



blueprints

for healthSM

FALL/WINTER 2010

THE HEALTH AND BENEFITS NEWSLETTER OF BLUEADVANTAGESM HMO AND HMO ILLINOIS

Help Find the Medical Group or Hospital that Best Meets Your Needs with Blue Star Reports

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) is committed to helping you make informed health care choices. And, when it comes to picking a new hospital or medical group, we know it can be a challenge.

BCBSIL's Blue StarSM Medical Group/IPA and Hospital reports, which list providers that have reached high levels of performance based on national clinical practice, preventive care, quality and safety rules, are now available. These two reports give useful facts to help choose the medical group or hospital that best suits you and your family's needs.

- The **Blue Star Medical Group/IPA Report** lists BCBSIL contracted HMO medical groups and Independent Practice Association (IPAs) in Illinois that have shown high levels of performance in providing care.
- The **Blue Star Hospital Report** shows the results of quality and safety performance measures for 91 urban Illinois hospitals.

For your ease of use, these Blue Star reports are now linked to BCBSIL's Provider Finder[®] tool on our website at bcbsil.com. You can look up a medical group or hospital's rating while searching for one.



This Is Your Last Printed Issue!

Go Green and Sign Up to Get BluePrints for Health Online

BluePrints for Health is now being published online and will no longer be mailed to you. If you are registered in **Blue Access[®] for Members (BAM)**, you will get an e-mail alert each time the new issue is ready online.

If you have not signed up for **BAM**, you will get a postcard letting you know the latest issue is ready online and how to access it. Don't miss out on important updates on your HMO coverage and wellness tips. Go green and sign up today at bcbsil.com/blueprints to get the newsletter online!

Name	Specialty
View this Medical Group's Contact Information View this Medical Group's Location View this Medical Group's Services View this Medical Group's Hours View and Print Directions Send to my phone Email to a friend	Mixed Specialties Clinic ★
View this Medical Group's Contact Information View this Medical Group's Location View this Medical Group's Services View this Medical Group's Hours View and Print Directions Send to my phone Email to a friend	Mixed Specialties Clinic ★

Access the reports directly online to see the latest Blue Star ratings, which can help you make better health choices:

Medical group/IPA Report: bcbsil.com/bluestar_ipa

Hospital Report: bcbsil.com/bluestar_hospitals



Our HMOs have been awarded a Commendable Accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). This accreditation level is awarded to plans that demonstrate levels of services and clinical quality that meet or exceed NCQA's rigorous requirements for consumer protection and quality improvement.

Feel Well at Every Age

Preventive care is the key to a healthier life.



The definition of “wellness” is the state of being in good health, especially as an actively sought goal. No matter what your age, wellness can be reached at every stage of life. Eating a healthy diet, exercising and listening to your doctor’s advice are ways to help seek out wellness. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) also wants to help you feel well and be well. Here are suggested preventive steps that children, adults and seniors alike can take to get there.

Please note that these recommendations are for healthy people who have typical health risks. Take the time to check the following summary of key services, and see if you and your family are up to date on immunizations and health screenings. You may also want to speak with your primary care physician (PCP) about your health care needs.

Children’s Health

Having a baby is a very joyful time in your life. Put your baby on the wellness path right away — make regular office visits with the doctor for the first two years of life. The PCP will watch the growth and progress of your baby. Also talk to the PCP about eating and sleeping habits, safety and behavior issues.

At age 3, your child should see the PCP once a year until the age of 17

for exams and blood pressure checks. Starting at age 2, the PCP should check your child’s Body Mass Index (BMI) regularly to screen for obesity. Eyesight testing should be done once a year from ages 3 to 6, and then at ages 8, 10, 12, 15 and 17. Hearing screenings should happen every year from ages 4 to 6, and then once again at ages 8 and 10.

Make sure your child gets the recommended immunizations below. Not only do they protect children from sickness, they also lay the groundwork for a healthy tomorrow.

If your child has missed any of these immunizations, there are specific plans on how to “catch up.” Talk to your PCP about how to make up missed immunizations.

Recommended Immunizations for Children — birth to 6 years*

Vaccine	Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	19 - 23 months	2 - 3 years	4 - 5 years
Hepatitis B	✓	✓				✓					
Rotavirus			✓	✓	✓**						
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, (DTaP)			✓	✓	✓		✓				✓
Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)			✓	✓	✓**	✓					
Pneumococcal (PCV)			✓	✓	✓	✓					
Polio			✓	✓		✓					✓
Influenza (Flu)								✓			
Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)						✓					✓
Varicella (Chicken Pox)						✓					✓
Hepatitis A							✓ (2 doses)				

Range of recommended ages

*Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**Check with your doctor to see if this dose is needed.


Tweens and Teens

As your child grows into a teen, he or she needs to keep seeing a doctor. Children ages 7 to 18 should keep getting exams and scheduled immunizations each year. Doing so also gives your PCP a chance to do any screenings that are due and talk about:

- the importance of good eating habits and being active,
- avoiding alcohol, smoking and drugs, and
- the consequences of sexual activity and sexually transmitted diseases.

Recommended Immunizations for 7 to 18 year olds*

Vaccine	7 - 10 years	11 - 12 years	13 - 18 years
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap)	✓	✓	
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) ⁺		✓ (3 doses)	
Meningococcal (MCV)		✓	
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) ⁺	✓		

 Range of recommended ages

*Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

⁺All girls should get this shot. Boys should talk about the need for HPV with their PCP.

Adult Health

As you know, preventive care is very important for adults too. By making some basic health choices, you can have a good impact on your health and well-being. Some of these good choices include:

- eating a healthy diet,
- getting regular exercise,
- avoiding smoking and
- limiting alcohol use.

Both men and women should have the following screening tests:

- height, weight and BMI, which help you learn if you are too heavy or obese,
- blood pressure every two years, and
- colorectal cancer screening beginning at age 50 (there are many ways to screen for this cancer; talk to your doctor about which method may be right for you).

People who have an increased risk of getting diabetes, heart disease, stroke or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) may need extra preventive services. Talk to your doctor to see if you should be:

- screened for diabetes,
- on aspirin therapy to help lower the chance of a heart attack or stroke, and
- screened for HIV or other STDs.



Find More Wellness Tips Online!

Our website offers a wealth of tips and tools on all the topics discussed in this article. Check out the **Personal Health Manager (PHM)** — an interactive resource that lets you take a health risk assessment, use the **Ask A Nurse, Dietitian, Trainer or Life Coach** features, use health tools, watch videos and partake in interactive health tutorials, as well as track your health with the personal health record. Log on to Blue Access[®] for Members at bcbsil.com today to go to PHM and see how you can be more proactive about your health!



Recommended Vaccinations for Adults*

Vaccine	Recommendation
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Td or Tdap)	Booster every 10 years (one of which should be Tdap)
Varicella (Chicken Pox)	If you have not had chicken pox and have not already been immunized, check with your PCP to see if you may need this shot.
Measles, Mumps and Rubella	If you were born in 1957 or later, and have not already been immunized, check with your PCP to see if you may need this shot.
Zoster (Shingles)	One dose after age 60
Influenza (Flu)	One dose once a year for younger adults with specific chronic conditions and for all people age 50 years and older. Those who are in contact with people at risk of complications of influenza should also have a flu shot.
Pneumococcal (Pneumonia)	One dose for people age 65 or older. In some cases, another dose may be necessary.
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	Three doses for adult women who are 19 to 26 years old if they did not receive the HPV vaccine during childhood.

*Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Women's Health

Women come with their own special health issues. As such, they should make regular screenings a priority to stay well, including:

- breast cancer – there are several different recommendations as to when women should be screened for breast cancer. At the very least, you should get a mammogram starting at age 50, and then talk with your doctor to see if screening should be every year or every two years. Having mammograms every one to two years starting at age 40 is also appropriate. Talk to your doctor to decide on your plan.

It is also suggested that women ages 20 to 39 get a clinical breast exam every three years, and women age 40 and older have a breast exam once a year.

- cervical cancer – women should get a Pap smear within three years of becoming sexually active or when 21 years old. If these tests have been normal, women can get another Pap smear every three years.
- cholesterol – women aged 20 and older should have a cholesterol test at least every five years if they have a raised risk of having heart disease.

Men's Health

Men need a smart health plan too — it can make a difference whether you win or lose in the wellness game. In addition to the recommended screenings and immunizations mentioned above, talk with your PCP about the pros and cons of being screened for prostate cancer starting at age 50.

If you are African American, age 45 or older or have a father or brother diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 65, you should ask your doctor about this screening.

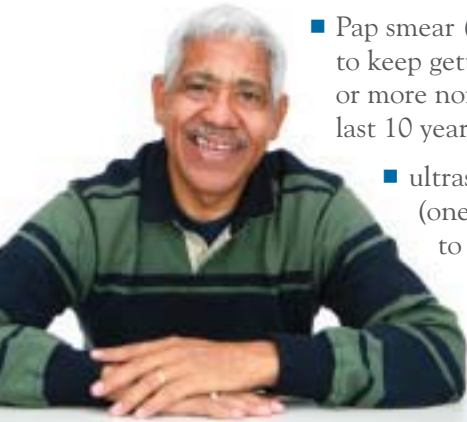
If you are age 35 and older, have a cholesterol test at least every five years. Start this test at age 20 if you have a higher risk of heart disease.



Senior Health

In addition to the recommendations for all adults, those over 65 years old should get these services:

- hearing screenings,
- influenza (flu) immunizations (yearly),
- pneumococcal (pneumonia) vaccine (one dose after age 65),
- zoster (shingles) immunization (if you have not yet had it),
- osteoporosis screening (for women),
- Pap smear (women aged 70 and older do not need to keep getting Pap smears if they have had three or more normal tests, and no abnormal results in the last 10 years), and
- ultrasound for an abdominal aortic aneurysm (one time for men ages 65 to 75 who have ever smoked).



Pathway to Health

By following these guidelines and working with your PCP, you are on the path to wellness.

Why You Should Get a Flu Shot this Year

Influenza (the flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by viruses. It can bring mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. A good way to avoid seasonal flu is to get a flu shot each year.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says that each year in the United States:

- 5 percent to 20 percent of people get the flu
- more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu-related problems
- about 36,000 people die from flu-related causes

Those who have a higher chance of having serious flu complications include:

- older people
- young children
- people with chronic health problems, such as asthma, diabetes or heart disease

Think about getting the flu shot if your child is 6 months or older. You should think about getting a flu shot if you:

- have a chronic health problem
- are age 50 or older
- work with the public or are caregivers
- will be pregnant during the flu season

Call your PCP to talk about whether getting the flu shot is right for you. It is recommended that you get the flu shot each fall, most often by October, as flu season is generally from November through April.

Also, note that if you do get a flu shot, you must get it from your PCP or it will not be covered under your HMO benefits.



Help On Hand for Chronic Conditions

Do you have asthma, diabetes or cardiovascular disease? Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois offers programs for members with these health problems. For more facts, please call HMO Quality Improvement at 312-653-3465.

Sound Mind... Sound Body

Let your PCP know about any behavioral health or substance abuse care that you receive, especially if drugs are prescribed. Letting your PCP know about this care helps your doctor coordinate your care and also lowers the chance of drug interactions.

Benefits for Reconstructive Surgery after a Mastectomy

Federal and state laws call for health insurers to give benefits for reconstructive surgery after a mastectomy. Should the woman's doctor agree, these laws say that health care benefits will cover:

- reconstruction of the breast which had the mastectomy,
- surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to make a symmetrical look,
- prostheses, and
- treatment for physical problems for all stages of mastectomy care, including lymphedemas.

The HMOs of BCBSIL cover mammograms once a year when ordered by a member's PCP or Woman's Principal Health Care Provider (depending on the member's health benefits).

For questions on these benefits, please check your Certificate Booklet or call Member Services at the toll-free number on the back of your ID card.



BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois

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It's Easy to Be Smart and Be Well

Be Smart. Be Well®. is a free online resource available to all Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois members, as well as to the general public. The goal of the site is simple: to help all of us stay healthier and safer through raised awareness and simple-to-use knowledge. Each topic features videos that mix facts from subject matter experts with the very personal stories of those who have been affected. You will also find reasearch and links to industry resources to explain the topic, why it matters and what you can do about it. The easy-to-follow "Habits to Have" section offers tips that may help you on the road to making smarter, healthier choices. The site now features news, tips and videos about:

- Traumatic Brain Injuries
- Caregiving
- Drug Safety
- Mental Health
- Domestic Violence
- Childhood Obesity
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Taking Care of Pregnancy Risks

New topics are added to Be Smart. Be Well. regularly. You can motivate yourself and loved ones by spreading the word about Be Smart. Be Well. on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Visit besmartbewell.com today!

How To Reach Us: To talk to Member Services, call the toll-free number on the back of your ID card from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CT weekdays. For written facts about the HMO Illinois and BlueAdvantage HMO Quality Improvement (QI) program, including goals, processes and outcomes related to member care and service, log on to the "Powerful Choice" section of our website at bcbsil.com/coverage/group/hmo/index.html, or call 312-653-3465 to request a copy of the QI program information.

Or Visit Us Online at bcbsil.com to:

- Search for network doctors, hospitals and medical groups/IPAs using Provider Finder®
- View our formulary (drug list) and prescription drug facts
- Review Blue StarSM Medical Group/IPA and Hospital Reports
- View our 2010 HEDIS results
- Read our privacy statement

Log on to **Blue Access®** for Members to:

- View an electronic version of this newsletter
- See your HMO Benefit Highlights
- Request a new ID card or print out a temporary ID card
- Change your medical group/IPA
- Find wellness tips and use the Personal Health Manager tool
- Fill out a Health Risk Assessment
- Check your BluePointsSM account
- Download forms

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This newsletter is published for the HMO members of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois. This publication should not be considered as medical advice, as each individual's circumstance is different. Should you need specific medical advice, do not rely on the knowledge gained in these articles, but seek advice from your doctor.

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