management programs from American Healthways to the Community Health Line call center located in St. Joseph, Mo. If you are enrolled in one of our disease management programs, you will receive personalized support from a care partner, a registered nurse who is specially trained to coordinate care and services for our members. This change will provide you with improved, local service and education.

There are several benefits to local disease management

- Staff of specially trained registered nurses
- Provide disease-specific education to members through telephonic support and newsletters
- Provide coordination of care information to members

- Assist members with navigating the health care system
- Registered nurses partner with the member's health care provider to enhance communication
- Keep you informed of local resources, support groups, classes, expos, health fairs, etc.
- 24/7/365 access to Community Health Line registered nurses for health care concerns or immediate answers to health care related questions
- Assist with locating providers through Community Health Line's provider referral program

We are pleased to bring you local disease management support as we continue to focus on health improvement in our community.

COMMUNICATING | with your health care provider

When you see your health care provider, it can seem like there isn't enough time to get all your questions answered. To avoid any anxiety, here are some tips for discussing your medical needs with your provider:

- Prepare a list of concerns and questions ahead of time, then while you are waiting to see your provider, review your list and organize your thoughts.
- Describe your symptoms (if any) clearly and briefly by stating how they make you feel, if something triggers them and what you've done to feel better.
- Let your health care provider know what prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, vitamins, herbal products and other supplements you're taking. It's important to be forthcoming with your provider about your diet, physical activity, smoking, alcohol or drug use, and sexual history. Describe allergies to drugs, foods, etc. Let your provider know if other doctors, including mental health professionals, are treating you.
- Discuss sensitive topics without embarrassment. Your health care provider has most likely heard it before. Don't leave out information because you are worried about taking up too much time. Be sure all of your concerns are addressed before you leave.
- If your health care provider orders tests, be sure to find out how to get the results and how long it takes to get them.
- If you are diagnosed with a condition, ask your health care provider how you can learn more about it, including what caused it, if it's permanent, and if there are lifestyle changes you can make to help yourself feel better. Also ask about all of the treatment options.
- When your health care provider gives you medications or other treatments, ask about them. Ask how long treatment will last, if there are any side effects, how much it will cost and if it is covered by insurance. Make sure you understand how to take your medications, what to do if you miss a dose; if there are any foods, drugs or activities you should avoid while taking the medication; and if there is a generic brand available at a lower price (you can also ask your pharmacist about this).
- Be sure to understand everything before you leave your visit. If you don't understand something, ask to have it explained again.

Being prepared takes the pressure off and reduces the anxiety of having to remember your questions in the moment. Following these simple steps will help you have a more successful visit.

REFERRAL PROCESS | for HMO members

With the HMO benefit plan, your primary care provider (PCP) works with you to receive necessary and appropriate care from specialists. You should discuss each referral with your PCP to understand the specialist services that are being recommended and why. Your PCP will call Community Health Plan to request a specialist referral for medically necessary services. Referrals are made to in-network participating providers and are valid for six months from the date the referral is issued, unless otherwise stated.

Note: Your membership card states “TELEPHONE REFERRAL REQUIRED.” Without a valid referral for specialist services, you may be responsible for the payment of the medical care provided.

Once the referral is approved, you will be assigned a referral number. You will receive a confirmation letter, which lists the valid time period and the number of specialist visits that have been authorized. The PCP and specialist also receive written referral confirmation.

- Always take the referral authorization letter with you when you visit the specialist.
- Referrals requested after services have occurred will not be approved.

Requests for additional visits or referrals to other providers that are recommended by a specialist must be made through your PCP.

Exception: An OB/GYN treating a member for the diagnosis and treatment of OB/GYN-related conditions is allowed to make a specialist referral.

You must contact your PCP to request a new referral if:

- You change employers.
- The timeline stated in your referral authorization letter expires or if a new calendar year has begun. (See article below.)
- You have used all of the authorized visits approved with your current referral.

For members who have Point of Service benefits, you may choose to have services from a specialist who is not in the Community Health Plan network and without a referral; however, these visits will be covered at a reduced level of benefits.

Community Health Plan members in the PPO benefit plan do not have requirements for specialist referrals.

Examples of services that do not require a referral:

- OB/GYN services (well-woman exams)
- Annual mammogram
- Chiropractic Care/Manipulative Therapy services

Note: these services must be provided by gynecologists and chiropractors contracted with Community Health Plan.

There are a few conditions/treatments that have a 12-month valid referral period.

These include:

- Chemotherapy
- Radiation oncology
- Hepatitis C
- Renal Failure
- Rheumatoid arthritis

NEW TECHNOLOGY | our member's care

Community Health Plan monitors new developments in medical treatments, pharmaceuticals and devices to ensure that appropriate new technology is available for our member's care. We identify new medical technology developments by requests from our members, physicians, published research and monthly Hayes Medical Technology reports.

Once new technologies are recommended they are reviewed for:

- Possible benefits and risks to the member.

- Compliance with evidence-based medical guidelines.
- Ethical considerations.
- Qualifications of medical personnel providing the new technology services.

Once this information is evaluated, the decision is made to approve or deny the new technology as a new benefit for our members. If you have a question about a new treatment or medication, contact Customer Service at (816) 271-1247 or (800) 990-9247.

HEALTH SCREENINGS | covered benefits

As a Community Health Plan member (exception: Advanced choice Value plan), the following adult preventive health screenings and exams are available to you as a paid benefit:

Men and Women

- Fecal occult blood test (annually)
- Skin screening/exam every three years if you are age 20 – 39, annually if you are age 40 or older
- Sigmoidoscopy every five years, or colonoscopy every ten years, once you are age 50 and older

Women

- Pelvic exam (annually)
- Pap test (annually)

- Mammogram and clinical breast exam:
 - Women between age 20 – 39: clinical breast exam every three years by a healthcare professional
 - Women age 40 and older: annual mammogram and clinical breast exam

Men

- Prostate exam if you are age 50 and older, digital rectal exam and PSA per physician discretion
- These screening exams are consistent with the current American Cancer Society screening guidelines.*

ESPECIALLY FOR WOMEN | the well-woman exam

Female members of Community Health Plan (CHP) are strongly encouraged to have one well-woman exam per calendar year from your health care provider or obstetrical/gynecological (OB/GYN) provider. The exam includes a pap test and a breast exam. Your provider will also schedule a mammogram, if appropriate. In addition to the routine well-woman exam, sexually active women should consider chlamydia screening. Chlamydia screening is essential, since the majority of women do not experience symptoms. This sexually transmitted disease can cause pelvic inflammatory disease, infertility

and ectopic pregnancy. Simply contact your health care provider to schedule an appointment.

If a health care need is identified during this exam, you may continue to go directly to the OB/GYN for follow-up care. If you need specialized services, the OB/GYN can make the arrangements.

Expectant mothers are covered for prenatal care under CHP according to the benefit program described in your Group Service Agreement. If you think you are pregnant, call your health care provider or an OB/GYN provider to schedule an appointment.

COVERAGE | for out-of-area dependents

Members who live out of the Community Health Plan service area, for example college students, are covered only for urgent care and emergency services.

Dependents who have the HMO product and are living out-of-area must still choose an in-network primary care provider (PCP) from the Provider Directory. When any routine care is needed such as an annual physical, well-baby check, etc., this service must be administered by the member's network PCP, to be considered a covered benefit.

For out-of-area dependents who require urgent or emergency care, we recommend contacting the Community Health Line at (800) 455-2476 for information regarding the most appropriate care in the most appropriate setting. Emergency services received outside of the service area will be covered at 100 percent. Urgent services received outside of the service area will be reviewed by the clinical review specialist and the medical director and will be covered based on diagnosis.

DENTAL | coverage information

While Community Health Plan (CHP) does not provide coverage for routine dental care and basic restorative dentistry, members who require services for dental trauma or for diseases of the mouth may seek care from any CHP participating dentist or oral surgeon.

Dental trauma may include, but is not limited to, blunt trauma and penetrating trauma that impacts the mouth, teeth and/or gums.

Diseases of the mouth may include, but are not limited to, oral cancer, oral lesions and infections.

For more information, contact Customer Service at (816) 271-1247 or (800) 990-9247.

ANNUAL PHYSICALS | a CHP benefit

One annual physical exam for the assessment of your health by your primary care provider is a benefit for Community Health Plan members. However, keep in mind that physical exams for the purpose of entering school, to participate on sports teams, summer camps

or for employment are not covered. The cost of these physicals will be the responsibility of the Community Health Plan member. Excludes: Advanced Choice, Value option.

update ...

Visit MyCHP Service at www.mychp.com to:

- View claims information
- View eligibility information
- Check referral status
- Order identification cards
- Change your primary care provider (for HMO members)
- Search the provider directory

Member Rights

- A right to receive information about Community Health Plan, its services, its practitioners and providers and members' rights and responsibilities
- A right to be treated with respect and recognition of their dignity and their right to privacy
- A right to participate with practitioners in making decisions about their health care
- A right to a candid discussion of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for their conditions, regardless of cost or benefit coverage
- A right to voice complaints or appeals about Community Health Plan or the care it provides
- A right to make recommendations regarding Community Health Plan's members' rights and responsibilities policies

Member Responsibilities

- A responsibility to supply information (to the extent possible) that Community Health Plan and its practitioners and providers need in order to provide care
- A responsibility to follow plans and instructions for care that they have agreed on with their practitioners
- A responsibility to understand their health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed upon treatment goals to the degree possible

HEDIS RATES | continued

improvement

Community Health Plan's (CHP) Health Plan Employer Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) and Consumer Assessment of Health Plans Study (CAHPS®) results are now finalized for report year 2004. HEDIS and CAHPS results are the most widely used performance measurement tools to monitor health plan performance and quality. These performance measures are developed and maintained by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA®). HEDIS and CAHPS rates are submitted to NCQA by 90 percent of the nation's health plans.

HEDIS has become much more than a set of performance measures; it is an integrated system to establish accountability in managed care. CHP's 2004 HEDIS results, which stem from administrative and medical record data, indicate statistically significant improvement in measures relating to children and adolescents. Overall, childhood immunization compliance increased by nearly 7 percent from the previous year. Adolescent immunization compliance increased more than 16 percent. CHP also experienced 10 percent rate increases for both Appropriate Treatment of Children with Pharyngitis and Appropriate Treatment of Children with Upper Respiratory Infection.

CHP improved in other domains of care as well from the previous year. Follow-up After Mental Illness (both seven- and 30-day follow-up rates) improved 7 percent. Prenatal Care rates improved nearly 12 percent. Colorectal

Cancer Screening and Chlamydia screening rates rose more than 5 percent.

Antidepressant Medication Management, Breast Cancer Screening and Well-Child Visit rates are all below national averages. Rates for cardiac and diabetic care decreased slightly for the first time in five years. Measures for asthmatic patient care have also decreased. CHP will actively pursue implementation of quality improvement initiatives related to these measures in efforts to ensure our members are receiving the highest quality care.

CHP is very proud of our CAHPS member satisfaction survey results. CAHPS results stem from a member satisfaction survey conducted earlier this year. Customer Service scores improved 5.5 percent and Claims Processing Scores improved more than 2 percent. These two scores place the plan #1 among health plans in the State of Missouri (tying for 1st in Customer Service) in reference to these two areas of service. The Overall Rating of the Health Plan score also improved significantly, up nearly 7 percent. This places CHP in the 75th percentile of all health plans in the nation. Getting Needed Care improved 4.6 percent, Rating of Overall Health improved nearly 3 percent, and Rating of Health Care improved nearly 4 percent. CHP will continue to keep a watchful eye on Getting Care Quickly, How Well Doctors Communicate and Courteous and Helpful Office Staff.

PRESCRIBED MEDICATION | proper use and communication

Today's medicines can achieve remarkable outcomes in the treatment of diseases and illnesses that just a few years ago would have required prolonged hospitalization or extended care. Even the best medicine can't produce its intended results if you don't use your medication as directed.

Three out of every five doctor visits result in a prescription being issued by the physician. Almost half of all patients do not have their prescriptions filled and as many as 30 percent do not have their prescriptions refilled. The improper use of prescription drugs — or “noncompliance” with medication instructions — can lead to complications and even hospitalization.

Studies have shown that by the time the patient gets from the doctor's office to the pharmacy, many have forgotten half of the doctor's instructions about their prescribed medication.

To ensure the proper use of your medications, please adhere to the following steps:

- Ask the pharmacist questions about proper use every time you get a new prescription.
- Use only one pharmacy for all prescriptions so a complete medication profile can be maintained.
- Tell the doctor and pharmacist about all the drugs — both prescription and non-prescription — you are using.
- Never take prescriptions that are prescribed for another person.
- Take all of the medicine as prescribed; don't stop

taking it once you start feeling better.

- Never take medicines in the dark; the wrong medication may be taken.
- Do not take more or less than the recommended dosage without consulting the prescribing physician or pharmacist.
- Never hesitate to ask the pharmacist any questions you have about your medication.

Ask your pharmacist the following questions each time you have a prescription filled:

- What is the name of the medicine and what is it supposed to do?
- How long am I to take it? What time of the day? How often?
- What if I miss a dose or forget to take it?
- If I start to feel better, can I stop, or take less than what the doctor prescribed?
- Do I take it with food? Are there foods, drinks or other medications — prescription or non-prescription — that I should avoid with this medicine?
- What side effects, if any, should I watch for? What should I do if they occur?
- What should I do with any left over medicine?
- Are there special storage precautions for this medicine?

By following these recommendations you should have the result you and your physician expect.

CHOLESTEROL | winning the battle

You may consider yourself risk-free from high cholesterol, but finding out your number by making an annual appointment with your health care provider to have a cholesterol screening is important.

Tips for controlling your cholesterol

- Cut down on high-fat meats.
- Trim visible fat from meat: grill or broil meat.
- Choose low-fat dairy products.
- Reduce high-fat snack foods.
- Substitute two egg whites for the whole eggs or use egg substitutes. Limit egg yolks to four or less per week.

- Limit meat to 6 oz. per day (3 oz. is the size of a deck of cards).
- Increase the fiber in your diet through oatmeal, dried beans, peas and fruits to help lower your cholesterol along with a low-fat diet.
- Use canola or olive oil in small amounts for baking and cooking.
- Use soft margarines with little to no saturated fat and no trans fatty acids or use spray butter for no added calories or fat.

WELLNESS RECIPE | brought to you by Wellness Connections

Smoked Paprika Pork Chops with Bell Pepper and Corn Relish

Accompany with refrigerated potato wedges tossed with garlic powder, ground red pepper, and salt, and roasted until crisp.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 tablespoon olive oil | 1 teaspoon cider vinegar |
| 1/2 cup prechopped red onion | 3/4 teaspoon salt, divided |
| 2 teaspoons bottled minced fresh ginger | 1/4 teaspoon black pepper, divided |
| 1/3 cup chopped red bell pepper | 1 1/2 teaspoons smoked sweet paprika |
| 1 teaspoon ground coriander | 4 (4-ounce) center-cut boneless pork loin chops, trimmed |
| 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme | Cooking spray |
| 1 (15.5-ounce) can no salt-added whole kernel corn, drained | |

Heat olive oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add red onion and ginger; sauté 2 minutes or until tender. Add chopped red bell pepper, ground coriander, dried thyme and corn; cook 3 minutes or until the bell pepper is tender, stirring occasionally. Stir in cider vinegar, 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon black pepper; cook for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Spoon relish into a bowl.

Combine remaining 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/8 teaspoon black pepper and paprika; sprinkle evenly over pork. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add pork to pan; cook 4 minutes on each side or until done. Serve with relish.

Nutritional facts

| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Serves: 4 | Sodium: 508 mg |
| Calories: 263 | Carbohydrates: 19.8 g |
| Total fat: 8.9 g | Fiber: 1.4 g |
| Saturated fat: 2.5 g | Protein: 27.2 g |
| Cholesterol: 62 mg | |

COPD | reducing your risk factors

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary (lung) Disease (COPD) is a group of diseases (including chronic bronchitis, chronic obstructive bronchitis and emphysema) that block airflow and cause breathing-related problems. COPD also includes a gradual loss of lung function.

Smoking is a key risk factor for COPD, whether you are a current or former smoker. Even passive exposure to smoke from cigarettes, pipes, cigars, etc. is a risk factor. Dusts, chemicals and outdoor air pollutants can also cause COPD. If your job frequently exposes you to toxic chemicals and pollutants, your risk of developing COPD increases. In a recent study, it's estimated that 19.2 percent of COPD occurrences are attributed to work-related exposure. To decrease your risk of developing COPD, avoid smoking and being exposed to secondary smoke.

COPD develops slowly; many years could go by before you notice any symptoms. Damage that this disease causes to your airways and lungs cannot be reversed. It is not contagious; you cannot spread the disease to others or catch it from someone else.

To further reduce your risk factors, eat a nutritionally healthy, balanced diet, stay active on a daily basis, exercise and make healthy lifestyle choices.

If you have been diagnosed with COPD and would like to talk with a Community Health Plan care partner, call (816) 271-1247 or (800) 990-9247. If you suspect you are suffering from COPD and have not been diagnosed, contact your health care provider.

DIABETES | small lifestyle changes make a big difference

Lifestyle accounts for many occurrences of diabetes. Many people can delay or prevent diabetes by making simple changes to their daily lifestyle. By increasing your activity level, eating a nutritious, balanced diet and controlling your portion sizes, you can make great strides in developing a healthy lifestyle that will last. Here are a few tips ...

Start with your eating habits

- Lower your fat intake to less than 30 percent of the total calories in your food.
- Lower your carbohydrate (carbs) intake: carbs turn into sugar and since insulin takes the sugar from the blood into the cells, too many carbs can cause a high blood glucose level in a diabetic.
- Plan your meals, instead of going for quick and easy (e.g. junk food, fast food), plan out your healthy meals and nutritious snacks for the week or at least the day.

Reinforce those good eating habits with an increased activity level

- Get up and do something ... walk around the block, do aerobic exercises to break a sweat. Try to get in 30 minutes of aerobic exercise a day. Do it all at once or break it up into 10-minute segments. Every little bit helps, just challenge yourself.

- Once you're comfortable with your aerobic exercises, try adding strengthening exercises at least twice a week.

If you are diagnosed with diabetes, be sure to visit your health care provider for routine assessments to ensure that you are properly managing your condition.



PREVENTIVE CARE | for your children

Routine visits to your child's health care provider begin when your child is a newborn and continue through adolescence. These routine well-child visits are the best way to ensure that your child's growth and development is on schedule. Your child's provider will typically check speech, eyesight, growth, social development and identify any problems or illnesses as early as possible.

At a well-child visit, we encourage parents of young members to ask questions about your child's nutrition, safety information and how to deal with any special needs. Your child's provider will be able to anticipate

concerns and questions that may arise during each stage of your child's development.

An adolescent wellness visit gives your health care provider the chance to discuss with you and your teenager how to avoid risky behavior, what to expect during puberty and to ensure that your adolescent's development is on schedule. Booster shots for some diseases are needed between ages 11 and 16.

For more information about well-child visits, contact Community Health Line at (816) 271-4000 or (800) 455-2476.

IMMUNIZATIONS | and your health

Our body's immune system is our personal defense against infectious diseases. It is designed to protect us when we are exposed to an illness. Our immune system learns from each experience, so the next time we are exposed to the same illness, our immune system will recognize the illness and work to destroy it. That's why immunizations are a powerful tool for preventive health.

How immunizations work

When you get an immunization, you are exposed to a small, safe, inactivated sample of the diseases you may encounter at some point in your life. A mild exposure teaches your immune system to recognize and attack the disease efficiently. If you are exposed to the full-blown disease later in life, you will probably not become infected or at least will have a less severe infection, because you were immunized.

Community Health Plan's (CHP) goal is to help you and your children enjoy the best possible health and quality of life. We encourage our members to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommended immunization schedule. This schedule is available by visiting www.mychp.com, click on *Health Improvement* and select *Immunizations*. Remember the ages recommended on the immunization schedule are not by chance. Children and adolescents receive the immunizations at the times listed for each vaccine so they will have the earliest and strongest protection against the disease. At each visit to your child's health care provider, ask about the next recommended immunizations.

We support parents of our young members and under-

stand the fear that comes with getting an injection (shot), the way most immunizations must be given, and we offer the following tips when your child is getting an immunization:

- Inform older children and adolescents that the shot is needed to keep them safe and healthy. Make sure your provider explains what will occur prior to, during and after the shot is administered. Understanding what to expect may reassure your child.
- Assure your child that it is okay to cry, but to be brave. Use yourself as an example by stating that you don't like shots either, but you try to be brave. Give your child praise after he/she receives the shot, whether or not he/she is crying.
- Distract your child at the moment of the injection by pointing out a poster or picture on the wall or sing the "ABCs" with him/her.
- Remain calm. Your child could notice if you cringe before the shot.
- Plan a fun outing or event for after the shot. If your child associates the shot with doing something fun afterward, it can make the next shot less scary.

Simply visit your child's provider to receive immunizations. If you would like more information about immunizations, contact Customer Service at (816) 271-1247 or (800) 990-9247.

This publication contains health information that is meant to complement your health care provider's advice, not to replace it. Before making changes in your medications, diet or exercise, talk to your doctor.



Simply, the right choice.

COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN

137 N. Belt Highway
St. Joseph, MO 64506

(816) 271-1247

(800) 990-9247

Heartland Health Business Plaza

entry hours: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

www.mychp.com

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