

HEALTH *Partners* TALK

Published for members of Health Partners



Dental care for everyone

At Health Partners we want to keep everybody on our plan healthy. Part of being healthy is having strong teeth and a smile you can be proud of. That means that you and every Health Partners member in your family receive regular dental care.

You can go to any of the general dentists listed in the provider directory. Just select a dentist from this list and call the office to make an appointment. You do not even need a referral for a dental visit.

Children under age 21 receive complete dental services. All adult members are eligible for one exam and cleaning a year.

For more information on your dental benefits, please call our Member Relations department at (215) 849-9600 or 1-800-553-0784.



NCQA seal

You'll be seeing this seal on your future issues of *Health Partners Talk*. You're probably wondering what it means. NCQA means National Committee for Quality Assurance. It is the biggest review organization for health plans in the nation. This symbol means that Health Partners was awarded a Commendable Level of Accreditation.

When NCQA reviews a health plan, they look to see if members of the health plan receive high-quality care. The people from NCQA who review the health plans are trained health care experts, like doctors.

When you see the NCQA seal, you'll know your health plan has been reviewed and approved by the experts!

See a bright future with eye care and eyeglass benefits from Health Partners



Health Partners offers vision benefits to all our members—including adults. There is no waiting

period. You do not need a referral for a regular eye exam.

Members can select from a wide variety of fashionable eyeglass frames at a participating provider. Your Health Partners vision coverage includes:

- Choice of glass or plastic lenses.
- Oversized lenses.
- Fashion and gradient tinting of plastic lenses.
- One-year breakage warranty on all plan glasses.
- If you prefer to wear contact lenses instead of glasses, Health Partners' vision plan will cover contact lenses instead.

If you choose a frame that is not on the Health Partners vision plan, Health Partners will cover part of the price for the frame.



If you need eye care, just call Member Relations for help finding a convenient vision care provider. When you call to make an appointment, be sure to tell the office you are a member of Health Partners. Remember to bring your membership ID card with you to the appointment.

Sometimes your eye doctor can fill your eyeglass prescription right in the same office!

For more information on your vision benefit or if you need help in finding a vision provider, please call our Member Relations department at (215) 849-9600 or 1-800-553-0784.

Health partners benefits for women

PAP tests and mammograms are two very important tests for women. PAP tests help detect cervical cancer, and mammograms help detect breast cancer. PAP tests and mammograms are called cancer screenings. Both of these screenings are covered under your Health Partners benefits. At right is a guide for how frequently you should have these tests. If you have any questions, call your PCP or OB/GYN for more details.



PAP test

Every year for three years. If results are normal, then once every three years. Once a year if abnormal.

Mammogram

Every one to two years starting at age 40. Annually after age 50.

Confused about generic drugs?

Q: I was given a generic drug. Is it different from the brand name one?

A: A generic drug is the same as a brand name drug. The only difference is the name. The generic drug you were given is called by its chemical name.

Q: How is a generic drug the same as a brand name drug?

A: It has the same active ingredient, it is just as strong, it is in the same form (pill, liquid or shot), and it works the same.

Q: Are generic drugs safe?

A: Generic drugs contain the same active ingredients as brand name drugs. Since they work the same way as brand name drugs, you can feel sure that these drugs must have the same high standards as brand name drugs and are safe for you to take.

Q: Does my doctor prescribe generic drugs because I am a Health Partners member?

A: Lots of people who are members of health plans get prescriptions for generic drugs instead of brand name drugs. Your doctor can determine which drug is right for you and can call Health Partners to talk to a pharmacist about the right medicine for you.

If you have questions about any medicine, ask your PCP or pharmacist.

Know your rights and responsibilities

Member rights

As a member of Health Partners, you have many rights, including:

- You have the right to know about all the benefits and services offered by Health Partners. You have the right to know about policies that can affect your membership.
- You have the right to be a part of decisions made by Health Partners and its doctors that affect your personal health care and your membership.
- You have the right to be treated fairly and to have your right to respect, dignity and privacy protected.
- You have the right to expect that information you provide to Health Partners, your medical records and anything you discuss with your doctor will be treated confidentially and will not be released to others without your permission.
- You have the right to request a specialist to help meet your special needs by serving as your primary care provider.
- If a problem comes up, you have the right to question decisions made by Health Partners or its doctors.
- You have the right to choose providers who participate with Health Partners, including the right to refuse care from specific doctors.
- You have the right to voice complaints and grievances about Health Partners or care provided.
- You have the right to file a DPW Fair Hearing appeal.
- You have the right to formulate advance directives.
- You have the right to have access to your medical records in accordance with federal and state laws. If you would like a copy of your records, please call the Health Partners Member Relations department at **1-800-553-0784** or **(215) 849-9600** for help.
- You have the right to talk openly with your doctor about all treatments that may be right for your health problem, whether or not Health Partners covers them, and without regard to cost.

Member responsibilities

You also have many duties as a member of Health Partners, including:

- You have the duty to tell Health Partners and its doctors about information which may affect your membership or your right to program benefits. For example, if you move to another address, you must call Health Partners and your primary care provider (PCP) and tell us your new address.
- You have the duty to help with your health care by following the membership rules. For example, you must call your PCP when you need urgent care and after getting emergency care.
- You have the duty to follow your PCP's instructions, such as taking medicine on schedule. You also have the duty to take your children to their PCP for care.
- You have the duty to inform your doctor about your health history, and to sign a consent form so your doctor can receive a copy of your medical records.
- You have the duty to make and keep appointments, to be on time, and to call to cancel an appointment or to report that you will be late.
- You have the duty to treat your PCP and other health care providers with respect and dignity.
- You have the duty to use our participating providers for all your health care needs. This includes PCPs, specialists, hospitals, pharmacies and any other providers you use as a Health Partners member.

Health Partners can help you learn to manage your asthma

Did you know that there are over 12 million people in the United States who have asthma? This number includes close to five million children.

Asthma makes it hard for you to breathe. If you have asthma, you need to learn the right treatments and how to manage your asthma so that you can stay as healthy as possible and not get worse.

Asthma symptoms can be caused by some of the following:

- Pollen, dust or mold.
- Cigarette smoke or harmful fumes.
- Animal hair, dander or feather pillows.
- Cold, dry air.
- Food additives, such as sulfites.
- Some drugs, such as aspirin.
- Colds, flu or other respiratory infections.
- Chemicals, such as yellow food dye.
- Emotional stress, exercise or fatigue.

Avoid the things that cause asthma symptoms

The more you know about

what brings on asthma symptoms, the less asthma will interfere with your life. You should talk to your doctor about the medicines you take and how they may affect your asthma. Your doctor may also prescribe medication for you to take for your asthma.

Use your medications

People with asthma have swollen and irritated airways that can get worse after they come across the things that can cause asthma symptoms. This is called inflammation. Asthma medications help reduce the inflammation in your lungs. Some of these medications should be used every day, even if you are feeling well. They prevent asthma flare-ups and help make sure that your airways stay as open as possible. Talk to your doctor about whether or not you should be on an anti-inflammatory medicine.

See your doctor at least once a year to help keep you healthy

Because your visit with your doctor is the best time to learn about your asthma, Health Partners

recommends that you see your doctor at least once a year. During this visit make sure to talk to him or her about the following:

- Discuss your medication. Ask your doctor if you should be taking an anti-inflammatory medicine.
 - Discuss the things that cause your or your child's symptoms of asthma and how to avoid them.
 - Discuss any smoking history or exposure to smoke.
 - Get the right vaccinations. Your doctor may recommend the following vaccines depending on your age and how well your asthma is controlled:
 - Influenza (every year).
 - Pneumococcal (one time).
- Smoking makes asthma and other lung problems worse. If you smoke at home, your child has a greater chance of developing asthma. Health Partners offers a stop smoking program if you smoke and would like to quit. If interested, please call (215) 991-4250.



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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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We're on the Web!

Health Partners is pleased to announce its new Website:
www.healthpart.com. Please visit the site for helpful information about Health Partners.

