

Your Health Matters!

spring 2012



**SAN FRANCISCO
HEALTH PLAN™**

Here for you

Healthy Breakfast for Kids

Breakfast is important for kids. Why? A healthy breakfast is brain food. It helps kids to learn and do better in school.

Make sure your child goes to school after a healthy breakfast. Don't serve cereal and waffles that have a lot of sugar, salt, and fat, because these ingredients are not healthy. Too much sugar can make your child sleepy and hungry before lunch time.

You don't have to stop buying your child's favorite cereal. Just mix it with healthier cereal, or add healthier food to your breakfast table. Foods with a lot of protein and fiber can make your child feel fuller for a longer time. Try foods like:

- Peanut butter and banana on a slice of whole grain bread or waffle
- A boiled egg
- Yogurt with fruit and granola
- Cereal with nuts and dried fruit
- Oatmeal with apples and nuts (not flavored packages)
- Sliced fresh fruits
- Smoothies



inside



**FLU AND
YOUR KIDS**



WHAT IS HPV?



HEART HEALTH

The Flu and Your Kids

For kids, having the flu can be a real pain.

There are things you can do to keep your child from getting the flu. Ask your provider about the flu vaccine. This shot can keep you and your family flu-free all year long! You can show your kids how to cover their sneezes and coughs. You can also teach your kids how to wash their hands the right way.

But sometimes, kids get the flu. You can do some things to make your child more comfortable too.

- **Give your child a warm bath.**
- **Make sure your child drinks a lot of fluids. Water and warm soup are good.**
- **Buy a bottle of saline nasal spray at a drug store. This spray can help your child breathe easier through their nose. Read the directions carefully.**
- **Put a humidifier in your child's room. This little**

machine makes the air less dry and makes it easier to breathe.

Not sure what to do? Call the SFHP Nurse Advice Line. Trained nurses can help you decide if you or your child need to see a provider, and they can give you advice to manage at home.



24/7 Nurse Advice Line
(877) 977-3397

toll free

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One, Two, Breathe Stress Away

Everyone feels stress.
It's a normal part of life.
But too much stress is never good.

Good stress can help you stay safe. For example, if someone is in danger, their body is stressed. The energy in their body will do one of two things. It can help the person fight the danger. It can also help the person run away from the danger.

Bad stress can cause problems with your health. This kind of stress can happen when something big happens in your life. Things like moving to a new place or losing a job can cause stress. This kind of stress can make your body work too hard for a long time.

Do you feel stressed? There are some things you can do to feel better. You can work on a hobby or exercise. But there's something else you can do that's quick. You can do it anywhere and at any

time. Try breathing stress away. It's easy. If you don't have any breathing problems, this breathing exercise can really help. Here's how to do it:

1. **Sit or lie down with your back straight**
2. **Put one hand on your chest**
3. **Rest your other hand on your stomach**
4. **Breathe in through your nose**
5. **Breathe out through your mouth**
6. **Tighten your belly muscles as you breathe out**
7. **Keep breathing in and out until you feel relaxed**

Hold on to Your Booster Seats!

As of January 1, California law requires all kids 8 years old and younger to be buckled into a car seat or booster in the back seat.

For more information on car-seat safety, visit www.cdph.ca.gov/vosp.



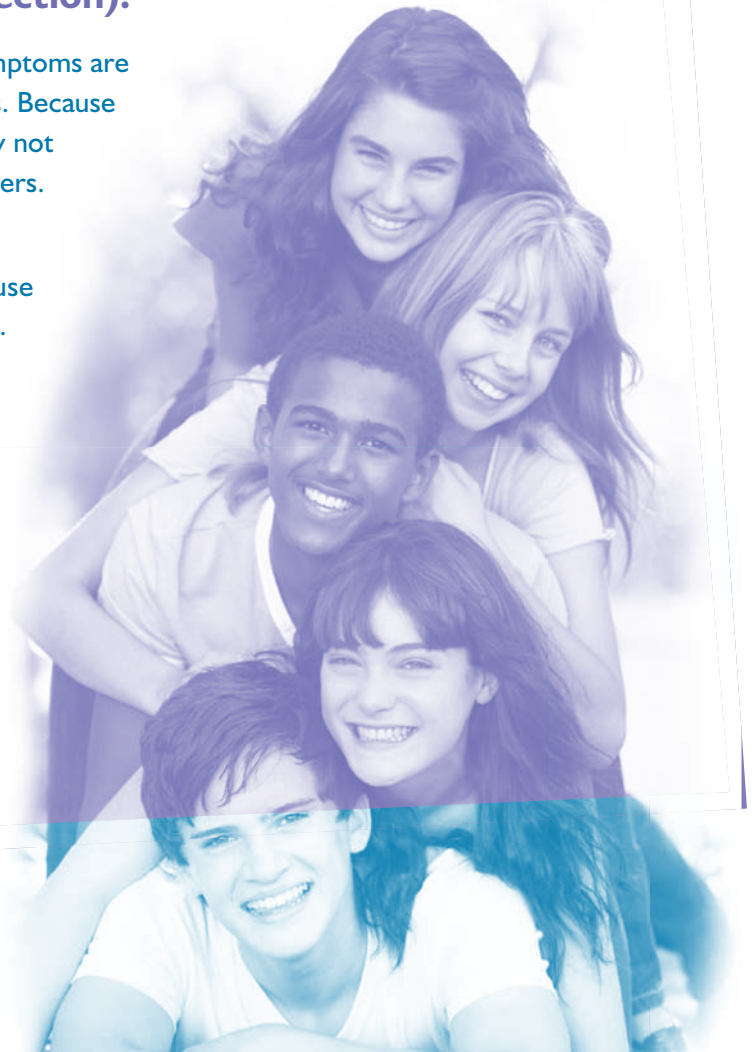
What's HPV?

HPV stands for human papillomavirus. It is an STI (sexually transmitted infection).

HPV does not always come with symptoms. Symptoms are signs that show that a person may have the virus. Because HPV doesn't always have symptoms, people may not know they have it; then they could pass it to others.

There are many types of HPV. Some can cause cancer in men and women. Other kinds can cause genital warts. HPV can also go away on its own. It does not always cause health problems.

There is a way to stop an HPV infection before it happens. The Gardasil® HPV vaccine can stop the kind of HPV that causes cervical cancer and genital warts. Girls and boys ages 9 to 26 years can get this vaccine. It is best to get this vaccine before your first sexual contact. In fact, the Centers for Disease Control now recommends that all preteen girls and boys get the vaccine. Check to see if your provider gives the vaccine.



Healthy Heart

Heart disease is the number one reason why many people die in the United States. Thousands of people die from heart attacks and strokes each year. But many people forget about their hearts. Don't forget about yours!

Your heart beats thousands of times each day. So having a healthy heart is really important. It is the most important thing in your life. Our hearts keep us alive. Doing good things for your heart will lower your chances of getting heart disease.



Men and women can make changes that make their hearts healthier. Small and big changes can help stop heart disease before it happens.

Pick up some of these healthy heart habits. Show your heart some love!

- **Stop smoking**
- **Do some physical activity for at least 20-30 minutes a day**
- **Cook more at home, eat out less**
- **Keep your weight in check**
- **Go to the doctor to stay healthy**
- **Use less salt in your food**
- **Sleep more**

Cool Exercises

Have you just started to exercise? Working out when it is cold outside can be hard. The cold winter air can make you want to stay home instead of going to the gym. But don't let these cold months slow you down. Keep working out. Taking a break from working out can be a bad idea. It may be hard for you to start working out again. Plus, you may gain back some of the weight you worked hard to lose. You may start to feel unhealthy too.

You can keep exercising in the winter. There are many things you can do to stay in shape and stay warm. Try these four indoor exercises during the winter months.

- **Step up and down** a strong step stool. Do this for 30 minutes (go up and down stairs if you have them in your house).
- **Use water bottles as weights.**
- **Dance** to five of your favorite fast songs.
- **Be a couch potato that moves.** While watching TV, raise your legs up straight in front of you. Point your toes to the TV. Hold your legs up during commercial breaks.



What is Asthma?

Asthma is a chronic disease of the lung airways. A person with asthma has airways that are extra-sensitive to, and irritated by, various things called asthma triggers. These are different for different people, but could include:

- Illnesses, such as colds or the flu
- Allergies to dust, pollen and plants, mold, animals, and certain foods
- Exercise
- Cold air or warm air, wind, sudden changes in temperature
- Smoke (especially cigarette or cigar), air pollution, strong smells
- Emotional stress or strong emotions (crying, laughing, anxiety)

What are the symptoms of asthma?

- **Shortness of breath** — you feel like you can't breathe fully
- **Tightness in the chest** — you feel like a strap is around your chest
- **Wheezing** — a whistle sound when you breathe out
- **Coughing lasting more than a week** — a consistent cough, especially at night



How do I take care of my asthma?

- Know about triggers.
- Work with your provider for ongoing asthma care.
- Make an asthma action plan. It will help you know what to do during a flare-up and what to do in an emergency.
- You should take your medicines as prescribed. Make sure that you understand how and when to give the medicines.
- Ask questions!
- If you want to use home remedies or an over-the-counter cold medicine, be sure to check with your provider. Some traditional remedies may be helpful, but you should confirm this with your provider.



Celebrating 15 Years of Quality Medical Care

In January 1997 San Francisco Health Plan took in its very first member. Since then, we have grown to provide access to high-quality health care services to 75,000 San Franciscans! Our network has grown to include over 400 Providers, 1,800 Specialists and 180 Pharmacies, close to where you live and work. As a valued member, you also have access to our 24/7 Nurse Advice Line and Emergency Care Nationwide.

We are proud to have you as a member, and pleased that you selected us as your health plan!



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Watch for a letter and renewal form in the mail. Fill out the renewal form and return it immediately. If you did not receive your renewal form or need help with the form, call us at **(415) 547-7800**. Make sure to call if you change your address.



Keep Mold and Mildew

AWAY!

Mold is something that you don't want in your home. Mold is a living thing that sometimes grows when water sits for a long time. Mold can grow on carpets, shower curtains, and on walls. You can see it growing. Sometimes you can smell it, too.

People can get sick from mold, especially people with asthma. Many people get stuffy noses, itchy eyes, or skin rashes.

Here are some ways you can stop mold from becoming a problem in your home:

- Open the bathroom window when you take a shower
- Let the shower curtain hang dry after showering
- Wipe down wet walls with a towel
- Turn the stove fan on when you are cooking
- Keep closet doors open

