

HEALTH Partners TALK

Published for members of Health Partners



Just had a baby? Be sure to get a checkup after delivery

A checkup after delivery is very important for every mother and every newborn. Doctor visits do not stop once you've had your baby.

You should schedule two important visits with your doctor about two to eight weeks after your baby is born to keep both you and your baby healthy.

1. The first visit is for the **baby** at two to four weeks after birth to make sure your baby is healthy and growing well. Your baby's visit to the doctor should include:

- A complete physical exam
- A check of the baby's physical and mental development

- Measuring the baby's weight and height

- Measuring the baby's head to check for normal growth

- Shot to prevent hepatitis B

2. The second visit is for **you** at three to six weeks after you have your baby to make sure your body is recovering properly. Your visit to the doctor should include:

- A physical exam that includes:

- Blood pressure
- Exam of breast and abdomen
- Pelvic exam, including checking any stitches
- Check for any problems urinating

- Blood sugar test if diabetic or you developed diabetes while pregnant (you should also return in three months for a recheck)

- Discussion and teaching about:

- How to take care of the baby, including breastfeeding
- Risks of tobacco and secondhand smoke
- Birth control options
- Any signs of depression or anxiety about being a new mother

Health Partners encourages you to make and keep these important appointments so that you and your baby will be in the best health possible.

For a full help guide, the first doctor visit is 2-4 weeks after birth. Return to a doctor for a second visit 6-8 weeks after birth. If you are not sure when to return, call your doctor. For more information, call 1-877-454-8477 or (215) 849-1579.

TTY/TDD: 1-877-454-8477 or (215) 849-1579

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Be sure you have a healthy pregnancy

When you are pregnant, you have a special privilege: You get to take care of your baby even before it is born.

How? By taking good care of yourself. When you make healthy choices, your baby benefits.

Five smart things you can do:

1. Eat a healthy diet. Aim for plenty of fruits and vegetables,

whole grains, and foods with protein, such as lean meats, fish and nonfat dairy foods.

2. Take vitamins if recommended by your doctor.

Women need a B vitamin called folic acid. It helps babies form a healthy brain and spinal cord.

Follow your doctor's advice about taking vitamins.

3. Safe exercise. Exercise may help you have an easier, more comfortable pregnancy. But don't overdo it. Too much exercise can cause injury. Ask your doctor what type of exercise is best. Walking is often a wise choice.

4. Stay away from tobacco, alcohol and other drugs. They are never safe during pregnancy and could harm your growing baby:

■ Smoking can slow down your baby's growth, cause early labor, or even make you lose your baby.

■ Drugs like marijuana, cocaine, crack or heroin can cause your baby to have brain damage or a stroke or even kill your growing baby.

■ Alcohol can seriously hurt and do long-term damage to your baby.

■ Ask your doctor before taking any pills or medicine. Even aspirin could hurt your baby.

5. Check in for checkups.

These visits help your doctor keep track of your baby's growth and your health. They are also chances for you to ask questions.

You should start visits with your doctor as soon as you know that you are pregnant. The earlier in your pregnancy, the better.

Your doctor will suggest the best schedule for checkups.

Need help with transportation? It's easy with Health Partners

If you are having trouble getting to and from your health care appointments, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania provides transportation for all Medical Assistance recipients so they can get to their appointments.

To sign up for transportation services, call your county's Medical Assistance Transportation Program Provider (MATP), or call Health Partners Member Relations at

1-800-553-0784 or **(215) 849-9600**.

If you have questions about transportation, call the transportation service in your county:

■ Philadelphia: **(215) 563-9670** or **1-888-235-4413**

■ Bucks: **(215) 794-5554, Ext. 526** (for general information), or

1-888-795-0740 (for scheduling rides)

■ Chester: **(610) 269-1844**

■ Delaware: **(610) 490-3975**

■ Montgomery: **(215) 542-7433**



Flu shots now may help you feel better later

A flu shot can help you stay well. Ask your doctor if a flu shot is right for you, especially if you are:

- 50 years old or older.
- Have a chronic medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, sickle cell disease, heart disease, kidney disease or HIV/AIDS.
- Have a chronic medical condition and were treated in a hospital or clinic in the past year.
- A child 2 years old and older or a young adult taking aspirin every day.
- A health care worker or someone who may give the flu to someone who is elderly or has a

chronic medical condition.

Members over age 65 should also get the **pneumococcal vaccine**. This shot helps prevent bacterial pneumonia.

You can get your shots starting in October, but the shots can be given through early winter.

Remember to see your PCP!

Don't forget to see your PCP every year for a visit! This is very important if you have asthma or breathing problems, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, hemophilia/blood disorder, kidney problems, HIV/AIDS or any other chronic illness.



Just the facts: Health Partners wants you to stay healthy!

Health Partners wants to keep you in good health.

That means that you and your children should go to see your Health Partners PCP and your dentist at least once a year. These checkups help make sure that you stay healthy. Men, women and children need different kinds of checkups at different ages.

Below you will find some information about Health Partners' members and if they are getting the care they need. We are working hard to make your health care even better. With your help we can do more!

About half of Health Partners members ages 2 to 12 got all of the shots (immunizations) they needed.

About half of Health Partners adolescent members ages 13 to 21 got all of the shots (immunizations) they needed.

Less than half of Health Partners women 50 and older got a mammogram for breast cancer screening.

Only half of Health Partners women ages 21 to 64 got a Pap smear to check for cervical cancer.

Only half of Health Partners women ages 16 to 26 got a screening for chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease.

Less than half of Health Partners members with diabetes got a dilated eye exam.

About half of Health Partners members with asthma are on

controller medicines.

About half of pregnant women in Health Partners are getting care early in their pregnancy.

Less than half of Health Partners new moms go back to the doctor in the two months after they have their baby for a postpartum checkup.

Two out of three Health Partners members are not going to the dentist every year.

Take care of yourself and stay healthy! Health Partners wants you to go to the doctor and get the screenings you need. Your children also need to see the doctor regularly to get the shots they need. Your health is important to us!



Please read this important health reminder

A copy of Health Partners *Preventive Care Guidelines* was sent to all Health Partners members in the mail.

The *Preventive Care Guidelines* list the checkups and tests you and your family should have and when you should have them. If you are not sure what checkups you need, ask your doctor.

If you need a copy of the *Preventive Care Guidelines*, call Health Partners Member Relations department at **(215) 849-9600** or **1-800-553-0784**.



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HEALTH PARTNERS TALK is published for the members of HEALTH PARTNERS, 833 Chestnut St., Suite 900, Philadelphia, PA 19107, telephone 1-800-553-0784, www.healthpart.com.

Information in HEALTH PARTNERS TALK comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

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Help keep children safe from lead

A good coat of paint has always been a way to spruce up a home. Unfortunately, what looks good may not be good for your family. Tiny particles of lead in paint or other items can be a big health problem for your child. They're so tiny you've probably never seen them. Lead can be in dust, paint chips, dirt and water. It's especially a problem if you live in older housing.

It is important to take steps to protect your child from lead. Lead can cause serious health problems—it can damage your children's brains, stunt their growth, cause ear trouble and cause problems with learning.

These six steps can help protect your child from lead:

1. Let water run for 30 seconds before you cook with it, make formula or let your child drink it. This helps to wash out the lead that may have settled in the

pipes. Never drink water from the hot water line.

2. Dust surfaces, vinyl window blinds and windowsills often with a wet cloth. Mop floors. Spend extra time cleaning areas where your child sleeps and plays.

3. For outside play areas, choose grass rather than dirt. Dirt sticks to fingers and toys and can make it into kids' mouths.

4. Wash your child's hands often—especially after he or she plays outside, before meals and naps, and at bedtime.

5. Feed your child healthy food. A good diet helps a child's body absorb less lead.

6. All children should be tested by their doctor for lead at 1 and 2 years of age. Children 3 to 6 who have not previously been tested should also visit their doctor for testing. Take your child to his or her doctor.