

health matters

Volume 12, Issue 2
Summer 2005

things to know

Do you have other health insurance?

Always give both your other health insurance information and your Mercy Care Plan information to doctors and pharmacies.

Your other health insurance pays for your health care *first*. After they pay, Mercy Care Plan will pay its part.

Do not pay copayments yourself. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to bill the copayments to Mercy Care Plan.

If your doctor writes a prescription for a drug that is not on Mercy Care Plan's list of covered drugs, do the following:

- Ask your doctor for a drug that is on Mercy Care Plan's list of covered drugs.

- If you can't take any other drug except the one prescribed, ask your doctor to ask for an exception from Mercy Care Plan.

If you are in Mercy Care Plan and a Medicare HMO, Mercy Care Plan will only pay copayments for a

Medicare HMO drug if it is on Mercy Care Plan's drug list.



Right from the start

You're pregnant. And you want to have a healthy baby.

What's the best thing you can do? See a doctor or other health care provider during your pregnancy. It's called *prenatal care*.

Three reasons to have early and regular prenatal visits:

1. For good care. At each visit your weight and blood pressure will be checked. Your doctor will see how you are doing and how the baby (fetus) is growing.

2. For good advice. Most pregnant women have questions—ask anything. Maybe you want to know about exercise, vitamins or what foods to eat. Or maybe you need help to stop smoking.

3. For a healthier baby. Women who get prenatal care



have babies of a healthier weight than women who don't receive care.

The earlier the better. Get prenatal care as soon as you can, even if you only think you're pregnant but aren't sure.

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Raising a healthy child

safety tips, visit the National SAFE KIDS Campaign Web site at www.safekids.org.

Have a smoke-free home.

Kids who breathe secondhand smoke have more health problems, such as ear infections. If you smoke, consider quitting or go outside when you smoke.

Monitor media. Violence, tobacco and alcohol are everywhere—on TV, in movies and in music. And kids can be influenced by what they see and hear. So be aware of what your child watches and listens to.

Read to kids—even babies—every day. Reading to children helps them learn to communicate. It also helps them become better readers.

Prevent violence. Hitting, spanking and mean words teach children that it's OK to hurt others to solve problems.

Reading to children helps them learn to communicate.

Most important, show your child love. Kids develop a sense of self-worth early in life. Listen and show you care. It can help your child feel important.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics

Safety on wheels

Bumps and bruises are a part of growing up. You know they will eventually heal.

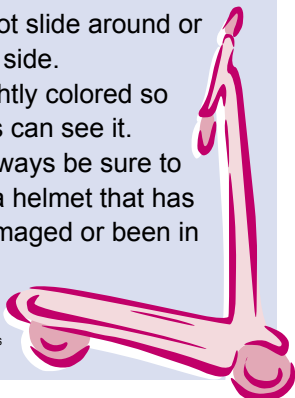
But a head injury could do lasting damage. That's why your child should always wear a helmet when riding a bike or scooter, inline skating or skateboarding. A helmet can help protect your child's head in an accident.

Choose a helmet that:

- Fits your child's head snugly. Check that the helmet sits squarely on top of the head. The helmet should not slide around or tilt to the side.
- Is brightly colored so motorists can see it.

And always be sure to replace a helmet that has been damaged or been in a crash.

Source: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons



As a parent, you are No. 1 in your child's life.

And it's important that you give your child a good start. Here are some ways to help your child grow up happy and healthy.

Make nutrition a goal.

A healthy diet can make a big difference in how kids grow and learn. Try to offer foods from several food groups at each meal.

Childproof your home.

Remove things that could hurt a child, such as poisons and small or sharp objects. For more

Why immunizations are important

Shots are no fun.

But neither is getting sick. And shots keep your child safe from dangerous diseases.

That's why it's so important to keep your child's shots up-to-date. You can keep track with a shot record. This record should be started when your child receives a shot for the first time. Be sure to have the record updated with each doctor visit.

Also, review shot records regularly with your child's doctor. That way you'll know when your child needs another shot.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Vaccinate for your family's health



Thanks to vaccines, some diseases no longer make a lot of people very sick each year.

But we still need vaccine shots. Most are meant for children, but you may need shots too.

As part of good health care, get immunized on time. It can help protect your family and others.

Infants and children

Several vaccines are recommended, such as those that guard against:

- Whooping cough.
- Tetanus (the disease that causes lockjaw).
- Measles.
- Polio.
- Chickenpox.

Children may need many doses at different ages, often before they're 18 months old.

Check with your doctor. And

keep records of all your child's shots since birth.

Teens

Some teens may need shots they missed getting when they were younger. Older kids and teens may need shots for meningitis, tetanus or a second dose for mumps, measles and rubella.

Or some teens may need shots if they have lifelong health problems, such as kidney disease. Teens leaving for college may also need shots to help them stay healthy.

Adults

Adults may also need vaccines for many reasons. A booster shot every 10 years helps protect against tetanus, for example.

You may need shots for the kind of work you do. Or you may need them if you are at risk because of health problems.

If you missed getting a shot

New meters for testing your blood sugar

Testing blood glucose (sugar) levels is important for people with diabetes.

By finding out what your blood sugar level is before meals, you can see how your insulin, pills, and/or diet and exercise are working for you.

Also, by checking your blood sugar level after meals, you can see how the foods you eat change your sugar levels.

Mercy Care Plan now has two new blood glucose meters available:

- Ascensia® CONTOUR™
- Ascensia® BREEZE™

These are the only blood glucose meters that do not need calibration before using.

Both can also be used for testing on other sites like your arm or leg, as well as your finger.



when you were younger, such as the measles vaccine, you may need to get it as an adult.

Age matters too. If you're 50 or older, you may want to get a flu shot each year. And you need a pneumonia vaccine shot if you are at least 65.

Stay up-to-date

If you're not sure which vaccines your family needs, your doctor can help you decide.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Partnership for Immunization

 To learn more about staying healthy, visit www.familydoctor.org.

Healthy eating on a budget

A healthy diet doesn't have to cost a lot.

Try these tips for a diet that's good for your body and your budget:

- Plan meals. Build them around rice, noodles or whole grains.
- Check newspapers for grocery sale ads. Plan meals based on healthy sale items.
- Look for coupons, but only for things you would have bought anyway.
- Shop with a list and stick to it.
- Don't go grocery shopping when you're hungry. You may be tempted to buy foods, such as chips and cookies, that aren't healthy.
- Compare prices for fresh, frozen and canned foods. Look for specials. Fresh fruits and vegetables may cost less when



they are in season. Large bags of frozen vegetables don't cost a lot and they keep well.

- Use dry beans or peas instead of meat in some dishes. They're healthy foods, have less fat

and cost less.

- Compare prices for national, generic and store brands.

Planning a healthy diet may take a little more time, but it pays off with better health.

Eating for two

When you are pregnant, you need to eat well to nourish your own body and to feed the growing baby inside you.

Try to eat a variety of foods. Each day, aim to have:

- Several servings of whole-grain bread, rice, cereal or pasta.
- At least five servings of fruits and vegetables.
- Three or more servings of protein, such as meat, chicken, beans or eggs.
- Four or more servings of low-fat

or nonfat dairy products.

- Plenty of fluids. Try to get at least eight glasses a day of water. Milk, fruit juice and other liquids count too.

These foods will give you energy. They will also help your baby grow strong and healthy.