



Simply, the right choice.
COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN

My CHP Connection

A quarterly health publication for Community Health Plan members

Summer 2006

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NEW PROCESS | for student status verification

We've made our student status verification easier! In the past, we required a copy of your dependent's class schedule. With the new process, you will no longer be required to submit the class schedule.

This change is effective for the 2006 – 2007 school year. In June, we mailed letters and forms to members who have a dependent who is a current student according to our records. By completing and returning the mailed form (or the new online form) by August 31, you have notified us of the status of your dependent. If you have a student and did not receive a letter, please contact

the Enrollment Department at (816) 271-1094 or (816) 271-7380.

When you receive the Student Status Verification form, you can either complete the mailed version or visit www.mychp.com and complete the online version. Just go to Members and click on Student Status Verification. If you complete the mailed version, please return the form in the self-address stamped envelope. If you do not notify CHP of your student's status, your dependent's insurance benefits will be terminated. By streamlining this process, we've made it easier for you to submit this information.

NEW VACCINE COVERED | the HPV/cervical cancer connection

You've probably seen it in the news ... cervical cancer is caused by certain types of a common virus, human papillomavirus (HPV). There are several types of HPV. Most are harmless, but some can cause cervical cancer. If a woman's body does not clear the infection, abnormal cells can develop in the lining of the cervix. If these cells are not discovered early, they can become cervical precancer and then cancer.

Community Health Plan is pleased to announce we will provide coverage for a new FDA-approved immunization called Gardasil™. This is a new vaccine to help control cervical cancer. It is given in a series of three vaccines. The FDA approved Gardasil for females age 9 – 26.

Immunization with Gardasil is expected to prevent most cases of cervical cancer due to the majority of HPV types. Gardasil does not protect

www.mychp.com

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TAKING CARE | of cholesterol

By now, you've probably heard the buzz about cholesterol. Every day experts become more certain that the lower your LDL cholesterol levels, the better your chances of avoiding a first — or second — heart attack.

Cholesterol control is important for everyone, no matter what your age or risk level for heart disease. The first step toward taking control is to know your numbers. Beginning at age 20, you should have your cholesterol tested every five years. The best test to have is called a lipoprotein profile. This test shows your total cholesterol, LDL (“bad”) cholesterol, HDL (“good”) cholesterol, and triglycerides levels.

Your total cholesterol number is a good general indicator of your heart disease risk (see chart below),

- **Eat wisely.** Choose a diet that is low in saturated and trans fats. Aim for less than 200 milligrams of dietary cholesterol per day. Include plenty of whole grains, beans, fruits and vegetables.
- **Get active.** Regular physical activity actually lowers LDL levels and raises HDL levels. Get at least 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week.
- **Control your weight.** Losing weight can also lower LDL levels. By following the TLC diet and exercise plan, you'll be on your way to dropping those extra pounds.

Dietary and lifestyle changes are sometimes enough to improve cholesterol levels and reduce heart disease risk. But if you have other risk factors, or already have heart disease, getting your numbers down may require medication too. There are many types of cholesterol-lowering drugs, statins being the most common. Based on your lipids profile, your doctor will choose the most appropriate treatment for you.

Remember, taking medication doesn't mean you can stop eating well or exercising. Medications work best in conjunction with a heart-healthy lifestyle.

Know Your Numbers

Total Cholesterol Level	What Does It Mean?
Less than 200 mg/dL	Desirable
200 – 239 mg/dL	Borderline high
240 mg/dL and above	High

but the other numbers are even more important. In general, you want your LDL numbers to be as low as possible: less than 100 mg/dL. You want your HDL level to be as high as possible, usually 60 mg/dL or more. Everyone will have different goals for exactly what those numbers should be depending on their risk factors.

No matter what your cholesterol goals are, one of the most important things to do is to give yourself a lot of TLC: therapeutic lifestyle changes, that is. TLC refers to the three basics of good health — diet, exercise and weight control.

How high is your risk of having a heart attack in the next 10 years?

Find out today so you can start doing something about it. The American Heart Association offers a quick online risk assessment at <http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=3003499>.

CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS |

more important than ever

According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of children in America receiving immunizations is at an all-time high. There have been major increases in the coverage rates for varicella (chickenpox) and pneumococcal conjugate vaccine. These are two of the most recent additions to the recommended immunization schedule.

It's no coincidence that we also have record or near record low levels of the kind of childhood diseases that can be prevented by vaccine. But make no mistake, these diseases have not disappeared. The viruses and bacteria that cause them are still alive, circulating in this country or just a short plane ride away in countries where vaccination is not so widespread.

That's why it's important — very important — that children, especially infants and young children, receive recommended immunizations on time.

This year, a major study from the Institutes of Medicine put to rest a number of unfounded rumors about childhood vaccination. Parents who have been needlessly frightened by tales of vaccination-related illnesses should be breathing easier. If your children have missed any in their series of vaccinations or are ready for the next phase, contact your physician and get them protected.

For the current CDC immunization schedules, please visit www.mychnp.com, click on Health Improvement and select Immunizations from the list provided.

COMMUNITY health LINE

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

WEIGHT MATTERS | for kids

Being overweight is harmful for children. It can lead to diabetes in kids and put them at risk for other health problems as adults. That's why it's very important that you help your children stay at a healthy weight. Here are some steps to take:

- Keep your children active. Don't let them spend too much time watching television.
- Make sure they eat healthy foods. Fast food is not a wise replacement for a well-balanced meal.
- Don't focus on an overweight child. Make healthy eating a family affair.
- Don't use food as a reward or punishment.

When it comes to controlling your weight, set a good example for your children. It will help your whole family get healthier.



YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE | action plan

No pun intended, high blood pressure is on the rise. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) says that there has been a “striking increase” over the past decade in the number of Americans whose blood pressure is too high. The NIH estimates that nearly one-third of adults older than age 18 now have this potentially dangerous condition.

Since you don’t usually feel the effects of high blood pressure, it may be hard to understand why it’s a problem. But the fact is that it’s a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke, and it increases the risk of kidney disease too.

Luckily, high blood pressure — also called hypertension — can be prevented and controlled by making simple lifestyle changes. Whether you make these changes one at a time or go for a lifestyle overhaul, it’s well worth the effort. Follow these five steps to better blood pressure.

1
 Lose weight and then maintain it. Blood pressure increases as weight increases, so losing even 10 pounds will make a difference.

2
 Eat smart. The foods to focus on are whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and low-fat dairy products. As with any heart-healthy diet, avoid saturated fats and limit cholesterol. Reducing sodium is crucial too. Hide the saltshaker, limit processed and fast foods — which are often high in sodium — and read food labels to choose lower-sodium options. To help counter the negative effects of sodium, get more potassium in your diet from foods like bananas, raisins and milk.

3
 Get active. Exercise lowers blood pressure, so it’s an effective way to prevent and control hypertension. After just a few weeks of regular exercise, you could see an improvement in your numbers. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week.

4
 Kick bad habits. Smoking is bad for your health in many ways, but it also raises blood pressure. Ask your doctor for help quitting. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation: no more than two drinks a day for men, one for women.

5
 Take your meds. If your doctor has prescribed medication to lower your blood pressure, be sure to take it as directed. Discuss any side effects with your doctor.

Preventing high blood pressure needs to start early, even with children and teens. It’s never too soon to make these lifestyle changes.

Blood Pressure Levels for Adults

Category	Systolic (top number)	Diastolic (bottom number)
Normal	Less than 120	Less than 80
Prehypertension	120 – 139	80 – 89
High blood pressure		
Stage 1	140 – 159	90 – 99
Stage 2	160 or higher	100 or higher

Next time you’re at the doctor, ask what your blood pressure reading is. You can also find blood pressure testing machines at some pharmacies. For an explanation of blood pressure numbers, visit the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute at www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/Hbp/HBP_WhatIs.html.

PAYING ATTENTION | to ADHD

As every parent knows, young children are naturally active and impulsive. Their attention spans can be measured in seconds, not minutes or hours. Some children, however, have severe, disruptive patterns of behavior known as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

ADHD, you might be surprised to learn, affects nearly 2 million American children. The National Institute of Mental Health estimates that every classroom in America has at least one child in need of help for ADHD. The good news is that help is available.

The Symptoms of ADHD

ADHD affects boys 10 times more often than girls. Its symptoms are noticeable early, often before your child reaches the age of 7. Mental health experts list the following as signs that your child might have ADHD:

- Has trouble following directions.
- Grows frustrated easily.
- Acts impulsively, often causing errors or accidents.
- Has difficulty paying attention and is distracted easily.
- Has difficulty planning and organizing tasks.
- Acts restless and fidgety, and can't stay seated.
- Can't wait for his or her turn.
- Can't finish a game or task before moving on to another.

Of course, all kids display these traits from time to time. Changes in the child's environment or home situation can cause some or all of these symptoms. Food allergies, new medication, and many other factors also affect young children's behavior. That's why experts warn parents not to worry that every tantrum is a sign of ADHD. But if the child consistently acts in two or more of these ways over a long period of time, he or she might need help.

What to Do

Despite all the attention given to ADHD recently, its causes are still largely unknown. It was thought that certain diets, difficult home life, and even too much television were possible factors, but those have largely

been ruled out. ADHD might have a genetic basis, and it sometimes runs in families. But the primary cause, be it heredity, environment, psychological, physical, or something else entirely, remains elusive.

Parents of children with ADHD worry less about the cause. They need help finding treatment. The first step for those parents is to realize that their child is suffering from a disorder. Like any medical condition, ADHD is not the fault of the child or the parents. Those parents must seek medical help in a calm, loving and caring manner.

Take the child to his or her pediatrician. The doctor can conduct tests to rule out other possible causes of the behavior, such as hearing, vision and cognition problems. The doctor will also talk with you about the child's behavioral history. In addition, the doctor might want to interview teachers, coaches and others who have spent time with your child.

Your pediatrician may be able to treat mild forms of ADHD easily. More severe cases that include overly aggressive behavior or depression might be referred to a specialist. Either way, the important thing is to seek help right away.

Is There a Problem?

All children are active. And they all have tantrums. Parents need to recognize the differences between normal behavior and ADHD. If you suspect ADHD, see your pediatrician.

WELLNESS RECIPE | brought to you by Wellness Connections

Oven-Poached Salmon in Garlic Broth

2 tablespoons lemon juice
5 garlic cloves, minced
2 (8-ounce) bottles clam juice
1 (16-ounce) bag coleslaw

4 (6-ounce) salmon fillets, skinned
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro or parsley
1/8 teaspoon pepper

Preheat oven to 375°.

Combine first three ingredients in a small saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 5 minutes. Place coleslaw in an 11 x 7-inch baking dish; arrange fish on top of coleslaw. Pour juice mixture over fish; sprinkle with cilantro and pepper. Bake at 375° for 12 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork.

Nutritional facts

Serves: 4
Calories: 338
Total fat: 15.8 g
Saturated fat: 2.8 g
Cholesterol: 123 mg

Sodium: 356 mg
Carbohydrates: 7 g
Fiber: 2.3 g
Protein: 40.6 g

NOW ONLINE!

Plan information now online!

You can now view plan information online. Just visit www.mychp.com, click on Member Newsletter on the left side of the home page and select Missouri DOI Plan Information to view the following topics:

If you do not have Internet access, please contact Customer Service at (800) 990-9247 to receive a copy of this information.

Annual Physicals: a CHP benefit

Member Rights and Responsibilities

CARE: a program for members with high-risk conditions

Specialist Referrals: for HMO members

Privacy Notice: for members

Health information online ...

Community Health Plan has added health information online. You are now able to search through a variety of health topics through our new online tool. Just visit www.mychp.com, click on Health Improvement and select Online Health Information from the list provided.

You'll have access to information about medical tests, drug information, drug interactions and more.

LOCAL SERVICE

better care

As part of Community Health Plan's health improvement initiative, we offer Community Connections, a disease management program, to members diagnosed with chronic conditions.

Care partners, who are specially trained registered nurses, support members in managing their condition by coordinating care with their physicians. Care partners focus on member education and instruction on how to self-manage a disease, with a goal of improving overall health and promoting the best possible quality of life. We currently offer programs for diabetes, coronary heart disease/congestive heart failure, asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary (lung) disease (COPD).

These programs are provided at no additional cost to Community Health Plan members who are diagnosed with any of these conditions. You'll find comfort in knowing that these services are provided locally by nurses who understand how to navigate through the health care system. This local service means you are getting personalized care and support.

Disease Management Programs

When you are enrolled in one of our disease management programs, you will receive customized service from a care partner. Each program includes support from a care partner and education on how to manage your condition so you can live a healthy and productive life. We also strive to improve your overall health and prevent, delay or reduce the severity of long-term complications.

Diabetes Connections

Diabetes Connections is available to members with type 1 or type 2 diabetes.

Program includes: educational phone calls, Diabetes Education Wheel (quick reference guidelines) and a quarterly diabetes newsletter. To view the quarterly *Diabetes Today* newsletter, visit www.mychp.com, click on Health Improvement, select Diabetes Connections and click on *Diabetes Today* newsletter.

Cardiac Connections

Cardiac Connections is available to members diagnosed with heart disease and congestive heart failure.

Program includes: educational phone calls, Cardiac Education Wheel (quick reference guidelines) and a quarterly cardiac care newsletter. To view the *Healthy Heart* newsletter, visit www.mychp.com, click on Health Improvement, select Cardiac Connections and click on *Healthy Heart* newsletter.

Asthma Connections

Asthma Connections is available to members who have been diagnosed with asthma. This program focuses on children, but we also support adults in asthma management.

Program includes: educational phone calls, instruction on asthma care guidelines and a quarterly asthma newsletter.

COPD Connections

COPD Connections is available to members with airflow obstruction due to chronic bronchitis, emphysema or asthma.

Program includes: educational phone calls and instruction on COPD care guidelines.

CARE Connections

The Community Health Access, Resource and Education (CARE) program is a care management service for members who have a high-risk or complicated diagnosis, need assistance in managing multiple medical conditions or have a behavioral health diagnosis such as chronic depression. Examples of high-risk or complicated conditions include: trauma-related conditions, organ transplants, cancer and those conditions that require increased coordination of care.

For more information or to find out if you are eligible for a program, please contact Community Health Plan Customer Service at (816) 271-1247 or (800) 990-9247.

GENERIC DRUGS | a cost savings for you

Generic drugs are lower-priced drugs, sometimes as much as 80 percent less than their brand-name equivalents. This can help you lower the amount you spend on prescription drugs. Generic drugs are less expensive because generic manufacturers do not have the costs associated with research, development and advertising as compared to brand-name drug manufacturers. Generic drugs are required to have the same quality, strength, purity and stability and must work the same way in the body as brand-name drugs.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires that all drugs be safe and effective. Since generics use the same active ingredients and are shown to work the same way in the body, they have the same risks and benefits as their brand-name counterparts. Generic drugs must also

meet the same standards of good manufacturing processes. The FDA will not allow drugs to be made in substandard facilities. In fact, brand-name companies are linked to an estimated 50 percent of generic drug production. They frequently make copies of their own or other brand-name drugs but sell them as generics.

Only you and your physician can decide if a generic drug is right for you. Just remember that generic drugs are less expensive than their brand-name counterparts, and this can save you and your employer money. This savings helps to control the cost of providing health care to you. If you would like further information, please visit the FDA Web site at <http://www.fda.gov/cder/ogd/index.htm>.

NEW VACCINE ... continued from Front Cover

against less common HPV types and is ineffective for those already infected with HPV. That's why routine pap screening is so important to detect precancerous changes in the cervix to allow treatment before cervical cancer develops.

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.

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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