



# Family

Self-Care  
Handbook

**CHILDREN**

**TEENS**

**WOMEN, TO AGE 45**

**MEN, TO AGE 65**

**PREGNANCY PRIMER**

**MATURE WOMEN**

**SENIORS**

**GENERAL FAMILY HEALTH**



presented by the National Women's Health Resource Center, Inc.

# Personal and Family Health Information

This form will help you create a quick reference for yourself, family, babysitters and any others who may need it. Keep a photocopy of the completed form in your purse or wallet so it's handy during medical appointments and when filling prescriptions. The information also can be a lifesaver in emergencies or while traveling.

YOUR NAME

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ADDRESS

PHONE

Family Member

Date of Birth

Blood Type

Chronic Conditions and Allergies (including drug and food allergies)

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY

PHONE

HEALTH INSURANCE GROUP #

HEALTH INSURANCE ID#

DENTAL PLAN

PHONE

ID#

VISION PLAN

PHONE

ID#

**EMERGENCY CONTACTS**

NEAREST RELATIVE

PHONE

FAMILY PHYSICIAN

PHONE

ADDRESS

PEDIATRICIAN

PHONE

ADDRESS

SPECIALIST

PHONE

ADDRESS

PHARMACY

PHONE

ADDRESS

HOSPITAL

NATIONWIDE POISON CONTROL HOTLINE: **1-800-222-1222**

**MEDICATION NOTES**

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Reminder: Be sure to periodically review all medications you and your family take, including over-the-counter medicines and supplements, with your health care professional or pharmacist

The information suggested in this publication is not intended as a substitute for medical advice, and does not suggest diagnoses for personal symptoms. Consult your health care professional to evaluate personal medical problems.

# Good Health Starts With You

**W**ho doesn't want good health for themselves and their family? But as everyone knows, keeping a family healthy requires a lot more than regular medical checkups. That's why we wrote this handbook: To give you some pointers and a helping hand! To make it simple, we've presented information in easy-to-follow checklists and bullet points, with key health information for everyone in your family, from infants to senior citizens.

To further explore any of the topics covered in the *Family Self-Care Handbook*, use at least two reliable sources, such as the sources listed at the back of this handbook. While the Internet is an excellent research tool, the health information you find online is not always reliable or current. Use U.S. government Web sites (those with addresses ending in .gov), national nonprofit organizations (.org), and universities and medical schools (.edu).

It is also vitally important to bring any medical problems or questions to your health care professional for evaluation and diagnosis.

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## Making the Most of Your Visit to a Health Care Professional

- Go prepared with a list of questions and any printed material that addresses your health concerns.
- Let your health care professional and pharmacist know about any prescription drugs, nonprescription medicines and nutritional supplements you are taking. Know your allergies and family history.
- Describe pain by (1) location, (2) severity, (3) when it occurs, (4) how long it lasts, (5) whether it's localized or spreading and (6) what makes it feel better or worse.
- Don't leave the health care professional's office with unanswered questions.

# Growing Fast, Growing Strong

## Children, Birth to Age 12



**N**ow is the time you have the most control over your children's safety, eating habits and physical activities. Use this time to their greatest advantage by setting a good example. Here are a few tips to steer your children onto the path of wellness that hopefully will last their entire lives:

### SAFETY

- ✓ Keep medicines, vitamins, alcohol, cleaning products and other toxic materials out of reach of children.
- ✓ Always use a car seat in the back seat of the car. Children under 12 should ride in the back seat. Seat belts should be worn by all passengers at all times. (Weight and age guidelines for car seat use vary by state; check local and state regulations.)
- ✓ Childproof your home with safety gates and childproof locks, and cover electrical outlets with childproof devices.
- ✓ Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each floor of your home and test them periodically.
- ✓ Keep balloons, toys with small parts and foods that can lodge in the throat away from children under age three.

### Helpful Hints About Medication

Seven out of 10 pediatricians report that patients fail to take their prescription medication as prescribed. To administer medication correctly and completely:

- Never guess on amounts. Kids aren't small adults: Half an adult dose may be more than your child needs, or not enough to help.
- Assemble medications in advance.
- Put daily reminder notes on your calendar.
- Follow dosing instructions for the age, height and weight of your child.
- Review precautions and safety guidelines before administering any medication.
- If your child takes prescription medication on an

- ✓ Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and how and when to treat infants and children for choking.
- ✓ Call the nationwide Poison Control Center Hotline, 1-800-222-1222, if your child swallows anything you think could be poisonous.
- ✓ Teach children about pedestrian and cycling safety including wearing a helmet.
- ✓ Discuss ways to handle temptations, such as playing with a gun, and peer pressure to have sex, drink, smoke or take drugs.

### NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✓ Serve high-fiber, nutritious meals, rich in whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ Give your child three servings per day of calcium-rich foods, such as milk and calcium-fortified orange juice.
- ✓ Encourage physical activity and limit eating in front of the television.
- ✓ Make sure your child eats breakfast.
- ✓ Use sweets as only an occasional treat.

ongoing basis, check with your health care professional before administering any over-the-counter medication.

- Read labels for all medications, both prescription and nonprescription.
- Follow directions exactly as written.
- Administer the entire course of medication, even if your child feels better.
- Safely discard all expired and unused medications.
- Inform your health care professional about all prescription and nonprescription drugs your child is taking.
- Always relock child-resistant caps on medications after each use.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics and the Consumer Healthcare Products Association

## WELLNESS

- ✓ Obtain all required immunizations, as directed by your health care professional.
- ✓ Go for all necessary well-baby visits, annual checkups and routine screenings.
- ✓ Put babies (up to one year) to sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- ✓ Be sure your child gets enough sleep. Needs vary by age. Visit [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org) for details.
- ✓ Teach your child the importance of brushing his or her teeth daily.
- ✓ Insist that your child wash his or her hands after using the bathroom and before eating.
- ✓ Do not expose your child to secondhand smoke. Set a good example: Don't smoke.
- ✓ Check with a pediatrician before using sunscreen on a baby less than six months old. After six months of age, apply a waterproof, PABA-free sunscreen (SPF 30) at least 20 minutes before going outdoors.

## When to Call the Doctor

Always seek help for emergencies and for any unusual symptoms, including:

- Fever: Under two months, rectal temperature of 100.4° F or above (or oral temperature of 99.5° F); age three months or older, oral temperature of 102° F or above
- Significant changes in feeding, crying, mood, sleep patterns or bowel movements
- Vomiting that is bloody or forceful in infants, lasts six to 12 hours or is accompanied by fever or diarrhea
- Eye(s) that are pink, bloodshot or have a sticky white discharge
- Seizures (convulsions) or uncontrollable shaking of any body part
- Severe headache
- Pain or stuffiness around the nose, eyes or forehead
- Earache or fluid discharge from the ear
- Abnormal visual sensitivity to light (especially if accompanied by fever, headache or stiff neck)
- Neck pain or stiffness (especially if accompanied by fever or headache)
- Severe or persistent cough (especially with bloody or discolored mucus)
- Intense or unusual abdominal pain
- Discharge from the penis or vagina
- A cut that oozes pus or is red, tender, hot or swollen
- A sudden rash, blotches or blisters (especially if covering a large area)

Source: American College of Emergency Physicians

Sources: American Medical Association; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Gateway to Government Food Safety: For Kids, Teens and Educators; U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service, Children's Nutrition Research Center, Baylor College of Medicine in Houston; National Institutes of Health; and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration

# Changing Bodies, Changing Needs

Teens, Ages 13 to 19



It would be nice if teens came with an owner's manual, but, of course, they don't. Actually that's part of the fun and challenge of parenting teens. Each one is unique. The best you can do as a parent is to try to guide your teen through the obstacle course of adolescence with love, firmness, patience and healthy role-modeling. It is extremely important to stay involved in your teenager's day-to-day life. Here are some helpful tips:

## SAFETY

- ✓ Openly discuss and role-play ways to handle temptations, such as peer pressure to have sex, drink, smoke or take drugs.
- ✓ Explain the health risks of smoking, abusing household products such as inhalants, and abusing alcohol and nonprescription and prescription medications.
- ✓ Insist that your teen wear a helmet when cycling and appropriate protective gear when engaging in other sports.
- ✓ Insist that your teen always wear a seat belt.
- ✓ Talk about the danger of handling guns.
- ✓ Offer to pick up your teenager anywhere, anytime — with no questions asked — if he or she is tempted to drive while high or drunk or is asked to ride in a car driven by an intoxicated friend.
- ✓ Be alert for signs of drug use, depression, eating disorders and gang participation. If a problem seems too serious for you to handle alone, seek help. Contact a health care professional, clergy member, support group or school counselor.

## Teen Depression Warning Signs

- Changes in personality or eating and sleeping habits
- Sustained boredom, irritability or sadness
- Unexplained violent or rebellious behavior, significant problems with parents
- Withdrawal from family or friends
- Tobacco, alcohol or other substance abuse
- Significant weight gain or loss and unusual neglect of appearance
- Difficulty concentrating, unexplained drop in schoolwork quality and grades
- Unplanned pregnancy
- Problems dealing with sexual orientation
- Unusual interest in themes of death; giving away prized possessions
- Talking about suicide or threatening or attempting to kill oneself
- Running away or being arrested

If your child displays any of the above warning signs, call a pediatrician, mental health professional, school counselor or the National Suicide Hotline, 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433).

Sources: American Psychiatric Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics

## NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✔ Provide nutritional, well-balanced, high-fiber meals and snacks that are rich in whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables. Teens should consume at least three servings of dairy foods per day.
- ✔ Challenge your teen to seek out healthier alternatives to fast food.
- ✔ Limit television watching and eating in front of the TV.
- ✔ Encourage regular physical activity. Plan family outings, such as swimming and hiking. Play sports together.
- ✔ Be a healthy eating role model yourself.

## WELLNESS

- ✔ Emphasize the importance of self-care, including regular exercise, a balanced, low-fat diet and regular oral health checkups.
- ✔ Answer your teen's questions about sex honestly and provide resources to help him or her make safe and healthy decisions about sex.
- ✔ Make age-appropriate rules and follow through with your enforcement of those rules.
- ✔ Encourage your teen to get at least nine hours of sleep each night.
- ✔ Engage in regular discussions about the powerful influences of peer pressure.
- ✔ Keep the lines of communication open; avoid judging or preaching.
- ✔ Help your teen learn how to roll with the punches and put life's stresses into perspective.

**Sources:** American Medical Association; The Nemours Foundation; and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

## Eating Disorder Warning Signs

Eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia, are devastating illnesses for both the affected individual and their families. They are most common among teenage girls and women in their early 20s, but can occur in boys and men, as well. Untreated, eating disorders can lead to serious health problems and death. Not all health care professionals are trained to treat eating disorders. Ask your health care professional for a referral to a specialist if your teen exhibits any of these behaviors or symptoms:

- Intense fear of weight gain; anxiety around mealtimes
- Strange behavior around meals, including moving food around on the plate without eating it and hiding food
- Unrealistic or distorted body image
- Missing menstrual periods
- Withdrawing emotionally from people and avoiding social activities
- Eating large amounts of food in one sitting or secretly (bingeing), then getting rid of it by forced vomiting or abusing laxatives (purging)
- Disappearing into the bathroom after meals for long periods of time
- Exercising to excess

Parents can do a lot to discourage unhealthy eating behaviors and encourage positive body images among their teens. Try these approaches:

- Explain that it's healthy and normal to gain some weight and experience other physical changes during adolescence.
- Don't criticize your teen's weight.
- Talk about the idealized physical images of men and women portrayed by the media and how these images are unrealistic for most people.
- Model healthy attitudes about your own body.

**Sources:** American Psychiatric Association; American Academy of Pediatrics; and the Harvard Eating Disorders Center

## WHY SO MANY TEENS HAVE ACNE

If your teen has acne, she or he isn't alone. Acne occurs in almost 85 percent of 12- to 24-year-olds. Though the precise cause is unknown, experts believe acne results from hormones, which increase during puberty and can cause the glands to enlarge and make more sebum (oil). Another factor is heredity. Stress, certain drugs, greasy cosmetics, friction and environmental irritants can worsen acne. But it's a myth that chocolate or other foods, or dirt, are to blame.

## ACNE SELF-HELP TIPS

- ✓ Wash skin gently with a mild soap made for acne-prone skin. Scrubbing your face or washing too often can make acne worse.
- ✓ To help prevent scarring, avoid picking or frequently touching pimples.
- ✓ Shave carefully to avoid nicking blemishes. Try both an electric razor and a disposable razor (always use a sharp blade) to see which works better.
- ✓ Avoid sunbathing.
- ✓ Use only oil-free cosmetics.
- ✓ Try over-the-counter acne treatments to help dry the skin and prevent new blemishes.
- ✓ For severe cases of acne, ask your pediatrician or dermatologist about an oral prescription medication or a topical acne treatment.

**Sources:** American Academy of Dermatology and the National Institutes of Health

## How to Quit Smoking Tips to Share with Teens

Tobacco use produces substantial health problems among teens, including an increase in the number and severity of respiratory illnesses, such as asthma and bronchitis, and decreased physical fitness. Tobacco use also increases the risk for cancer, heart disease, stroke, emphysema and other health problems later in life. The first symptoms of tobacco dependence among 12- and 13-year-olds can appear within days to weeks after occasional use begins, often before the onset of daily smoking. Here are some tips for teens:

- Choose a "Quit Day" in the next two weeks.
- Use the Internet: [www.smokefree.gov](http://www.smokefree.gov), sponsored by the National Cancer Institute, is one of several smoking-cessation sites for Web-savvy teens.
- If you are looking for a job, try to apply only at smoke-free workplaces.
- Get involved in team sports where you are likely to meet friends who don't smoke.
- Ask your health care professional about treatments to quit smoking. Many over-the-counter products that include self-help programs are available for smokers 18 and over. For younger teens, ask your health care professional for guidance.
- See if your school or community offers N-O-T (Not on Tobacco), a teen program of the American Lung Association, [www.lungusa.org](http://www.lungusa.org).
- Consider enrolling in group or individual therapy aimed at smoking cessation.

Suggest your teen do one of the following activities when he or she feels like smoking:

- Go for a walk.
- Call a friend.
- Drink water or juice.
- Take a deep breath and count to five. Let your breath out slowly. Repeat five times.
- Tell yourself, "I can quit smoking."

**Sources:** National Women's Health Report; American Lung Association; Tobacco-Free Kids; and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

# Woman to Woman

Women, Ages 20 to 45



**L**ike many women, you're probably chief health care manager for your family — scheduling your partner's doctors' appointments, reminding your mother to get a flu shot and taking your children to their annual checkups. Please don't forget that your physical and mental well-being are top priorities, too. Here are some self-care reminders:

## SAFETY

- ✓ Always fasten your seat belt properly when riding in a motor vehicle, even for short trips. Don't be a distracted driver. Limit cell phone use and don't apply makeup while driving or turn your head to talk to your children in the back seat.
  - ✓ Bend your knees and use your legs instead of your back when lifting heavy objects, shoveling snow, raking leaves and doing other chores around the house.
- ✓ When exercising outdoors, stay on well-marked paths, sidewalks or roads with wide shoulders; exercise with a friend or a dog; wear bright-colored clothing and finish before dark.
  - ✓ When buying or taking medicine, check all drug packages and the medicine itself for signs of tampering. Return the product to the store and report anything suspicious to the store manager or pharmacist.
  - ✓ Remember that while abstinence is the only sure way to protect yourself from a sexually transmitted infection, condoms are the next best method of reducing your risk and can also prevent an unwanted pregnancy.

## NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✓ Eat a low-fat, high-fiber, low-salt diet. Consume at least two cups of fruit, two-and-a-half cups of vegetables and three cups of low-fat or fat-free dairy products every day.
- ✓ Limit the amount of foods high in saturated and/or trans fat in your diet.
- ✓ Keep total fat intake between 20 to 35 percent of calories, with most fats coming from polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fat sources, such as fish, nuts and vegetable oils.
- ✓ Consume less than 300 mg/day of cholesterol and less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat.
- ✓ Choose a physical activity you enjoy and do it regularly. See a health care professional before starting an exercise program, especially if you are over 35 and have been inactive.
- ✓ Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (such as brisk walking) on most days.
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight to reduce your risk for diabetes, heart disease and other health problems.

## WELLNESS

- ✔ To better cope with negative stress, try yoga, meditation, positive self-talk, hobbies or confiding in a close friend. And maintain a well-balanced diet.
- ✔ Use sunscreen on exposed skin every time you plan to be in the sun for more than 20 minutes.
- ✔ If any of your blood relatives suffer from a disease or medical condition that could be hereditary, such as colon cancer or high blood pressure, ask your health care professional about medical screenings and other ways of lowering your risk.
- ✔ If you're 40 or older, have a mammogram once a year and consider doing a breast self-exam monthly. See more screening guidelines on pages 14 and 18.
- ✔ Begin cholesterol screening at age 20 and repeat at least once every five years. Cholesterol is a waxy fat-like substance that can build up in arteries, eventually causing heart disease.
- ✔ Avoid all forms of tobacco. If you smoke, discuss ways to quit with your health care professional. If appropriate, a number of over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapy products are available that include self-help programs.
- ✔ Don't use illegal drugs or anyone else's prescription medications.
- ✔ If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation. (Moderate drinking for women is defined as one drink per day equaling one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine or 1½ ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.)
- ✔ Get a medical checkup annually and a professional dental cleaning twice a year or as recommended by your dentist.

## Relieving PMS Symptoms

Premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is a medically recognized condition that affects 30 to 40 percent of women in their mid-20s to early 40s. Its causes are unclear. If you experience temporary mood swings, irritability or physical symptoms severe enough to interfere with normal activities a week or two before your period each month, you might have PMS. Be sure to speak with your health care professional to rule out other medical problems that may be similar to those commonly blamed on PMS. If you do have PMS, here are some strategies that can help:

- Supplement your diet with 1,000 to 1,500 mg of calcium daily, in addition to increasing your intake of low-fat dairy products.
- Decrease or avoid coffee, alcohol, nicotine and caffeinated beverages, which can make PMS symptoms worse.

## Self-Help Tips for Menstrual Cramps

Cramps are not considered a symptom of PMS. Called dysmenorrhea, cramps typically start at the beginning of your period and disappear when your period ends. Try these tips to relieve your menstrual cramps:

- Lie down with a heating pad on your abdomen. With your fingertips, lightly massage your belly in a circular motion.
- Drink warm, noncaffeinated beverages.
- Take a warm shower.
- Do waist-bending exercises or take a walk.
- Take an over-the-counter pain reliever containing acetaminophen, ibuprofen, naproxen sodium, aspirin or ketoprofen.

**Sources:** *New England Journal of Medicine*; National Women's Health Resource Center; and the Mayo Clinic

**Sources:** Consumer Healthcare Products Association; American Social Health Association; National Cholesterol Education Program; National Institutes of Health; *Staying Well: The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Guide*; President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism; *National Women's Health Report*; American Council on Exercise; the American Heart Association; and the American Academy of Dermatology

- Limit your intake of refined sugar, fat and salt. Drink more water.
- Choose foods high in complex carbohydrates, such as fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- Exercise regularly. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (such as brisk walking) on most and preferably all days of the week.
- Incorporate stress management into your lifestyle. Try muscle relaxation or deep breathing exercises.
- Get plenty of sleep — at least seven to nine hours each night.
- Eat smaller, more frequent meals at the same time each day, if possible.
- Keep a PMS diary. Record your symptoms, when they occur and what makes you feel better.
- Ask your health care professional about antidepressant and other medication formulated for PMS sufferers.
- Avoid unproven remedies.

**Sources:** National Women's Health Resource Center; American Academy of Family Physicians; *Journal of Women's Health*; the American Heart Association; and OBG Management

## PAP TEST GUIDELINES

The Pap test or smear is still considered one of the biggest health advances in the fight against cervical cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, screening should begin about three years after a woman becomes sexually active, but no later than age 21. Until age 30, women should have a traditional Pap test every year OR a liquid-based Pap test every two to three years. Beginning at age 30, after three normal Pap tests in a row, screening may be done every two to three years. And, ask about having blood tests that screen for sexually transmitted infections at the same time as your Pap test.

## When to Call the Doctor

You know your body best. If you develop unusual health changes, including any of the following symptoms, call your health care professional.

- Severe abdominal pain, nausea or vomiting that lasts several days
- Fever lasting more than a few days
- Frequent dizziness, nausea or headaches
- Changes in vision
- Unexplained changes in weight
- Abnormal bleeding or blood in the urine, stool or phlegm
- Cough or pain lasting more than a week
- Extreme fatigue
- Excessive thirst
- Persistent bloating, a feeling of fullness or gas
- Menstrual disorders (heavy and/or prolonged menstrual bleeding, skipped periods, bleeding in between periods)
- Pain during intercourse
- Any unusual breast symptoms (discharge, redness, swelling or changes in shape or size)

**Sources:** *Your Healthy Best: Self-Help Handbook of Symptoms and Treatments*; The Scripps Research Institute; and the Scripps Foundation for Medicine and Science

To make your Pap test result as accurate as possible:

- ✓ Schedule it between 10 and 20 days after the first day of your last period.
- ✓ Don't douche or use any spermicidal foam, cream, gel or vaginal medicine for 48 hours before your Pap test unless instructed otherwise by your health care professional.
- ✓ Don't have sex for 24- to 48-hours before your Pap test.

**Sources:** American Society of Clinical Pathologists; American Cancer Society; and the National Women's Health Resource Center

# Man to Man

Men, Ages 20 to 65



**Y**ou have more power than you may

realize to improve your health and quality of life and perhaps prolong your life. Even if you are feeling great, following these tips will help keep you in tip-top shape, inside and out:

## SAFETY

- ✓ Always wear your seat belt when riding in a motor vehicle. Obey all rules of the road. Don't be a distracted or an aggressive driver. Limit cell phone use and don't use other electronic devices while driving.
- ✓ Use condoms to reduce risk of sexually transmitted infections or an unplanned pregnancy.
- ✓ Don't strain your body when moving heavy objects. Use your knees and legs and not your back for leverage. Ask for help, if you need it.
- ✓ Wear appropriate protective gear for your eyes and ears whenever using construction equipment, lawn mowers, leaf blowers and snow blowers at home or work.
- ✓ Never use a grill indoors or in a garage,

breezeway, carport, porch or under an awning. Place the grill at least 10 feet away from your house or any building. When grilling, never leave the grill unattended, especially when small children and pets are present. Keep a fire extinguisher handy and know how to properly use it.

## NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✓ Eat foods low in saturated fat. Avoid junk food whenever possible.
- ✓ Eat breakfast every day. Munch a piece of fruit at snack time.

## Home Screening Tests

A variety of health screenings can be performed at home. While they can be convenient, home screening tests should not replace regular medical exams and screenings by a health care professional.

Perform home screening tests exactly as explained in the kit directions for accurate results. If you develop symptoms of potentially serious illness, such as visible blood in your urine or stool, chest pain or testicular pain, see a health care professional immediately. Home tests include:

- Blood glucose monitoring (if you have diabetes): Check your blood-glucose level as often as recommended by your physician. Talk to your doctor or diabetes educator about additional ways of managing your illness.
- Blood-pressure monitoring: If your health care professional recommends it, buy a blood pressure kit or a digital monitor. Keep a running log of your blood-pressure readings to share with your health care team.
- Urinalysis: Home tests generally detect any traces of blood in the urine, which could indicate a urinary tract infection or kidney problem.

- ✓ Reduce the portion size of your meals.
- ✓ Eat plenty of whole grains (oatmeal, for example) and other high-fiber foods.
- ✓ Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products and baked goods.
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight.
- ✓ Get active. Begin and end each workout with a five- to 10-minute warm-up and cool-down. Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity (such as brisk walking) on most and preferably all days of the week.

- Blood cholesterol level: Most home test kits determine only total cholesterol level, but when total cholesterol level is high, your LDL (“bad cholesterol”) level may be high, too. Some kits provide immediate results; others must be sent to a lab for analysis.
- Fecal occult blood test (stool test): Using a test kit (obtained from a physician), you put a small piece of stool on a test card for three consecutive bowel movements. Then you return the test cards to the doctor or a lab to check the stool samples for blood, which could indicate intestinal bleeding. This test should be done every year.
- HIV test: You perform a finger-stick to produce a dried-blood spot specimen on filter paper. Identified by an anonymous code number, the specimen is mailed to a laboratory for HIV antibody testing. You call a toll-free phone number to obtain your results, and if necessary, counseling and referrals.
- Testicular self-exam: Once a month, check for swelling on the scrotal skin and roll each testicle gently between your thumbs and fingers. If you feel any pain or abnormalities, see a urologist.

**Sources:** American Urological Association; American Diabetes Association; American Heart Association; U.S. National Library of Medicine; American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science; and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Understanding Blood Pressure

Blood pressure — the force of blood against the walls of arteries — is recorded as two numbers: systolic pressure (as the heart beats) over diastolic pressure (as the heart relaxes between beats). For example, a blood pressure measurement of 120/80 mm hg (millimeters of mercury) is expressed verbally as “120 over 80.” Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80. Between 120/80 mm hg and 139/89 mm hg is considered prehypertension. High blood pressure, or hypertension (140/90 mm hg or above), increases your risk for heart disease, kidney disease and stroke. Hypertension often has no warning signs or symptoms. Once high blood pressure develops, it usually lasts a lifetime.

You can help to prevent or control high blood pressure by:

- Eating healthfully
- Reducing salt (sodium) in your diet
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Being physically active
- Limiting your alcohol intake
- Quitting smoking
- Taking blood pressure-lowering medication, as prescribed by your health care professional

**Source:** American Heart Association

## WELLNESS

- ✓ Know your family medical history. Pursue health screenings for those diseases for which you may be at greater risk, such as colon cancer, prostate cancer and heart disease.
- ✓ Get an annual checkup. Starting at age 50, have an annual digital rectal exam and an annual prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test.
- ✓ If you drink alcohol, limit your consumption to no more than two drinks per day. (One drink equals one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one five-ounce glass of wine or 1½ ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.)

- ✓ Don't use tobacco. If you smoke, discuss ways to quit with your health care professional. Consider nicotine replacement therapy products that include self-help programs, if appropriate.
- ✓ Notice early-warning signs of stress, such as tension in your shoulders and neck, grinding your teeth or clenching your hands into fists.
- ✓ Don't be a weekend-sports warrior. Exercise moderately if you aren't normally active. Use over-the-counter pain relievers to treat mild exercise-related aches and pain.

**Sources:** American Social Health Association; American Heart Association; American Cancer Society; American Academy of Family Physicians; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism; National Safety Council; and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

### Cholesterol Primer

Cholesterol is a waxy, fat-like substance that can build up on the walls of your arteries if your blood cholesterol level remains too high. This fatty buildup narrows arteries, which slows down or blocks blood flow to the heart. Eventually, this can lead to heart disease, chest pain or heart attack.

High blood cholesterol has no immediate symptoms or warning signs. Everyone age 20 and older should have a cholesterol screening test at least once every five years. The most informative test is the "lipoprotein profile," which gives information about total cholesterol, LDL and HDL cholesterol and triglyceride levels. This screening test is done after a nine- to 12-hour fast.

The ranges below are for healthy individuals. Your cholesterol goals will be different if you have one or more risk factors for heart disease.

#### Total cholesterol

<b>Desirable</b> less than 200 mg/dL*	<b>Borderline High</b> 200-239 mg/dL	<b>High</b> 240 mg/dL and above
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**Low-density lipoprotein (LDL or "bad cholesterol")** is the main source of cholesterol buildup and blockage in the arteries. The lower your LDL level, the better for your heart.

	<b>Near/Above</b>	<b>Borderline</b>		
<b>Optimal</b> less than 100 mg/dL	<b>Optimal</b> 100-129 mg/dL	<b>High</b> 130-159 mg/dL	<b>High</b> 160-189 mg/dL	<b>Very High</b> 190 mg/dL and above

**High-density lipoprotein (HDL or "good cholesterol")** helps keep cholesterol from building up in the arteries. The higher your HDL level, the better for your heart.

<b>Optimal</b> 60 mg/dL or more	<b>Low/Undesirable</b> less than 40 mg/dL
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**Triglycerides** (another form of fat in the blood); high levels can raise heart disease.

<b>Ideal</b> under 100 mg/dL	<b>Normal</b> 149 mg/dL or lower	<b>Borderline High</b> 150-199 mg/dL	<b>High</b> 200 mg/dL and above
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\*Cholesterol levels are measured in milligrams (mg) of cholesterol per deciliter (dL) of blood. Values indicate degree of risk for developing heart disease.

**Source:** National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

# Pregnancy Primer

## Tips for a Healthy Pregnancy



It's never too early to start to take care of yourself and your future child. Making healthy choices can help ensure a healthier pregnancy and a healthier baby. Follow these tips:

### SAFETY

- ✓ Continue to wear a seat belt (under your belly) anytime you ride in a motor vehicle throughout your pregnancy.
- ✓ Avoid x-rays, hot tubs and saunas. Taking a bath or shower is safe as long as the water temperature is comfortable for you. Remember, check it before stepping in.
- ✓ Sex during pregnancy is safe for most women right up until labor, unless your health care professional has advised against it.

### NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✓ Eat a balanced diet and take a supplement that contains folic acid.
- ✓ Thoroughly wash all raw fruits and vegetables before eating them.
- ✓ Eat only well-cooked meats. Undercooked and raw meats can carry a parasite-borne infection that can cause miscarriage or brain

### Think You Might Be Pregnant?

For most women the first signs of pregnancy typically include:

- Skipped periods
- Fatigue
- Swollen or tender breasts
- Urinating more frequently
- Nausea

### ABOUT HOME PREGNANCY TESTS

Home pregnancy tests are easy to use and provide accurate results in two to five minutes, as early as the first day of a missed period. These urine tests detect the presence of human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG), a hormone produced only during pregnancy. If the hormone is present, a colored stripe, dot or other symbol appears in the test window.

If you suspect you're pregnant or if pregnancy symptoms persist despite a negative result, see your health care professional as soon as possible.

Source: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

damage in the fetus. This infection is also found in cat feces, so wear gloves when changing the cat litter or have someone else change it for you. Also, wear gloves when gardening outside, if cats frequent the garden.

- ✓ Drink six to eight glasses of water daily.
- ✓ Exercise regularly, with your health care professional's permission, to reduce backaches, constipation, bloating and swelling. Exercise also will give you more energy, improve your mood, increase your muscle strength and endurance and help you sleep.
- ✓ Warm up before exercising and cool down afterward.
- ✓ Avoid activities that could cause abdominal trauma.
- ✓ Ask for instructions for how to do Kegel exercises to help maintain or regain bladder control weakened by pregnancy. Then, practice. Squeeze your pelvic-floor muscles; hold for three seconds, then relax for three seconds. Work up to 10 sets, three times daily.

## WELLNESS

- ✓ Don't miss your regular prenatal checkups or recommended tests.
- ✓ Avoid cigarettes, alcohol and illegal drugs; seek help, if you need it.
- ✓ Don't use any prescription drug, over-the-counter medicine, herbal supplement or topical ointment unless your health care professional tells you it's okay.
- ✓ Get plenty of rest.
- ✓ Limit caffeine to one or two cups of coffee, tea or other caffeinated drinks per day.

## What You Need in Your Diet

While a balanced diet is a key to good health throughout your life, it is even more important during pregnancy. The chart below, from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, shows recommended food servings during pregnancy.

### DAILY FOOD CHOICES DURING PREGNANCY

Food Group	Minimum Daily Servings	Example of Single Serving
Bread, Cereal, Rice, Pasta	9	1 slice bread; 1 cup cold cereal; or 1/2 cup cooked cereal, rice or pasta
Vegetables	4	1 cup salad greens, 1/2 cup other cooked vegetables, 1 cup raw vegetables, or 3/4 cup vegetable juice
Fruit	3	1 medium apple, banana or orange; 1/4 cup dried fruit or 3/4 cup 100% fruit juice
Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Meat, Eggs and Nuts	3	2-3 ounces cooked lean poultry, fish or meat; 1/2 cup dry beans; 2 eggs or 2 tbsp peanut butter
Milk, Yogurt and Cheese	3	1 cup milk or yogurt, or 1 1/2 oz low-fat cheese

### NUTRIENTS YOU ALSO MAY NEED

Extra iron, vitamins B<sub>6</sub> and B<sub>12</sub> and calcium are especially important during pregnancy. Folic acid (600 mcg/day) is also recommended to help prevent spina bifida and other birth defects. Dark leafy greens, vegetables, whole-grain breads, cereals, citrus fruits, juices, dried peas and beans all contain folic acid.

- ✓ Eat smaller meals more often and more slowly and avoid spicy foods to reduce heartburn.
- ✓ Wear sunscreen and a hat in the sun. Sunlight can aggravate the development of darkened skin patches on the face that some women experience during pregnancy.

**Sources:** American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; National Women's Health Resource Center; March of Dimes; National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases; and the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center



**M**any women look and feel their best at midlife. While it's true that your body is changing, this natural process can be your stepping-stone to a healthy future, depending on the choices you make now. Learn as much as you can about this life stage and use this knowledge to do what's best for you. Here are some tips to get you started:

### SAFETY

- ✓ Continue to be safety conscious; for example, always buckle up in the car.
- ✓ Use condoms to reduce risk of sexually transmitted infection.
- ✓ Learn the early-warning signs of heart attack and stroke in women. Call 911 immediately if you notice symptoms.
- ✓ Take medications exactly as prescribed, don't use anyone else's prescriptions and inform your health care professional and pharmacist of all medications you are taking.

### NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✓ Eat fruits, vegetables, whole grains and complex carbohydrates such as pasta, cereal and beans daily. Consume foods containing omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, albacore tuna, walnuts and flax seed, and soy-rich foods such as tofu. Avoid foods high in saturated fat.
- ✓ Get between 1,000 and 1,200 mg of calcium and 400 to 800 international units (IU) of vitamin D daily (for calcium absorption). Also take B-complex vitamins to help fight osteoporosis and heart disease.
- ✓ Walk or do other aerobic activity on most days of the week for 30 to 60 minutes. Lift weights regularly to increase muscle strength and bone density. Talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise regime.

### WELLNESS

- ✓ Get checkups annually and health screenings as appropriate (see chart on page 18).
- ✓ Discuss any menopausal symptoms you may experience with your health care professional. Irregular menstrual periods, hot flashes, mood changes, vaginal dryness and insomnia are common symptoms. If your symptoms become overwhelming, a variety of treatment options are available. Ask your health care professional for guidance.
- ✓ Stay physically active and connected to friends and activities you enjoy.
- ✓ Quit smoking. Discuss nicotine replacement therapy products and self-help programs with your doctor.
- ✓ Seek a second medical opinion if you need surgery or treatment for a chronic illness.

**Sources:** National Women's Health Resource Center; the National Osteoporosis Foundation; and the American Heart Association

## Women's Health Screening Guidelines

Continue preventive health screenings as you age. These guidelines are for women at low risk for conditions associated with the screenings suggested. If you are at high risk for a condition, such as diabetes, your health care professional may recommend other screening tests possibly at more frequent intervals.

TYPE OF TEST	WHEN & HOW OFTEN
<b>Blood pressure reading</b>	Every two years for women over age 21; more frequently if borderline-high or high blood pressure is indicated, or if there is a history of high blood pressure.
<b>Bone mineral density test</b>	Routine screenings are recommended for premenopausal women who have risk factors for osteoporosis and for all women over 65.
<b>Breast examination</b>	Women ages 20 to 39* should have their breasts examined by their doctor every three years and once a year beginning at age 40.
<b>Cholesterol check</b>	All women age 20 or older should have a fasting lipoprotein profile every five years or more often if there is a family history of high cholesterol.
<b>Colon cancer screening</b>	Beginning at age 50, women should have an annual fecal occult blood test and a flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years; women with a family history of colon cancer or polyps should ask their doctor when and how often to have screenings.
<b>Dental checkups</b>	Adult women should have their teeth cleaned and examined twice a year by their dentist or dental hygienist.
<b>Hearing test</b>	Between ages 18 and 49, women should have a hearing test every 10 years; at age 50, discuss with your doctor how often hearing tests should be done.
<b>Mammography</b>	Women ages 40 and older should have a mammogram every year.
<b>Pap test</b>	Get tested every year within three years of becoming sexually active but no later than age 21. Women age 30 and older at low risk for cervical cancer may be tested every two to three years after three normal Pap tests in a row. At age 70 and older, women may choose to stop Pap tests if they have had three or more normal Pap test results in a row and no abnormal results in the past 10 years.
<b>Pelvic examination</b>	Any woman who is or has ever been sexually active should have a pelvic exam every year until age 70.
<b>Skin examination</b>	Visual inspection of the skin for abnormal or precancerous conditions should be done every three years between ages 20 to 40, and yearly for women age 40 and older. Skin self-exams should also be performed monthly.
<b>Vision examination</b>	Women ages 40 to 64 should have routine eye exams every two to four years; after age 65, exams should be yearly.

\*Most major medical organizations continue to support clinical breast examination in cancer screening guidelines; however, several organizations no longer include breast self-examination (BSE) as an early detection strategy in their guidelines because research has not demonstrated that BSE saves lives.

**Sources:** Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; American Cancer Society; American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; American Academy of Family Physicians; American Heart Association; American Academy of Ophthalmology; American Geriatric Society; American Medical Association; American Speech-Language-Hearing Association; National Cancer Institute; National Women's Health Information Center, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; and the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force

# Staying Healthy, Staying Strong

## Seniors, Age 65 and Beyond



**M**ost Americans can expect to lead active, fully engaged lives well beyond age 65. Make the most of your life by staying involved in your health care and making healthy lifestyle choices:

### SAFETY

- ✓ Make your home a fall-free zone: Remove clutter, keep rooms well-lit, use nonskid backings on throw rugs and install a handle in your bathtub or shower.
- ✓ Don't skip dosages or stop taking your prescriptions without talking first to your health care professional. Report any adverse side effects.
- ✓ Create a system to remind yourself to take medications at the right time.
- ✓ Bring a list of your medications, vitamins and nutritional supplements with you to the doctor.
- ✓ If someone you love has expressed concerns about your driving ability, honestly reconsider if you should continue to drive.

### NUTRITION AND EXERCISE

- ✓ Try to keep your weight within the normal range according to your health care professional's guidelines.
- ✓ Engage in low-impact exercise regularly, as approved by your doctor.
- ✓ Eat plenty of high-fiber foods including fruits, vegetables and whole grains, every day. Avoid high-fat junk food. Limit sweets and salt.
- ✓ Drink eight glasses of water a day, and more in hot weather.
- ✓ Be sure to get 1,200 mg of calcium per day (1,000 mg per day for women taking menopausal hormone therapy) and 400 to 800 international units (IU) daily of vitamin D (for calcium absorption) if you are a man or woman age 65 or older.
- ✓ Get extra calcium from these foods: low-fat or fat-free dairy products, pudding, almonds, sardines, broccoli and figs.

### WELLNESS

- ✓ Get a complete physical exam, including vision and hearing tests, once a year, and get dental checkups and cleanings twice a year or as often as your dentist recommends.
- ✓ Watch for signs of depression, such as prolonged sadness, thoughts of death or suicide, problems concentrating or sleeping or low energy. If you suspect you're depressed, talk to your health care professional.
- ✓ Stay involved in a social network.
- ✓ Speak to your health care professional about a yearly flu vaccination and a pneumonia vaccination.
- ✓ If you haven't done so already, quit smoking and cut back on alcohol. The older you are, the more problems these habits can cause.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists and the National Osteoporosis Foundation

## About Memory

Memory loss and confusion were once considered a normal part of aging. Scientists now know that most people remain alert as they age, though recall may sometimes slow down.

### MEMORY-BOOSTING TIPS

One key to a better memory is staying active in mind and body. Making lists, using notes and calendars and putting frequently used things in the same place also help. Here are some additional memory-enhancing activities:

- Take a moment, pay attention and mentally note what you are doing.
- Turn off the TV or radio when trying to concentrate or focus on a task.
- Repeat to yourself what you want to remember.
- Divide lists or numbers into shorter, more easily recalled “chunks.”
- Review photos when you expect to see people you haven’t seen in a long time.
- Connect an interesting or absurd visual image to what you want to remember.
- Mentally associate things you want to remember with other meaningful things, such as a familiar name, song or poem.

### HOW TO TELL IF MEMORY LOSS IS SERIOUS

Many people experience occasional memory lapses. While lapses sometimes signal a deeper problem, most do not. People who have serious changes in memory, personality and behavior may suffer from Alzheimer’s disease or another form of dementia. See your doctor with any concerns about yourself or a loved one.

**Sources:** U.S. Administration on Aging; American Psychological Association; *Third Age*; and the National Institute on Aging

## TIPS FOR CAREGIVERS

If you care for an elderly, chronically ill or disabled loved one, try to simplify your life and take time for yourself. Here are some ideas:

### CARING FOR YOUR LOVED ONE

- ✓ Look into devices designed to enhance independence and safety, such as skid-free rugs, jar-opening aids and bathtub or shower bars.
- ✓ Upgrade your telephone: Keep cordless, easy-to-use phones with large digital displays within reach, and keep a list of emergency response numbers by the telephone.
- ✓ Buy comfortable, washable, easy-to-remove clothing to ease dressing routines and needs.
- ✓ Establish manageable routines that meet your loved one’s needs.
- ✓ Let all health care professionals, including your pharmacist, know which medications your loved one is taking. Periodically review all medications, including over-the-counter medicines, as well as vitamins and herbs.
- ✓ Know when and how to administer medication and what side effects to expect.
- ✓ Seek guidance on administering care. Hire a nurse or home-health aide, if necessary and if possible.

### CARING FOR YOURSELF

- ✓ Exercise to stay physically fit.
- ✓ Join a support group, keep a journal, delegate responsibilities and continue your hobbies.
- ✓ Stay involved socially. Don’t abandon your religious or spiritual practices.
- ✓ Manage stress. Exercise, deep breathing, stretching and meditation can help.
- ✓ Get adequate sleep, take breaks and ask for and accept help.
- ✓ Investigate respite care, including adult daycare centers and short-term institutional care.
- ✓ Get regular medical checkups.

**Sources:** U.S. Department Health and Human Services and the National Women’s Health Resource Center

### HOW TO READ A NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICINE LABEL

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the pharmaceutical industry have been working to improve the readability of nonprescription drug labeling. Below is an example of a typical nonprescription label that shows you what to look for (match the numbers and the descriptions). Always read the label before administering any over-the-counter medication.

#### Key:

- 1 The chemical in the product that relieves your symptoms.
- 2 Primary symptoms the drug is indicated to treat; one or more symptoms should be present before taking this drug.
- 3 The drug could potentially worsen these conditions.
- 4 Taking this drug if you are taking any of the drugs listed here could cause adverse side effects.
- 5 Possible side effects or problems you might experience when taking this drug.
- 6 If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, never take this or any drug without a health care professional's approval.
- 7 How much and how often to take the medicine to gain the greatest benefit and prevent accidental overdose.
- 8 Keep drug at room temperature; i.e., do not refrigerate or leave in your car on very hot or very cold days. Do not remove medication from its container until you are ready to take it.
- 9 Substances used to color, seal, flavor and preserve the drug. They should not affect your symptoms or health in any way, unless you are allergic to them.

#### Drug Facts

**1 Active ingredient (in each tablet)** Chlorpheniramine maleate 2 mg

**Purpose** Antihistamine

**2 Uses** temporarily relieves these symptoms due to hay fever or other upper respiratory allergies: ■ sneezing ■ runny nose ■ itchy, watery eyes ■ itchy throat

**Warnings** Ask a doctor before use if you have:

**3** ■ glaucoma ■ trouble urinating due to an enlarged prostate gland ■ a breathing problem such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis

**4** Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use if you are taking tranquilizers or sedatives

#### When using this product

**5** ■ you may get drowsy ■ avoid alcoholic drinks ■ alcohol, sedatives and tranquilizers may increase drowsiness ■ be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery ■ excitability may occur, especially in children

**6** If pregnant or breast-feeding, ask a health professional before use.

**KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN.** In case of overdose, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center right away.

#### Directions

adults and children 12 years and over	take 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 12 tablets in 24 hours
children 6 years to under 12 years	take 1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 6 tablets in 24 hours
children under 6 years	ask a doctor

**7 Other information** ■ store at 20-25° C (68-77° F)

■ protect from excessive moisture

**9 Inactive ingredients** D&C yellow No. 10, lactose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, pregelatinized starch

## BE PREPARED FOR EMERGENCIES

Keep your family safe by taking these steps to prepare for any type of emergency:

- ✓ Learn first aid and CPR skills.
- ✓ Develop a family disaster preparedness plan and practice it.
- ✓ Place emergency phone numbers by each phone. Key in an emergency contact number as “ICE” — in case of emergency — on cell phone. Make sure your children know how, when and whom to call for help.
- ✓ Assemble a disaster supplies kit containing personal identification, flashlights, batteries, battery-powered radio, matches, water and nonperishable ready-to-eat food.

Keep these items in a “Family First-Aid” kit:

- ✓ Sterile adhesive bandages, butterfly closures, gauze pads in assorted sizes, bandages and adhesive tape
- ✓ Scissors, tweezers, needle and safety pins
- ✓ Antiseptic, thermometer and tongue depressors
- ✓ Petroleum jelly
- ✓ Cleansing agent/soap, first-aid cream and moistened towelettes
- ✓ Latex gloves
- ✓ Sunscreen
- ✓ Pain relievers
- ✓ Anti-diarrhea medication, antacid and laxative
- ✓ Ice pack
- ✓ Any special medications or other personal needs
- ✓ Phone number for the nationwide Poison Control Center, 1-800-222-1222.

Source: American College of Emergency Physicians

## DRUG INTERACTIONS: KNOW HOW TO AVOID THEM

Drugs can interact with certain foods and beverages or with health conditions such as diabetes, as well as with other medications. Be sure to discuss potential drug interactions with your health care professional. Here’s a short list of red flags for some common over-the-counter ingredients.

- ✓ Don’t drink alcohol if you take antihistamines or drugs that treat sleeplessness.
- ✓ Don’t take sleep medication if you take sedatives or tranquilizers.
- ✓ If you have diabetes, check with your doctor before taking aspirin or a prescription blood thinner.
- ✓ Don’t use laxatives if you have stomach pain, nausea or vomiting.
- ✓ If you take a prescription drug for high blood pressure or depression, or if you have heart or thyroid disease, don’t use a nasal decongestant without guidance from your health care professional.

Source: Consumer Healthcare Products Association

### Make Time for a Medicine Cabinet Checkup

Be sure to look through your medicine supply at least once a year and take these steps to keep your medicines safe and effective:

- Always store medicines in a cool, dry place or as stated on the label.
- Safely throw away any medicines that have old expiration dates, have lost their labels, or look different from their original shape, consistency or coloring.
- To make sure no one takes the wrong medicine, keep all medicines in their original containers, with labels intact.

Source: Consumer Healthcare Products Association

**American Heart Association**

7272 Greenville Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75231  
1-800-242-8721 (toll-free)  
www.americanheart.org

Promotes research, advocacy and education about cardiovascular disease and stroke. Publishes diet and lifestyle guidelines for heart-healthy living.

**American Academy of Pediatrics**

141 Northwest Point Boulevard  
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007-1098  
847-434-4000  
www.aap.org

Web site offers free children's health newsletter, current childhood immunization schedule, car safety seat guidelines and physician referral.

**Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids**

1400 Eye Street, NW, Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20005  
202-296-5469  
www.tobaccofreekids.org

Makes available fact sheets, research information and resources on how to help teens stop smoking, as well as prevent them from starting.

**Consumer Health Education Center (CHEC)**

900 19th Street, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20006  
202-429-9260  
www.checforbetterhealth.org

Offers brochures, tip sheets and online materials on the safe and responsible use of OTC medications. CHEC is the nonprofit consumer educational foundation for the Consumer Healthcare Products Association.

**Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA)**

900 19th Street, NW, Suite 700  
Washington, DC 2006  
202-429-9260  
www.chpa-info.org

CHPA represents U.S. manufacturers and distributors of nonprescription, over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and nutritional supplements. CHPA partners with other organizations to produce educational materials on the safe use of self-care products.

**Family Caregiver Alliance**

180 Montgomery Street, Suite 11001  
San Francisco, CA 94104  
1-800-445-8106 (toll-free)  
www.caregiver.org

Provides a variety of resources to address the needs of families and friends providing long-term care.

**National Institute of Mental Health**

6001 Executive Boulevard, Room 8184, MSC 9663  
Bethesda, MD 20892-9663  
1-800-421-4211 (toll-free)  
www.nimh.nih.gov

Offers comprehensive information on a wide range of mental health conditions for all age groups, as well as fact sheets and links to community and other resources.

**National Kidney and Urologic Diseases Information Clearinghouse**

3 Information Way  
Bethesda, MD 20892-3580  
1-800-891-5390 (toll-free)  
www.niddk.nih.gov

Offers information on a wide range of urologic disorders, including prostate conditions and urinary tract infections.

**National Women's Health Resource Center**

157 Broad Street, Suite 315  
Red Bank, NJ 07701  
1-877-986-9472 (toll-free)  
www.healthwomen.org

Provides comprehensive information on the Web and in the *National Women's Health Report* and other publications; offers referrals to other women's health services via toll-free phone number.

**Planned Parenthood Federation of America**

434 West 33rd Street  
New York, NY 10001  
1-800-230-7526 (toll-free)  
www.plannedparenthood.org

Provides information on a wide range of family planning, pregnancy and STD-related issues for women and men of all ages.

The National Women's Health Resource Center (NWHRC) is the leading independent health information source for women. NWHRC develops and distributes up-to-date and objective women's health information based on the latest advances in medical research and practice.



The Consumer Health Education Center (CHEC) is dedicated to improving the health and well being of Americans through appropriate, safe, and effective over-the-counter medicine use. CHEC is the nonprofit consumer education foundation for the Consumer Healthcare Products Association.



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