

health matters

Mercy Care
Plan

Fall 2008

Things to Know

Autism screening

At your baby's next checkup, the doctor may screen your child for a disorder called autism.

All kids between 18 and 24 months old should be checked, even if there is no sign of a problem.

Signs of autism usually start before a child is 3 years old. A child with autism may not:

- Turn when you say his or her name
- Point at objects
- Turn to look when you point at something
- Babble or talk
- Make eye contact

A child with autism also may not want to be held or cuddled. Or a child may flap his or her arms or rock side to side.

Talk to your child's doctor if you have questions or concerns.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

Give yourself the
best present ever—
peace of mind.

Get a mammogram and
well-woman exam every year.



Asthma

Kids can stay active

Having asthma shouldn't keep your child on the sidelines.

In fact, it's good for kids with asthma to be active.

Regular exercise can help your child be fit. This helps make breathing easier. It may also allow your child to take less medicine.

Exercise can also help:

- Improve heart and lung health
- Reduce asthma attacks
- Cut back on hospital visits related to asthma

- Improve your child's well-being
- Your child's doctor can suggest good activities.

The doctor can also provide a written asthma plan. This plan can help your child manage asthma.

Be sure to tell coaches or school staff that your child has asthma. It's a good idea to give anyone working with your child a copy of the asthma plan. The plan will outline what to do in case your child has an asthma attack.

Source: American College of Sports Medicine

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Don't want the flu? Get a shot

Nobody wants to get sick with influenza (the flu). No one wants to spend a week or more: » Coughing » Having a sore throat » Feeling tired and achy » Having a high fever

And those signs of flu aren't always the worst of it.

For some people, the flu can mean more asthma symptoms. It can make diabetes worse. It can lead to sinus infections and pneumonia.

Some people may also have to stay in the hospital.

If none of that sounds good to you, talk to your doctor about getting flu shots for your whole family.

A yearly flu shot is very important for:

- Kids 6 months to 18 years old

- Pregnant women
- People 50 and older
- People with asthma, diabetes or other chronic health problems
- People who live with someone who fits any of these descriptions

Some people, such as those who are allergic to eggs, should not get the vaccine.

You also shouldn't get the vaccine while you are ill with a fever. In that case, you should wait until you feel better.

If you don't like the idea of getting a shot in the arm, you may be able to get a nasal-spray vaccine. It is good for healthy people 2 to 49 years old but not pregnant women.

Your doctor can tell you more about protecting yourself from the flu.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Tips to keep you healthy

Make sure your child has his or her shots. Children and teens need shots for good health because they protect against many diseases. Bring your child's shot record with you to his or her primary care physician (PCP).

All children, not just babies, should have well-child checkups and immunizations. Checkups help find problems before your child gets sick.

Checkup schedule

Make appointments with your child's PCP at the following ages to keep your child (and teen) healthy:

SCHEDULE FOR Well-child visits

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| » Newborn | » 6 years |
| » 2-4 days | » 8 years |
| » 1 month | » 10 years |
| » 2 months | » 11 years |
| » 4 months | » 12 years |
| » 6 months | » 13 years |
| » 9 months | » 14 years |
| » 12 months | » 15 years |
| » 15 months | » 16 years |
| » 18 months | » 17 years |
| » 24 months | » 18 years |
| » 3 years | » 19 years |
| » 4 years | » 20 years |
| » 5 years | |

TOOTH TALK

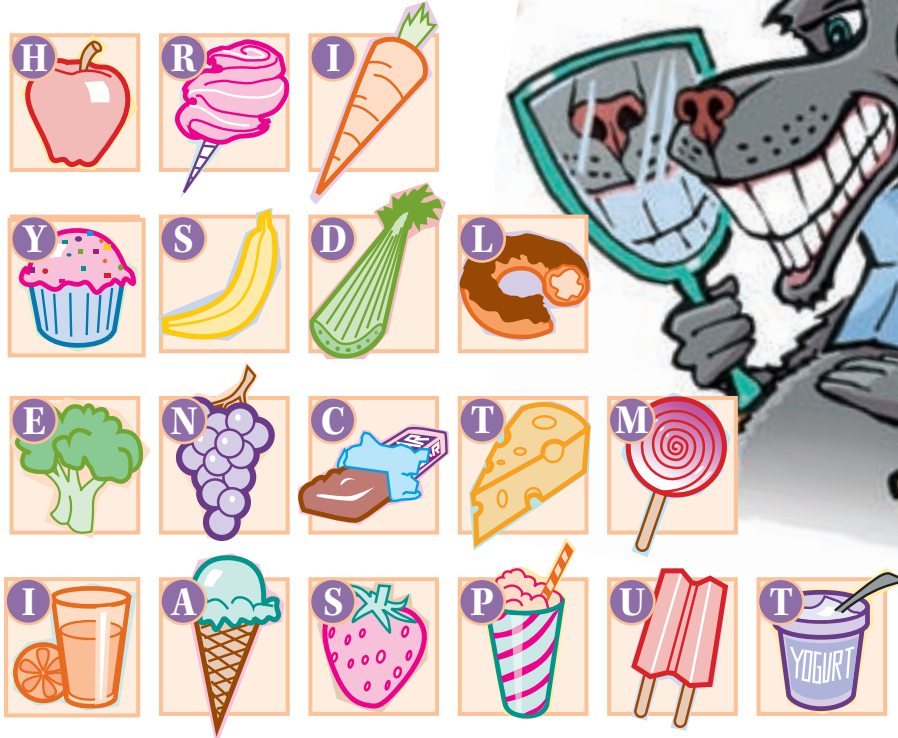
Watch what you wolf down

» Eating the right kinds of foods can help keep your teeth healthy.

Look at the pictures and put an X through the foods that are sticky or sugary. They aren't good for your teeth, so you shouldn't eat them often.

Then, in order, write on the lines below the letter that's next to each remaining picture. These foods are good for you.

When you're finished, you'll have the answer to the riddle you see here. (And it might just make you smile and show off those great teeth of yours!)



ANSWER:
HIS DENTIST

What did the Big Bad Wolf eat after getting his teeth cleaned?

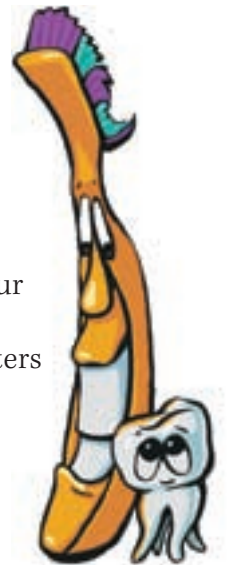
Did you know?

» Teeth are like fingerprints. No one else's are just like yours.

What you can do to keep your smile

» Here are some rules to help you keep your smile. The letters of one word in each sentence are scrambled. Can you put the letters in order so that the sentences make sense?

1. Brush your teeth at least **ewitc** a day.
2. Eat healthy **ofsod**.
3. At least once a day, **slofs**.
4. See your **endttsi** regularly.
5. Wear a mouth guard when you play **orsrpts**.



ANSWERS: 1. twice, 2. foods, 3. floss, 4. dentist, 5. sports.

Know your family health history

Some diseases, like diabetes and heart disease, can run in a family. If you know which ones might affect you, you can take steps to prevent them.

You should try to find out:

- What health problems your family members have had.
- Their ages when they got sick.
- What your family members died from, and how old they were when they died.

Find out this information about your parents and siblings. If you can, also find out about your grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

Write down what you know and share it with your doctor. Your doctor can let you know what health problems you might be at risk for. And your doctor can suggest ways to prevent those health problems.



Communication: A key to good health care

You want to be clear when you talk to your doctor about your health. But what if your doctor doesn't understand the language you know the best?

We can help.

Interpreters are on hand for members who need one. Call Member Services to learn more.

It's a great way to be sure you and your doctor communicate clearly.

Language and interpretation services

Mercy Care Plan can help you get a telephone or sign language interpreter for your health care visits at no cost to you. If you need help in your language or if you have a hearing impairment, call Member

Services for an interpreter at (602) 263-3000, (800) 624-3879 or (866) 602-1982 (TTY/TDD).

الاتصال بخدمات الأعضاء وإبلاغنا. بحاجة إلى معلومات بهذه اللغة، فرجاء إذا كنت

Get to know your doctor

Think of your primary care physician (PCP) as your first step to the world of health care.

It is likely that he or she will be your first stop when you are sick and when you need advice about staying well. Most PCPs are either family doctors or internists. Among other things, he or she will lead all of your health care activities. You can count

on your PCP to help you by:

- Treating a wide range of health issues
- Helping prevent health problems
- Referring you to other experts as needed

Over time, PCPs get to know your health history and help you make good choices so that you can



stay well. Keep in mind, it will take more than one visit for you and your doctor to get to know each other.