

# good health report

FALL '10

YOUR FAST TRACK TO LIVING WELL



## Eat Well

Delicious ways  
to enjoy the holidays  
at every age

## It's Time

Know when to  
see a doctor

**It's a great time of year** to make healthy choices! Whether you're getting a flu shot to combat the cold and flu season, or choosing cranberry salsa instead of a cheese dip for a gathering of friends and family, there are many ways for you to live well today. In this issue, we explain that if you're just starting a family, there are things you can do to make sure that your baby gets a healthy start in life—and that you take care of yourself, too. And then, as you make choices for your family as it grows, you know how to lead by example, and your loved ones grow up with every advantage of healthy living.



## BRUSH UP

You rely on your toothbrush to keep your teeth clean, so return the favor by keeping your brush clean. Keep bacteria and germs at bay, and disinfect your toothbrush by rinsing it in antibacterial mouthwash, or a mixture of 2 tablespoons of baking soda to 1 cup water. You can also soak your toothbrush in vinegar overnight once a week, or deep clean it in your dishwasher.



## BEST OF THE BUNCH

As a rule of thumb, the richer and deeper the color of the fruits and veggies you eat, the better. For example, tomatoes are high in lycopene, an antioxidant that can help fight cancer and lower blood pressure, and are also a good source of vitamins A and K. Blueberries contain antioxidants as well as acids that may promote heart health, reduce blood pressure and keep your brain sharp. Eat a rainbow of produce every day and you can't go wrong.



## JUST THE FLAX

For an easy way to give some of your favorite foods a healthy boost, just add flaxseeds. With their mild nutty flavor, flaxseeds are high in omega-3 fatty acids, which have proven heart-healthy and anti-inflammatory benefits. Omega-3s can also protect bone health and help ward off cancer, diabetes and high blood pressure. Add ground flaxseeds to baked goods, put them on cereal or veggies, or toss them in the blender when you're making a smoothie.

## AT YOUR SERVICE

**A**s a member, you have access to the Utilization Management (UM) staff to gain information about the UM process and authorization of care. UM staff are available between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. daily to discuss UM issues by calling 330-438-6360; 1-800-344-8858; or TTY 330-363-2393 or 1-800 633-4752. After normal business hours and on weekends and holidays a voice messaging system is available at the above numbers, or you may fax us a message at 330-454-9635. If you are leaving a voice mail, please speak clearly and include how to best reach you so that our staff can address your questions the next business day. If you're sending us a fax message, please include a number at which we can reach you the next business day.

### How are utilization management decisions made?

UM decisions are based only on if the care and service requested are appropriate and if there is coverage for the request. Decision makers are not rewarded for

issuing denials of coverage or care, nor are there any incentives paid to decision makers that result in barriers to care and service for our members.

### Evaluation of new and existing technology

AultCare investigates all requests for coverage of new technology using a medical technology assessment company as a guideline. If additional information is needed, AultCare utilizes sources including, but not limited to, Medicare and Medicaid policy. The Food and Drug Administration releases any current medical peer review literature. This information is reviewed and evaluated by AultCare's medical director and other physician advisors in order to determine if a new technology is appropriate for coverage under your AultCare plan. Members and providers may request that a certain new technology be investigated for coverage by contacting the UM department at 330-438-6360; 1-800-344-8858; or TTY 330-363-2393 or 1-800 633-4752 during regular business hours.



## Should You Stay Or Should You Go?

It's time for the emergency room when ...

**W**hen an injury or illness happens outside your doctor's office hours, it can be difficult to tell if you should get straight to the emergency room (ER) or wait to see your primary care physician (PCP).

You're experiencing a medical emergency if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Chest or abdominal pain
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea, or coughing up blood
- Fainting or sudden dizziness
- Vision changes
- Confusion or difficulty speaking
- Sudden or severe pain

If you go to the ER, it's a good idea to bring a list of your allergies and the medications you take, including supplements. Create a file of this information before there's an emergency and keep it in a handy location.

ERs take the most serious cases first. For example, a heart attack is prioritized over a broken arm. But a doctor will see you as soon as possible to perform an examination. Be sure to tell the doctor everything you can—or ask a family member to help if you can't remember—so the doctor can determine the best plan of action for your diagnosis and treatment.

## Taming That Tummy

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) can make anyone, well, irritable. But there are treatments that can help.

IBS is a common intestinal problem. Typical symptoms include bloating, gas, constipation, diarrhea and strong urges to have a bowel movement, even after you've just had one.

Eating a healthy diet can help manage IBS. Increasing your fiber intake is one strategy, but do it slowly. Foods high in fiber include apples, beans, citrus fruits and whole-grain breads.

IBS can be aggravated by stress, so talk to your doctor about stress management techniques such as increased physical activity and relaxation exercises.

There's no cure for IBS, but if lifestyle modifications don't ease your symptoms, ask your doctor about medications that can help.

# 'Tis the Season

Cold or flu, what to do.

**D**uring cold and flu season, chances are you or someone in your family is going to catch something. But it isn't always easy to tell the difference between a cold and the flu, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Both are respiratory illnesses and can cause similar symptoms. Generally, colds are milder than the flu and do not cause serious health problems. Here's a guide to what you have and what to do.

## It's a Cold When ...

If it's a cold, you probably won't have a fever or a headache. You might feel a little achy and tired, but not exhausted. Typical symptoms include stuffy nose, sneezing, sore throat and a cough. You may develop sinus congestion or an earache. There's not much you can do to prevent the common cold—other than avoid sick people and wash your hands often—and treatments only provide temporary symptom relief.

## It's the Flu When ...

The flu, on the other hand, is usually accompanied by a fever that lasts three or four days.

You may feel severe aches and pains, along with extreme exhaustion or fatigue and weakness that can last up to two or three weeks. You may or may not have symptoms like a stuffy nose, sneezing and sore throat. But you

will commonly experience chest discomfort and coughing. You can prevent some forms of the flu with an annual flu shot, and if you develop the flu you can shorten the duration and severity of symptoms with antiviral medicines.

The flu can become serious and lead to complications such as bronchitis or pneumonia. Seek medical care right away if you are having trouble breathing, feel pain or pressure in your chest or abdomen, or experience severe or persistent vomiting.

Most people recover from the flu without complications—and the recommended steps for getting well are pretty much the same whether you have the flu or a cold.

Plenty of rest is key. Drink lots of fluids and avoid alcohol and tobacco. And don't scoff at time-tested home remedies like gargling with warm salt water to ease a sore throat or eating chicken soup. Chicken soup offers good nutrition and, according to some evidence, may relieve cold symptoms, including congestion. If nothing else, it's inexpensive, safe and comforting.







# Wellness for Life

Help your kids establish a lifetime of healthy habits.

**Y**ou want to give your children the best of everything. Give them the best chance at a long and robust life by teaching them healthy behaviors from an early age. Set a good example with your own lifestyle, and look for opportunities to educate your kids on the following foundations of well-being.

## ➤ NUTRITION

Serve your kids balanced, nutritious meals and they'll know that this is how people should eat. Encourage them to enjoy healthy choices from all the food groups and dish out reasonable portions.

Discourage them from drinking sugary soda or too much fruit juice, and keep plenty of water or flavored no-sugar-added seltzer on hand instead.

## ➤ EXERCISE

Children and adolescents should get at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, says the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Team sports, dancing or an old-fashioned game of tag are great ways to exercise. Encourage your kids to be active by making it part of your family's routine.

## ➤ SLEEP

Help your kids establish good sleep habits by encouraging them to go to bed

and wake up at the same time, even on weekends. Don't let them watch TV in the bedroom and discourage them from using the computer right before bed, too.

## ➤ STRESS

Kids of all ages face significant stress. With increased pressure to be involved in sports, community events and school, it's easy to become overscheduled.

Your children may be facing issues you aren't aware of or didn't have as a child—whether they are struggling with peer pressure to smoke or stressing about managing friends on Facebook. Let your kids know early on that it's helpful to talk about what's on their mind. Be receptive and nonjudgmental when they come to you. Allow quiet time every day, for both you and your children.

## GREAT SHOT

Making sure your children receive immunizations at the right time is key to their health. Your doctor will answer questions you might have about vaccinations, and you can go to [cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc](http://cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc) to download schedules and for answers to frequently asked questions.



# Understanding Diabetes

Knowing what to do—and not do—is key.

**D**iabetes is a condition in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, the hormone needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into the energy we need to live.

## The three main types of the disease are:

**TYPE 1** results from the body's failure to produce insulin. It is estimated that 5 to 10 percent of Americans diagnosed with diabetes have type 1 diabetes.

**TYPE 2** results from insulin resistance, a condition in which the body fails to properly use insulin, combined with insulin deficiency. Most Americans who are diagnosed with diabetes have type 2 diabetes.

**PREDIABETES** is a condition in which a person's blood glucose levels are higher

than normal but not high enough for a diagnosis of type 2 diabetes.

## Taking care

If you've been diagnosed with diabetes, it's critical that you work closely with your healthcare team and follow its recommendations for routine care. Typically, people with diabetes should see their doctor at least twice a year in order to:

- Monitor their weight, blood pressure and vision.
- Check the condition of their feet.
- Receive an A1C test.

It's also important to keep tabs on your kidneys, your cholesterol and your teeth and gums. Talk to your doctor to confirm the right schedule for you.

## KEEP SMILING!

If you have diabetes, you may be more prone to certain oral health issues, including tooth decay, gum disease, infections, delayed healing and taste impairment.

The best way to take good care of your teeth is to take care of your diabetes, by managing it effectively. Also, brush and floss daily, see your dentist at least twice a year and be sure your dentist consults with your doctor before you have any dental surgery.

# Do You Have Questions?

Find the answers at [aultcare.com](http://aultcare.com).

**W**e continue to enhance the information available on our website. You'll find interactive health tools as well as information about your plan coverage, claims status, pharmacy benefits and claims history. AultCare puts the answers to your questions right at your fingertips, anytime you wish to go online.

## Here's a list of the other information and services you'll find on our site:

- Information about network healthcare professionals and our Provider Directory
- Pharmacy benefit information for your plan
- Updates to our Prescription Drug Formulary
- Complaint or appeal filing, including our independent appeals process
- Enrollee Rights and Responsibilities
- Chronic disease management programs
- Case Management programs
- Benefits and services included and excluded in your coverage
- How to obtain primary care
- How to obtain specialty care and behavioral health services
- What to do if you need to be hospitalized
- Obtaining care when outside the service area
- Obtaining care after normal business hours
- Obtaining emergency services
- Health assessment tools

- Evaluation of new medical technology
- Notice of Privacy Practices
- How to obtain language services
- When and how to submit a claim for covered services
- Quality management programs, evaluations and outcomes

You can find all of this by viewing our website at [aultcare.com](http://aultcare.com), referencing your plan documents, taking advantage of your Member Guide online or by contacting our AultCare Customer Service Center. If you would like a written copy of this information and/or a Member Guide, Provider Directory, Notice of Privacy Practices or Formulary, please call our Service Center at 330-363-6360 and a representative will be happy to assist you. If your plan is self-funded, please contact your employer if you would like a copy of the Notice of Privacy Practices.

## SPECIAL COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS

**If you or someone you know requires the assistance of a translator, please contact our Service Center at 330-363-6360 and we will gladly provide one for you. To access our TTY phone line, please dial 330-363-2393 or toll free 1-866-633-4752 for the hearing-impaired.**

# Prepare for a Good Stay

Tips to make your hospital visit more comfortable.

A trip to the hospital, whether for surgery or another treatment, can be daunting. But with a little advance preparation, you can make your hospital stay predictable and even pleasant.

First and most importantly, bring your medical documents and paperwork with you. Bring a folder with your medical history, test results, insurance information and contact information for family, friends and medical specialists. Include a complete list of medications and supplements you take. If you have them, include your written power of attorney or living will, too.

To stay calm and comfortable, bring along familiar items. Bring a cardigan or light jacket to wear over your hospital gown if you're too cool, as well as loose-fitting underwear and warm socks. Pack your toothbrush, glasses or contact lens case and solution. Although it's best to leave valuables at home, bring a little cash

for the gift shop or vending machine. Do not bring credit cards. Some procedures may require you to remove rings, earrings, necklaces or watches, in which case, leave these things at home to prevent theft.

Despite fears that cell phones can interfere with patient care equipment, a Mayo Clinic study found no truth to those worries. Still, cell phone use policy varies from hospital to hospital. If you bring yours, remember to be considerate of other patients.



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