

THE KEY TO THE GOOD LIFE IS A GREAT PLAN

health TALK

SPRING 2009



MAKE A LIST of all the prescription and over-the-counter medicines you take. Include vitamins, herbal supplements and ointments. Write down the name of the drug, the dose, when and how you take it and why you take it. Keep this list in a handy place. Share it with your pharmacist and any provider who treats you.

▼ ABOUT YOUR PLAN ▼



TAKE note

CHANGES TO RITE CARE PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

If you are a Rite Care member, you may have noticed your prescription drug coverage has changed. That is because, as of February 1, all Rite Care members must use generic drugs. If this change impacts you, you should have gotten a letter from UnitedHealthcare telling you. Your doctor should have gotten a letter too.

If you need help getting a prescription, talk to your doctor. He or she can help you get what you need. This change does NOT apply to Children with Special Health Care Needs or Rhody Health Partners members.

i **QUESTIONS?** Call Member Services at 800-587-5187 (TTY 800-587-5188).

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▼ BABY BASICS

▶▶ YOUR BABY SHOULD HAVE NOTHING BUT BREAST MILK FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS.

best start

3 TIPS FOR BREASTFEEDING YOUR BABY

Breastfeeding can be a good experience for both you and your baby. Following these three tips can get breastfeeding off to a good start.

- 1 **NURSE EARLY AND OFTEN.** Try to breastfeed your baby within the first hour after birth. Newborns need to nurse at least every two hours, but not on a strict schedule. This tells your breasts to produce plenty of milk.
- 2 **BREASTFEED ON DEMAND.** Watch your baby for signs of hunger. Hungry babies may be more alert or active or put their hands by their mouths. Don't wait until the baby starts crying to feed.
- 3 **HAVE BABY OPEN WIDE.** Nurse with the nipple and the areola (the darker area around the nipple) in the baby's mouth.



FREE HELP Most moms can be successful with breastfeeding. Your local WIC office (www.fns.usda.gov/wic) or La Leche League chapter (www.llli.org) can provide free breastfeeding help and advice. The National Women's Health Information Center (www.4women.gov) has a free breastfeeding hotline at 800-994-9662.

▼ CHRONIC CONDITIONS

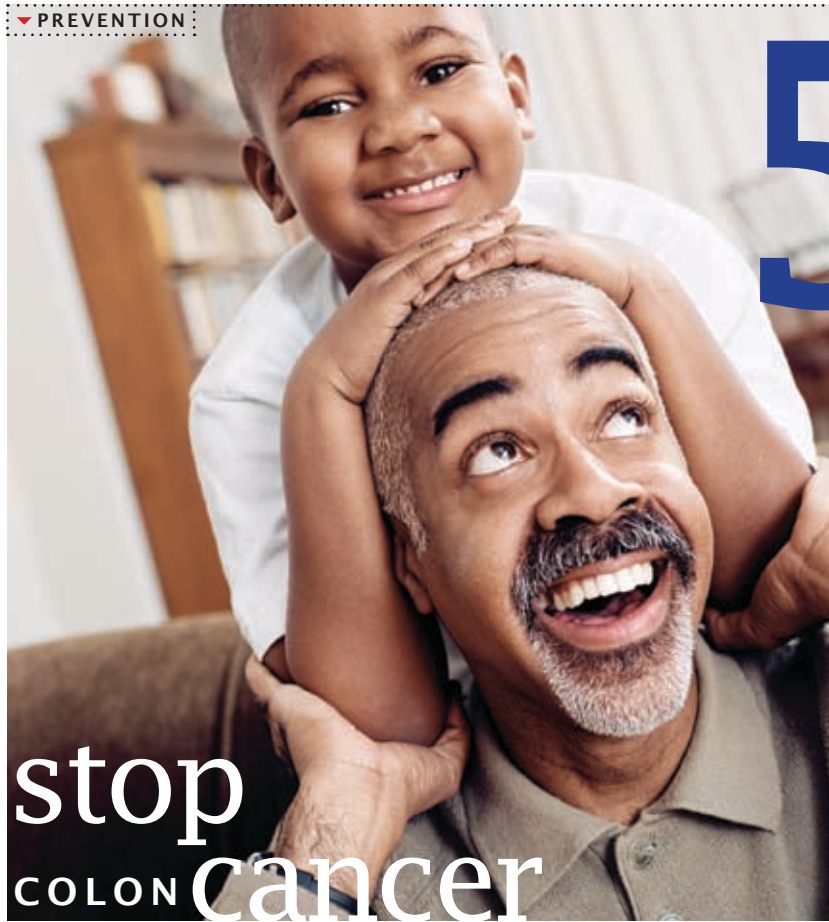
CONTROL your BLOOD sugar

WHY A1C TESTS ARE IMPORTANT

If you're diabetic, you know how important it is to check your blood sugar often. That little finger prick gives you a good idea about how well you are controlling your diabetes. But it only tells you about your blood sugar at that moment.

There is a test that your doctor does that gives a more complete picture. It's called A1c and it provides an average measurement of your glucose over a six- to 12-week period. It's important to keep your blood sugar controlled over the long term to prevent serious complications.

▼ PREVENTION



Colon cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States. But it shouldn't be. That's because it can be cured if caught early. And it can actually be avoided with these tips.



LEARN MORE Learn about preventing colorectal cancer at www.cancer.gov.

For people without diabetes, a normal A1c result is between 4 percent and 6 percent. For people with diabetes, a good A1c result is under 7 percent. If your diabetes is not well-controlled, you should have an A1c test every three months. If you do have good control, two tests a year are recommended.



DIABETIC? Your health plan has programs to help people with diabetes and other chronic conditions. Call the toll-free number on your health plan ID card to learn about these programs.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING COLON CANCER



- 1 EAT SMART.** Get a lot of fiber. Enjoy fruits and vegetables daily. Cut back on fat and red meat.
- 2 DON'T SMOKE.** Believe it or not, the toxins you breathe end up in your colon.
- 3 KNOW YOUR FAMILY HISTORY.** If colon cancer runs in your family, tell your doctor.
- 4 LEAD A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE.** Exercise and maintain a healthy weight.
- 5 GET A COLONOSCOPY.** This test can actually prevent cancer by removing polyps that can turn into cancer. Have your first one when you turn 50. Ask your doctor if you might need one sooner.

▶▶ **DIABETES IS THE 6TH LEADING CAUSE OF DEATH IN THE U.S.**

Name that bug

CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A COLD AND THE FLU?

Cold and flu season is not over yet. Both illnesses are very common. They are caused by viruses. You can reduce your chances of getting sick. Get a flu shot each fall. Wash your hands often. Don't share household items with someone who is sick. But if you do get sick this season, will you know which virus you have?



COMMON COLD

Colds usually begin gradually. They start two to three days after you are infected. They may start with a sore throat. Then you start sneezing and get a runny nose. Fevers are rare, especially in adults.

THE FLU

The flu comes on quickly, often within a few hours. You feel worse than you do with a cold. Flu symptoms include headache, muscle aches, a dry cough and chills. A fever is common. In about two to three days, these symptoms stop. Then you get a stuffy nose and sore throat.



TREATMENT

Because viruses cause colds and the flu, antibiotics won't help. Antibiotics kill bacteria. There are many over-the-counter medicines available to help you feel better. Generally, it's best to choose those that treat only the symptoms you have. For example, if you have a sore throat and runny nose, you don't need a medicine that also helps a cough.

And remember, over-the-counter drugs don't cure you. They just make you feel more comfortable. Only time, and your body's immune system, can beat a cold or flu.

i **WHEN IT'S WORSE** Sometimes, a cold or flu causes another infection. You might get an ear infection, bronchitis or other problem. If you still feel bad one week after a cold or two weeks after the flu starts, see your doctor.

alcoholism

WHEN DRINKING IS A DISEASE

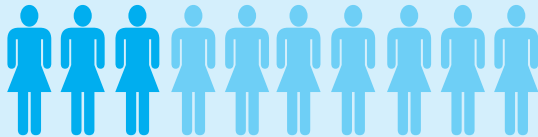
Alcoholism is a serious disease. An alcoholic is addicted to drinking. It can tear apart relationships. It can cause people to lose their jobs. And it can be deadly if not treated. People with alcoholism can't just stop. They need treatment and support.

FOUR SYMPTOMS OF ALCOHOLISM

- 1 CRAVING:** You feel a strong need to drink.
- 2 LOSS OF CONTROL:** You can't limit your drinking.
- 3 PHYSICAL DEPENDENCE:** You feel sick if you don't have alcohol.
- 4 TOLERANCE:** You need to drink more alcohol to get drunk.



GET HELP If you or someone you love suffers from alcoholism, get help. Call 800-435-7486 to learn where to get help. Or, find an Alcoholics Anonymous meeting near you in your local phone book.



▶▶ **3 OUT OF 10 GIRLS GET PREGNANT AT LEAST ONCE BEFORE AGE 20.**

too young

8 TIPS FOR PREVENTING TEEN PREGNANCY

The teen birth rate has risen for the first time in 15 years. If you are a parent of a teenage boy or girl, it's important to talk to them about sex. Here are some tips from the National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy:

- 1** Be clear about your own sexual values.
- 2** Talk about sex with your kids early and often. Be specific.
- 3** Know where your kids are, what they are doing and who they are with.
- 4** Say no to early, frequent and steady dating.
- 5** Tell your kids to only date kids their own age.
- 6** Give your kids options for the future that are better than teen parenthood.
- 7** Tell your kids how important school is to you.
- 8** Build a strong, close relationship with your children from an early age.

LEARN MORE Read more about these tips at www.thenationalcampaign.org. A good Web site for teens is www.stayteen.org.



give us a call

OUR RHODE ISLAND TEAM

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UNITEDHEALTHCARE MEMBER SERVICES

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www.uhcmedicaid.com/rhodeisland

Open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

UNITED BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

800-435-7486

www.liveandworkwell.com

RHODE ISLAND RITE CARE STATE INFO LINE

401-462-5300, English and Spanish

TRY-TO-STOP TOBACCO RESOURCE CENTER

800-TRY-TO-STOP (800-879-8678) (TTY 800-833-1477)

www.trytostop.org



provider updates

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