

Mission In Motion

Health & Wellness Monthly Newsletter
August 2012—Preventive Health



Health care common sense



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Make the grade, Take the HRA

We'd all like to get an A+ when it comes to our health. One way to increase your smarts is by taking a Health Risk Assessment (HRA). When you do, you can learn a lot, like what health conditions or concerns you need to share with your doctor. And that means you can head off problems early. You don't even have to crack a book. Just log in to Blue Access® for Members, select the Know Your Risk link through the Personal Health Manager, and have these numbers ready before you start:

- Blood pressure reading (systolic – higher number, diastolic – lower number)
- Total cholesterol level, HDL level, LDL level
- Blood glucose (sugar) level
- Waist measurement

Learn the best lesson about prevention: know your numbers and take an HRA.

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Lower Health Care Costs with Preventive Screenings

Need antidotes to rising health care costs? Here's one remedy that can help: preventive health screenings. Health problems can sneak up on you, but when you get regular screenings, there's a better chance of catching problems early before they get big. When health issues are smaller, so are the costs to take care of them.

Schedule a checkup each year and stay on schedule with these screenings:

- Blood pressure (the narrower your arteries, the harder it is for blood to flow through and the higher your blood pressure)
- Cholesterol (causes fat to build up in vessels and slows blood flow)
- Triglycerides (a type of fat in your blood that can make arteries thicker)
- Blood sugar (often measured before you eat to see how well insulin in your body turns food into energy)
- Body mass index (BMI) (height and weight formula to estimate body fat)
- Male- and female-specific tests (your doctor can tell you what you need)

Preventive health screenings—one cure for the health care costs that ail you.

Source: Mayo Clinic

Making Sense of Vision and Hearing Exams

We depend on our senses every day, often without even thinking about them. But imagine navigating the world around us without the ability to see or hear. While many people schedule routine physicals and other wellness exams, sometimes the health of our eyes and ears is overlooked. However, regular vision and hearing exams are very important when it comes to your health and well being.

Three kinds of specialists—ophthalmologists, optometrists and opticians—can provide routine eye care and exams, depending on your preference and specific eye-related and overall health needs. For a hearing test, you can schedule an appointment with either your physician or an audiologist (hearing specialist).

Keeping an eye on your health

Besides revealing vision changes that may need to be monitored or corrected, a vision exam can be a real eye opener when it comes to your health. Your physician or eye specialist can detect signs of early illness by examining the condition of blood vessels, veins and arteries in your eyes as well as uncoordinated or involuntary eye movements. Diseases and conditions that can show early signs in your eyes include:

- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Stroke risk
- High cholesterol
- Multiple Sclerosis

It's also important to watch for eye diseases such as cataracts, glaucoma or macular degeneration, which tend to occur more frequently in people as they get older. If you don't wear glasses or contact lenses, and have no eye trouble or risk factors for

eye disease, the following eye exam schedule is recommended:

- At least once between ages 20 and 39
- Every two to four years between ages 40 and 64
- Every one to two years beginning at age 65

If you have certain health problems or a family history of eye disease, check with your physician or eye specialist to determine the appropriate screening schedule for you.

Now hear this

As with our eyesight, our ability to hear changes as we age. The gradual loss of hearing, known medically as presbycusis, is common with about one-third of Americans older than age 60 and one-half of those older than age 75 experiencing hearing loss.

Physicians believe that both heredity and extended exposure to loud noises, such as a noisy workplace environment or music played at too high a volume, are the main factors that contribute to hearing loss. If you are regularly exposed to loud noises, schedule a screening test to determine if you have a hearing impairment. Also, be vigilant about protecting your hearing in situations that expose your ears to high levels of noise.

By having the right attitude and following these strategies and protective measures, you can help keep your eyes and ears open for years to come.

Check your benefits booklet to determine if your health plan coverage pays for these types of screenings.

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Hand Washing to Prevent Infectious Disease

It only takes a few minutes of your time and some very basic tools, but it makes a huge difference in taming infectious germs. It's none other than hand washing, that simple but good idea that mom pestered you about long ago.

Here's how to do it the right way*:

- Use soap and warm, running water.
- Wash all parts of your hands and wrists thoroughly, including under your fingernails.
- Rub your hands together for at least 10 to 15 seconds.
- Pat them dry using a clean or disposable towel.

Isn't it time you raised the bar on fighting infectious disease? Then pick up the soap bar and give your hands a scrub, and use them to log on to Blue Access® for Members at www.bcbstx.com for more hand washing strategies.

*American Society for Microbiology



Give Good Health a Shot in the Arm

If you're an adult, you are not immune to getting vaccinations. Immunizations are readily available for a number of common adult illnesses, and your doctor can let you know what immunizations are needed to keep you healthy.

Follow these guidelines to keep preventable diseases at arm's length:

- Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Td and Tdap) immunizations should be given to adults at 10 year intervals throughout your life
- Adults born after 1956 who are not immune to measles, mumps and rubella should be immunized
- Women ages 26 or younger should be immunized against human papilloma virus (HPV), the virus that causes cervical cancer
- All adults ages 65 or older, as well as persons ages two to 64 years who have diabetes or chronic heart, lung, liver or kidney disorders need protection against pneumococcal disease, and should consult their health care providers regarding the pneumococcal vaccine
- Influenza vaccination is recommended for all adults ages 50 years or older, women who are pregnant during flu season, individuals who have a chronic illness (like diabetes, heart disease or asthma), and residents of long-term care facilities
- Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B vaccines should be given to people in high-risk groups or who travel to countries where these diseases are common

Arm yourself with the latest health tips and wellness tools by logging into Blue Access® for Members at www.bcbstx.com.

Source: National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

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Arm Yourself for Flu Prevention

Flu season is coming! It's time to roll up your sleeves and get your flu shot. Between September and mid-November is a good time to get the flu vaccine—before the flu season starts. Getting a flu shot later in the flu season may still protect you, but remember, it takes up to two weeks to build immunity after a flu shot.

Don't get a flu shot if you:

- Ever had an allergic reaction to the vaccine
- Are allergic to chicken eggs
- Developed Guillain-Barre syndrome within six weeks of having the vaccine in the past. Guillain-Barre is a serious disease that affects the nerves outside the brain and spinal cord.
- Have a fever (wait for symptoms to go away before getting vaccinated)

When you take time to get the flu shot, you're embracing flu prevention with open arms.

Source: Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research
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Annual Open Enrollment: Begins August 20, 2012—September 18, 2012 effective October 1, 2012

VENDOR INFORMATIONAL SESSIONS

Date	Monday,08/20/12	Tuesday,08/21/12	Wednesday,08/22/12	Thursday,08/23/12	Friday,08/24/12
Time	8:00AM - 10:00AM	7:30AM - 9:30AM	8:00AM - 10:00AM		8:00AM - 10:00AM
Department	Public Works / Health - English	Parks and Recreation / Golf - English	Public Works / Health - Spanish		Police
Location	Public Works Administration	Parks and Recreation Gym	Public Works Administration		Parks and Recreation Gym
Time	10:00AM - 12:00PM	10:00AM - 12:00PM	10:00AM - 12:00PM		
Department	Fire	City Hall, Municipal Court, Library, Museum, Boys & Girls Club, MEDC	Fire		
Location	Central Fire Station	Speer Memorial Library	Central Fire Station		
Time	2:30PM - 4:30PM	1:30PM - 3:30PM	1:30PM - 3:30PM		
Department	City Hall, Municipal Court, Library, Museum, Boys & Girls Club, MEDC	Fire	Parks and Recreation / Golf - Spanish		
Location	Speer Memorial Library	Central Fire Station	Parks and Recreation Gym		

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ENROLLMENT SESSIONS

Date	Monday,08/27/12	Tuesday,08/28/12	Wednesday,08/29/12	Thursday,08/30/12	Friday,08/31/12
Time	8:00AM - 12:00PM	8:00AM - 12:00PM	8:00AM - 12:00PM	8:00AM - 12:00PM	8:00AM - 12:00PM
Department	Public Works / Health	Parks and Recreation / Golf	Fire	City Hall, Municipal Court, Library, Museum, Boys & Girls Club, MEDC	Police
Location	Parks and Recreation Gym	Parks and Recreation Gym	Central Fire Station	Parks and Recreation Gym	Parks and Recreation Gym
Time	1:00PM - 4:00PM	1:00PM - 4:00PM	1:00PM - 4:00PM	1:00PM - 4:00PM	1:00PM - 4:00PM
Department	Public Works / Health	Parks and Recreation / Golf	Fire	City Hall, Municipal Court, Library, Museum, Boys & Girls Club, MEDC	Police
Location	Parks and Recreation Gym	Parks and Recreation Gym	Central Fire Station	Parks and Recreation Gym	Parks and Recreation Gym

Wellness Scramble

Unscramble the letters of these words. Look for the answer next month.

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**July Answer:
Protect your skin**

2012 Annual Health Fair

Free Flu Shots, Lab/Blood Tests, Cholesterol, Blood Pressure exams, etc. You don't want to miss it!

Details coming soon!

Mission In Motion

Our mission is to promote health awareness and to encourage healthy lifestyles.

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