Getting Your Child Vaccinated

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) publishes vaccine schedules for U.S. children and adults. These recommendations are set to protect infants, children, adolescents and adults against vaccine-preventable diseases.

If your child is starting school and has missed any vaccines, work with your doctor or nurse to make sure your child gets caught up. Plan a yearly well-child visit with your child’s doctor. You may need a certificate of immunization to enroll your child in school.

On-time vaccinations (shots) throughout childhood is vital because it helps give immunity before children are exposed to potentially deadly diseases. Vaccines are tested to make sure they are safe and effective for children to get at the recommended ages.

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Getting Your Child Vaccinated

The CDC suggests vaccines for three age groups based on their exposure risk and health:

- Birth to age six
- Ages seven to 18
- Adults age 19 and older

**Vaccine side effects and risks**

Vaccines are monitored for safety, and like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects. For the most part these are minor (for example, a sore arm or low-grade fever) and go away within a few days. However, a decision not to vaccinate a child also involves risk and could put the child and others who come into contact with the child at risk of getting a harmful disease.

Severe allergic reactions are very rare after getting a shot. However, doctors and nurses are trained to deal with those reactions.

**Keep in mind**

- When you go to your child’s doctor visits, ask if your child is due for any shots.
- Keep a close watch on your child’s health a few days after they have been vaccinated. If you see changes in their health, call your child’s doctor.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*
Why Are Well-Child Visits So Important?

Well-child visits are just as important as sick visits because that is when the doctor can check a child’s overall health, growth and development, which cannot be done at a sick visit.

The benefits of well-child visits:

• Prevention. Your child’s doctor will talk with you about the following topics:
  – Immunizations. These are given to keep your child from getting a harmful disease.
  – Nutrition, such as what foods are important to eat and what foods to avoid.
  – Physical activity, such as what types of exercise your child is taking part in.
  – Limiting computer time.
  – Safety in the home and at school, such as wearing a bike helmet or using a seat belt.

• Tracking growth and development. See how much your child has grown in the time since your last visit and talk with your doctor about your child’s development — both mental and physical development. You can discuss your child’s milestones, social behaviors and learning.

• Raising concerns. Make a list of topics you want to talk about with your child’s doctor, such as development, behavior, sleep, eating, physical activity or getting along with other family members. Bring your top three to five questions or concerns with you to talk with your child’s doctor at the start of the visit.

• Team approach. Regular visits create strong, trustworthy relationships among doctors, parents and children. The AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics) recommends well-child visits as a way for doctors and parents to serve the needs of children. This team approach helps develop the ideal physical, mental and social health of a child.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics
The nerves can become more active during stress, causing the intestines to be more sensitive and squeeze (contract) more. While IBS is not caused by emotions or stress, emotional problems can make symptoms worse in someone with a hyper-reactive bowel.

**Learn your triggers to handle IBS**

There is no cure for IBS, but the symptoms can be managed. Symptoms can often get better through treatment. Your doctor may suggest medicines to help ease your symptoms. And life changes are a main part of reducing symptoms.

Figuring out which foods are triggers for you and avoiding them may help. Foods and drinks that often cause trouble for people with IBS are wheat, rye, barley, chocolate, milk products, alcohol, coffee, tea and colas. Watch out for large meals as well, they may cause symptoms.

**Namaste for stomachs**

New research suggests that learning to lower your stress and emotional disturbances may help cut the symptoms of IBS.

Self-care is a big part of IBS management. Try these steps to see if they help your symptoms:

- Eat a balanced diet that is not high in fat
- Drink lots of water
- Eat six small meals a day instead of three large ones
- Keep a food journal to find out if certain foods make your symptoms worse
- Work out often
- Get enough sleep
- Reduce stress by learning and practicing relaxation techniques
- Talk to your doctor

If you have the symptoms, that may mean you have IBS. Be sure to talk to your doctor. The symptoms can be like other, more serious bowel disorders. Your doctor can help find out what problem you have and how best to treat it.

How to Fit in Fitness

We can all likely come up with a thousand and one reasons why we cannot work out today. The main reason is often our belief that we do not have time to work out. Most of our schedules are jam-packed to the point where it can be hard to fit in an hour to watch TV, let alone go to the gym.

Start small. Try fitting in a half hour of exercise most days, and then build off that progress in the weeks and months that follow.

Here some ways you can fit exercise into your daily routine:

1. **Make a plan and stick to it**
   Open your calendar and block off some time — at least five times a week — to work out. Treat it like any other meeting that you would not skip.

2. **Wake up earlier**
   If you are going to have a super busy day or evening, the morning might be the only time to fit in some exercise. Get your gym bag packed the night before with work clothes and toiletries.

3. **Turn your commute into a workout**
   Instead of hopping on the train or driving, try biking, running or walking to and from work or the grocery store. You might even find that your commute is a little faster since you will not have to deal with traffic or train times.

4. **Work out during lunch**
   Go for a walk and/or use a resistance band on your lunch break. It is a great way to clear your head and calm some stress after a busy morning.

5. **Work out with your family or friends**
   If you are having trouble finding the time to work out with your busy social calendar, try combining exercise with the time you spend with friends or family. Some fun ideas are:

   - Going for a long walk after dinner
   - Gardening
   - Biking
   - Hiking
   - Rock climbing
   - Yoga or chair yoga

*continued on page 7*
• Taking dance lessons
• Playing a pick-up game of your favorite sport
• Jogging

Having someone else to work out with makes it more fun and is also a great way to stay motivated.

6. Make use of your TV time

Watching TV is one of life’s most simple pleasures. But instead of just vegging out on the couch, try moving around while you catch up on your favorite shows. If you want to stay seated, do some stretching or lift free weights or soup cans. You can also hop on the treadmill or elliptical while you watch TV. You might even find that your workout will go by even faster because you are distracted.

7. Join an intramural sports league

Exercising does not need to be something you dread — it can be a fun way to hang out with friends or meet new people. Look up the intramural sports leagues in your city and see if any of the activities interest you. Ask your friends to start a softball, kickball or basketball team, or join an existing team as a way to make new friends.

If you are starting to exercise for the first time in a while, talk with your doctor to make sure you are healthy enough.
Rights & Responsibilities

As a valued member of Blue Cross Community Health Plans (BCCHP℠), you have the following rights & responsibilities. Please take a moment to review.

Your rights:

• Be treated with respect and dignity at all times.
• Have your personal health information and medical records kept private except where allowed by law.
• Be protected from discrimination.
• Be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation.
• Receive information from Blue Cross Community Health Plans in other languages or formats such as with an interpreter or Braille.
• Receive information on available treatment options and alternatives, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
• Receive information necessary to be involved in making decisions about your healthcare treatment and choices.
• Refuse treatment and be told what may happen to your health if you do.
• Receive a copy of your medical records and in some cases request that they be amended or corrected.
• Choose your own primary care provider (PCP) from the Blue Cross Community Health Plans. You can change your PCP at any time.
• File a complaint (sometimes called a grievance), or appeal without fear of mistreatment or backlash of any kind.
• To make recommendations regarding the organization’s member rights and responsibility policy.
• Request and receive in a reasonable amount of time, information about your health plan, its providers and polices.

Your responsibilities:

• Treat your doctor and the office staff with courtesy and respect.
• Carry your Blue Cross Community Health Plans ID card with you when you go to your doctor appointments and to the pharmacy to pick up your prescriptions.
• Keep your appointments and be on time for them.
• If you cannot keep your appointments cancel them in advance.
• Follow the instructions and treatment plan you get from your doctor and agree with goals to provide better care for your health.
• Tell your health plan and your care coordinator if your address or phone number or any other information changes to provide care efficiently.
• Understand your health status and participate in developing mutually agreed-upon treatment goals to the degree possible.
• Read your member handbook so you know what services are covered and if there are any special rules.
To ask for supportive aids and services, or materials in other formats and languages for free, please call, 1-877-860-2837 TTY/TDD:711.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois:

• Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  o Qualified sign language interpreters
  o Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
• Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  o Qualified interpreters
  o Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact Civil Rights Coordinator.

If you believe that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Civil Rights Coordinator, Office of Civil Rights Coordinator, 300 E. Randolph St., 35th floor, Chicago, Illinois 60601, 1-855-664-7270, TTY/TDD: 1-855-661-6965, Fax: 1-855-661-6960, Civilrightscoordinator@hscenet. You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201

1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)

English: ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711).


हिंदी (Hindi): ध्यान दें: यदि हाल हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711) पर कॉल करें।


اُردُو (Urdu): اگو کرین ۔ بہیں دستیاب مین مفت خدمات ہیں مداد کی بھی بیان کو آپ کو پہلے اردو آپ اگر خبردار
1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711).


λ η ν ι κά (Greek): ΠΡΟΣΟΧΗ: Αν μιλάτε ελληνικά, στη διάθεσή σας βρίσκονται υπηρεσίες γλωσσικής υποστήριξης, οι οποίες παρέχονται δωρεάν. Καλέστε το 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711).
LifeTimes is published four times a year for Blue Cross Community Health Plans members. It brings you news about your health plan and staying healthy. Each issue has important phone numbers for you to cut out and keep. If you have questions or need help, call Member Services.

Articles in LifeTimes are meant to educate. They are not meant as medical advice. Please check with your doctor for any advice about your health.

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<tr>
<th>LifeTimes</th>
<th>Important Blue Cross Community Health Plans phone numbers (Please have your member ID number ready)</th>
<th>Toll-free Number</th>
<th>TTY/ TDD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Your guide to health, wellness, and fitness</td>
<td>Member Services</td>
<td>1-877-860-2837</td>
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<td>We are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The call is free.</td>
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<td>24/7 Nurseline</td>
<td>1-888-343-2697</td>
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Member and Community Events

Check out what is happening near you. You can find BCCHP member and community events on the BCCHP website at www.bcchpil.com. Or you can call us toll free at 1-877-860-2837 (TTY/TDD: 711).