

# For Better Health

FALL 2009

## Lifestyle Choices Do Your Heart Good

Good news for people who worry about coronary artery disease (CAD): Research shows that lifestyle choices can help you live a longer, healthier life.

Prevention is the best cure. Here are some tips for avoiding CAD:

**1. If you smoke, quit.** Smokers are 2 to 4 times more likely to get CAD. If you are in Ohio, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)**.

**2. Eat a healthy, low-fat, low-salt diet.** Choose 1 percent or skim milk. Eat lots of veggies—without butter or sauce. Skip frying in favor of baking or steaming.

**3. Be active.** Brisk walking, bike riding, dancing, and swimming are good choices.

**4. Maintain a healthy weight.** By eating less, choosing nutritious foods, and getting more exercise you can lose up to 2 pounds a week.

If you already have CAD, it's especially important for your doctor to keep track of your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels. You may need medications in addition to lifestyle changes to help you manage CAD.



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## Bone Up on Osteoporosis

**One in 2 American women and 1 in 4 men older than age 50 break a bone due to osteoporosis.**

Osteoporosis causes bones to become weak. Weak bones can break from even mild stresses, such as bending over or coughing.

Building strong bones, especially before age 30, can keep you from getting osteoporosis later in life. To build strong bones, you need a healthy diet. Sodas contain chemicals that can make bones weaker. Young people should drink low-fat milk and orange juice with calcium instead.

These healthy habits keep bones strong, no matter your age:

- **Exercise regularly.** Weight-bearing exercises, such as walking or weight training, can help maintain and build bone strength.

- **Get plenty of calcium and vitamin D.** Foods like yogurt, figs, almonds, and broccoli are high in calcium and vitamins.
- **Don't smoke.** Smoking keeps your bones from absorbing calcium.

The National Osteoporosis Foundation has more information online, in English and Spanish, at **www.nof.org**.

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## Could You Have Chlamydia?

Chlamydia is the most common sexually transmitted disease in the U.S. Both men and women can get it, but it's more dangerous for women.

Chlamydia can take away a woman's ability to get pregnant. In addition, babies who are exposed to chlamydia during birth can get pneumonia or eye infections.

Most women with chlamydia don't even know they have it. The symptoms are often not noticeable. Some women experience pain while urinating or a discharge from the vagina. Fortunately, chlamydia can be treated with antibiotics.

**Talk with your doctor about getting a chlamydia screening if you are a sexually active woman younger than age 26, or if you are older than 26 and have new or multiple sexual partners.**



## Battling the "Baby Blues"

**You're the proud mother of a new baby. You looked forward to this for months. So why are you crying?**

For the first week or 2 after giving birth, as many as 8 out of 10 new moms feel sad or anxious. No wonder. Having a baby is stressful.

If the feelings last for more than a couple of weeks or begin weeks after you give birth, you may be suffering from postpartum depression. This condition affects about 1 out of 10 new mothers. Postpartum depression is treatable, but it can get worse if you don't get help.

You may have postpartum depression if you have some of the following symptoms:

- Sadness
- Extreme tiredness
- Irritability
- Inability to sleep

- Eating less or more than usual
- Too much or too little concern for your baby
- Loss of interest in hobbies

If you have postpartum depression, your doctor can help. It's also important to help yourself. Here's how:

- Ask for help with housework.
- Nap when your baby naps.
- Talk with your partner, family, and friends about your feelings.
- Join a postpartum depression support group.

See [3 Services for Moms-to-Be!](#) to learn about a survey to help new moms.

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- healthy you -



## Vaccines: Not Just for Kids

**There are many reasons why adults need vaccines.** First, you may not have gotten a certain vaccine before. Second, the effects of a vaccine can wear off. Finally, some vaccines are meant to be given regularly, such as the flu shot.

The vaccines you need will depend on your risk factors and medical history.

These are on the list of recommended vaccines: tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap); human papillomavirus (HPV); measles-mumps-rubella (MMR); varicella; influenza (flu); pneumococcal; hepatitis A and B; meningococcal; and zoster.

Talk with your doctor to find out which vaccines you might need.



## Keep Teeth Safe During Sports

If your child plays sports, you might worry about sprained ankles and broken arms. But what about a young athlete's teeth?

The American Dental Association suggests wearing a mouth guard during sports with any risk for injury—basketball, football, even gymnastics.

A mouth guard can protect your child's teeth, tongue, lips, and cheeks. Most sports stores sell soft plastic mouth guards that fit over the upper teeth. A dentist might recommend a mouth guard for your child's lower teeth as well. Your dentist can create a custom-fitted mouth guard. These may cost more but offer better fit and protection.

A mouth guard should be comfortable. It shouldn't make it hard for your child to talk or breathe. Ask your dentist about finding the right mouth guard.



## Kids Need Freedom to Play

**Who has time to play? Schools have cut back on PE and recess time.**

After school, many kids participate in scheduled activities. And at home, a recent study found, children watch TV about 5 hours a day.

The American Academy of Pediatrics encourages parents to put free play time back at the center of their children's lives. Play is good for creativity and making friends. Plus, playful kids can naturally get the 60 minutes a day of physical activity experts say all children need.

To give your own kids more play time, try these tips:

- Don't put a TV in your child's bedroom.
- Limit computer time that is not homework to under 2 hours a day.
- Buy old-fashioned toys—think wooden blocks and paper dolls—that require imagination.
- Cut back on scheduled activities.
- Create safe outdoor play spaces near home.



## 3 Services for Moms-to-Be!

Sign up for these 3 services while you are pregnant to keep you and your baby healthy.

### Prenatal to Cradle Program

Earn up to \$100 in gift cards for baby care items by seeing the doctor. You can also be entered into a drawing for a 4-week supply of diapers. To learn more, call **1-888-296-0220**.

### Free Home Visits for Baby and You

If you have had a baby, you can get 2 visits to your home by a nurse. Someone will talk with you to set up your visits before you leave the hospital. You can also call **1-419-887-2525** or **1-800-462-3589**.

### A Survey to See if You Feel Blue

Feeling sad or overwhelmed for more than 2 weeks after you have a baby may mean you have postpartum depression. If you recently had a baby, look for a Paramount survey on depression to arrive in the mail. Please fill out the survey. Mail the top part back to Paramount. Be sure to call your doctor if your score is 12 or higher.



**Member Service Numbers:**

**1-800-462-3589**  
**1-419-887-2525**

**TTY:**

**1-888-740-5670**  
**1-419-887-2526**

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[www.paramounthealthcare.com](http://www.paramounthealthcare.com)

- health quiz -



## A Lifesaving Screening: How Much Do You Know?

Colorectal cancer is America's second-deadliest cancer. But it can be prevented with screenings that detect polyps. Doctors can remove these growths before they turn into cancer.

**True or False?**

1. Only people with a family history of colorectal cancer and smokers need to be screened.  **T**  **F**
2. There's no "right" way to be screened for colorectal cancer.  **T**  **F**
3. You may need screening before age 50 if you have inflammatory bowel disease.  **T**  **F**

**Check Your Answers**

1. **False.** All men and women should start colorectal screening by age 50. African-Americans and people with other risk factors should discuss earlier screening with their doctors.
2. **True.** There are choices for screening, so talk with your doctor about which is right for you.
3. **True.** Screening before age 50 also might be wise if you or a close relative has had polyps or cancer.

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### Paramount Advantage™

## Member Services Is Here to Help

Member Services can answer your questions about your health care benefits. We have a team of people ready to take your phone call.

**How to Reach Us**

The Member Services number is **1-419-887-2525** (TTY: **1-419-887-2526**). The toll-free number is **1-800-462-3589** (TTY: **1-888-740-5670**). You can call Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

**How We Can Help**

- Call Member Services:
- When you want to change your doctor
  - When you need a new ID card
  - When you get a medical bill by mistake
  - When you want to know how to get care
  - Si usted necesita a un interprete (if you need an interpreter)