



# HEALTH PARTNERS TALK

PUBLISHED FOR MEMBERS OF HEALTH PARTNERS

## Wash your hands: Stay germ-free

One of the most common ways people get sick is by rubbing their nose, eyes or mouth after their hands have been in contact with germs.

To prevent the spread of germs, you should wash your hands:

- Before, during and after you prepare food
- Before you eat and after you use the bathroom
- After handling animals or animal waste
- When your hands are dirty
- More frequently when someone in your home is sick

Make sure to scrub your hands, using a good antibacterial soap, for 10 to 15 seconds (about as long as it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song). Then thoroughly rinse and dry your hands.

## New location for Health Partners

Our new address is:

**Health Partners**  
901 Market St., Suite 500  
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Phone numbers will remain the same: **1-800-553-0784** or **(215) 849-9600** (TTY/TDD: **1-877-454-8477** or **[215] 849-9600**).

## Children stay healthy with EPSDT

Health Partners' Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) program makes sure your child gets the right shots, tests and health care at the right time.

As a parent or guardian, keeping your child healthy is one of the most important things you can do. At each visit, ask your doctor to check that EPSDT services are up-to-date.

EPSDT services include:

- Immunizations
- Physical exams
- Body mass index (BMI)



- Dental exams
  - Lead test
  - Hearing test
  - Eye test
  - Mental health counseling
  - Drug and alcohol services
- EPSDT services are available to all members younger than 21.



If you have any questions, ask your doctor or call Health Partners' EPSDT coordinator at (215) 991-4252.



## Protect your teeth and gums

Diabetes increases your chances for getting gum disease. But you can help prevent gum disease if you take care of your teeth and gums every day.

### What is gum disease?

Gum disease starts with a sticky film of food, saliva and germs called plaque. Plaque settles where the gums meet the teeth. When plaque stays on your teeth, it can harden into tartar. You need to go to the dentist to have it removed.

Poor blood sugar control can make gum problems even more likely. If gum disease gets really bad, the gums begin to pull away from your teeth. Your teeth can even fall out.

You may have gum disease if you have:

- Gums that bleed while you are eating or brushing your teeth.
- Bad breath on a regular basis.
- A bad taste in your mouth, even after brushing.

If you have any of these signs, see your dentist.

### Don't let plaque attack

You can help prevent gum disease if you:

- Brush your teeth twice a day.
- Floss your teeth every day.
- Look for early signs of gum disease.
- Visit your dentist at least twice a year.

## Help keep diabetes away

Diabetes is a disease you want to avoid. So help protect yourself with these three keys.

**1. Know your risk.** Work with your doctor to find out your risk for getting diabetes. Your chances of getting diabetes increase as you get older. If you're 45 or older, ask your doctor about being tested, especially if you're overweight.

## You have a right to privacy

All Health Partners members should have a brochure entitled *Notice of Privacy Practices*.

This brochure describes your privacy rights, how medical information about you may be used and disclosed, and how you can get access to this information.

If you would like another copy of this *Notice of Privacy Practices* brochure or have any questions, please call Health Partners' Member Relations department at **1-800-553-0784** or **(215) 849-9600** (TTY/TDD: **1-877-454-8477** or **[215] 849-9600**).

You may also gain access to the brochure by visiting our website at [www.healthpart.com](http://www.healthpart.com) and clicking on "Notice of Privacy Practices" at the bottom of our home page.



**For more information about diabetes, call the American Diabetes Association at 1-800-342-2383.**

**2. Stay active.** You don't have to run a marathon or work out for hours to prevent diabetes. If you walk for just 30 minutes most days of the week, you can protect yourself.

**3. Watch the scale.** Are you overweight? Then losing as little as 5 percent of your total weight will lower your risk. (That's dropping only 8 pounds if you weigh 160 pounds.)

Source: National Institutes of Health

## Help spot asthma attacks



### Stuck at home? Call for a ride

Need a ride to your doctor's office? To schedule transportation to a health care appointment with Medical Transportation Management (MTM), call toll-free **1-888-240-6588**.



When asthma attacks, you need to fight back.

And your best defense against a flare-up is spotting it early. That way you can treat it right away and get it under control faster.

### Watch for signs

To do this, you need to know what warning signs you often have just before an asthma attack. An attack might be coming on if you:

- Have a lower peak-flow reading.
- Cough a lot, especially at night.
- Breathe hard or fast.
- Feel tightness or discomfort in your chest.
- Get out of breath easily.
- Wheeze.
- Feel tired.
- Have an itchy, scratchy or sore throat.
- Have a headache or stuffy head.
- Sneeze or have a runny nose.
- Have a fever.
- Have dark circles under your eyes.

### Act quickly

If you notice the warning signs, it's time to take action. The first step is to follow your asthma action plan. This plan—made with your doctor's help—can tell you what kind of medications to take, when to take them and how much to take.



**If you smoke and would like to quit, Health Partners has a smoking cessation program just for you. For more information, please call (215) 991-4252.**

If you know what is causing the asthma flare-up, try to get away from that trigger.

Finally, stay calm. Follow your plan. Measure your peak flow if needed. And call your doctor if your medicine isn't working or if you need help.

Sources: American Medical Association; American Academy of Family Physicians

## Get the right tests at the right time

You may have received in the mail your personalized Report Card. This important form is being sent to all members who have specific diseases, such as diabetes and asthma.

These Report Cards include information about:

- Special tests you should have performed regularly
- Whether the tests were completed or not

● What should happen next  
Other Report Cards having to do with men's and women's preventive health and immunizations are being sent to members as well.

We encourage you to share and discuss your Report Card with your doctor to be sure you are receiving the tests that you need to monitor and maintain your health.

If you have any questions about your personalized Report Card, call **(215) 991-4250**.

# staying healthy



## Managing your heart failure

### A program just for you

All Health Partners members with congestive heart failure, diabetes or asthma are automatically enrolled in our Disease Management Program, providing education, outreach and outpatient services.

For more information, please call the Health Care Management department at **(215) 991-4250**.

- Follow a low-salt diet.
- Try to lose weight if you're carrying extra pounds.
- Take all the heart and blood pressure medicine your doctor prescribes.
- Weigh yourself every morning. Weight gain for several days in a row may be the first sign of a dangerous fluid buildup.

Sources: American Heart Association; American Medical Association

Learning you have "heart failure" can be frightening.

But it doesn't mean that your heart has failed you. It's just not pumping like it should.

Many people are living with heart failure. You can too.

### What goes wrong

Many things can damage your heart and make it pump poorly. Among them: high blood pressure, past heart attacks and diabetes.

And when your heart doesn't

pump well, fluid may build up in your body. Your ankles and feet may swell. You may also:

- Have a hard time breathing
- Cough and wheeze, especially at night
- Feel tired, weak or confused
- Not be hungry

### What you can do

Still, there's a lot you can do to control your symptoms.

- If you smoke, stop right away.
- Ask your doctor about a safe exercise program.

## You and your baby Keep safe during pregnancy

Abuse during pregnancy is more common than most people think. About one in five women suffer from domestic violence when they are pregnant.

There are many effects abuse can have on you and your baby.

Because of the stress, you may be tempted to escape in smoking or using drugs or alcohol. Abuse can also cause physical damage to you and your baby.

There are many reasons relationships become abusive. If you are in an abusive relationship or are fearful that abuse may happen, talk to your doctor, nurse, midwife or social worker.

You can also call the 24-hour

National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)** or **1-800-787-3224** (TTY for the deaf). Or go online to [www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org).

Help is available in English, Spanish and many other languages. All help is free and confidential.

For information about Health Partners' services, visit our website at [www.healthpart.com](http://www.healthpart.com).



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HEALTH PARTNERS TALK is published for the members of HEALTH PARTNERS, 901 Market St., Suite 500, Philadelphia, PA 19107, telephone 1-800-553-0784, [www.healthpart.com](http://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.

Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

If you need help reading this information, please call the 24-hour Health Partners Member Relations line at 1-800-553-0784 or (215) 849-9600.

Si necesita ayuda para leer esta información por favor llame a la línea del Departamento de Servicios para los Miembros de Health Partners, disponible las 24 horas, al 1-800-553-0784 ó al (215) 849-9600.

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Nếu quý vị cần giúp đỡ đọc phần thông tin này, xin vui lòng gọi đường dây Liên Hệ Hội Viên Health Partners 24 tiếng tại số 1-800-553-0784 hoặc (215) 849-9600.

Если Вам нужна помощь в прочтении данной информации, позвоните, пожалуйста, в круглосуточную Справочную Службу для членов страхового полиса по телефону 1-800-553-0784 или (215) 849-9600.

您如果看不懂此通知, 请联系 Health Partners Member Relations, 电话号码: 1-800-553-0784, (215) 849-9600.

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