The Wellness Wire

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Select the button for this month’s events.

Power to Protect
By Department of Health

Protect your family by learning the facts about vaccines, vaccine-preventable diseases, vaccine safety, and best practices.

Infants and Children:
Vaccines protect children from 14 preventable diseases before the age of two. From birth, immunization schedules work with children’s immune systems to provide optimal protection when they are most vulnerable and keep them protected throughout life.

- **Hepatitis B**: an incurable infection that can cause chronic swelling of the liver and lifelong complications, including severe liver damage and cancer. All babies need the first of three doses of the Hep B vaccine within 24 hours of birth because they are much more vulnerable to complications than adults.

- **Measles**: a highly contagious and potentially fatal respiratory disease that causes a rash and fever. Outbreaks still occur, but nearly all who receive the vaccine are protected from exposure. Kids need their first dose of the MMR vaccine at 12 - 15 months and again at 4 - 6 years to protect against measles, mumps, and rubella.

- **Pertussis**: also known as whooping cough, pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory infection. Before the vaccine was available, around 200,000 children contracted it and over 9,000 died from the disease every year. The CDC recommends 5 doses of the DtaP vaccines for infants and children at 2, 4, 6, 15 – 18 months and 4 - 6 years.

Adolescents and Teens:
Older children and teens need vaccines too! Because they are more social, older children and teens are vulnerable to a different set of diseases. Also, the protection they receive from certain vaccines weakens over time, requiring boosters.

- **Meningococcal Disease**: refers to any illness caused by the meningococcus bacteria. While rare, these illnesses can be deadly and are easily spread by coughing, kissing, or even sharing water bottles. The first dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine is needed between ages 11 – 12 with a booster does at age 16.

- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV)**: HPV is a very common virus that nearly all men and women contract at some point in their lives. While it can go away on its own, it can also cause several forms of cancer and genital warts. Vaccinating between the ages of 11 – 12 can prevent the risk of HPV cancers.

- **Pertussis**: whooping cough is especially serious and potentially life-threatening in newborn babies. Vaccinating against the disease during the third trimester of every pregnancy provides the best short-term early protection for newborns who are too young to receive the vaccine.

- **Influenza (Flu)**: a very common, highly contagious virus that infects the nose, upper airways, throat, and lungs. Contracting it while pregnant can cause serious complications, including premature labor. The CDC recommends the flu shot as the most important step to protect yourself and your baby from the flu.

Expecting Mothers:
Vaccinations protect pregnant mothers and unborn babies. Pregnant mothers share everything with their babies, including immunities. By vaccinating yourself while pregnant, you are protecting your child as well as yourself.

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*For more information of the Power to Protect campaign visit: [https://www.thepowertoprotect.org/](https://www.thepowertoprotect.org/)*

Men’s Health
By Capital Health Plan

June is Men’s Health month. Did you know that men are more likely than women to put off annual routine checkups and medical care? Often times common conditions – such as diabetes, obesity, hypertension, heart disease, and high cholesterol – are not diagnosed in a timely manner, which may cause unnecessary complications, including early death. Other health conditions that only affect males, such as prostate cancer and low testosterone, can be prevented and treated with early diagnosis.

Making healthy lifestyle choices, like eating a healthy diet and including physical activity in your daily routine, can lower the risk of chronic conditions. Certain preventive screening tests, recommended by your physician, can also improve men’s health. Preventive screening tests can detect diseases early, when they are easier to treat. Get answers to all of your men’s health questions by simply talking with your doctor to discuss your family history and health risks.

For more information on Men’s Health, visit Capital Health Plans’ Healthwise® Knowledgebase at [www.capitalhealth.com](http://www.capitalhealth.com). Enter Men’s Health in the search bar.
Power to Protect: A Further Look into Measles
By Department of Health

What is measles?
Measles is a highly contagious, vaccine-preventable disease. Although it is usually considered a childhood disease, it can be contracted at any age. Generally preschool children, adolescents, and inadequately immunized individuals comprise the majority of measles cases in the United States.

What are the symptoms of measles?
Symptoms typically appear 7 to 14 days after a person has been infected and include:
- High fever
- Cough
- Runny nose
- Red, watery eyes
- Within 3 to 5 days, a rash often develops on the face and neck, and can spread to the rest of the body

How can people prevent catching measles?
The best way to prevent measles is to get vaccinated. Health care providers and county health departments offer the MMR vaccine, which prevents measles, mumps, and rubella.

What are the possible health complications from measles?
- Encephalitis can lead to convulsions, deafness, or intellectual disabilities.
- Death occurs in about 1 or 2 out of 1,000 children who catch measles.
- Pregnant women who catch measles are at risk of premature birth or having a low-birth-weight baby.
- People with compromised immune systems, such as from leukemia and HIV infection, may be especially at risk for measles complications.

Who is at risk of getting measles?
- People who are unvaccinated or inadequately vaccinated for measles.
- People with compromised immune systems.
- People who traveled to international and domestic geographic regions with ongoing measles outbreaks.
- People who have been exposed to someone with measles.

What should I do if I think my child or a loved one may have measles?
First, call your health care provider, facility, or county health department and let them know your concerns. DO NOT go directly to your health care provider’s office or facility, or the county health department. A health care provider or a county health department official will give you instructions on getting seen in a timely manner, and how you can avoid exposing other people to measles.

Tips for a Safe and Healthy Summer
By Aetna

Summer is upon us, with barbecues, beaches, pool parties, and kids running around outside, just being kids. All these fun activities have one thing in common: the summer sun. It’s important to stay safe and keep cool, and don’t forget to take extra care to protect yourself and your family from harmful UV rays.

Ways to Beat the Heat
Seek shade
Stay in the shade between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., when UV rays are the strongest.

Drink plenty of fluids
It’s recommended to drink eight or more 8-ounce glasses of water per day.

Plan ahead for outdoor activities
Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing so that your body can cool itself properly.

Try aloe vera cubes for sunburn relief
It’s critical to use sunscreen, but if you happen to forget or miss a spot, try this home remedy for a soothing sunburn relief.

1. Pour aloe vera gel into ice cube trays
2. Freeze for at least six hours
3. Use the cubes to cool your sunburn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sunscreen by the Numbers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use at least 1 full ounce of sunscreen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reapply every 2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan 15 minutes ahead</td>
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<tr>
<td>Choose SPF 30 or higher</td>
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That’s what skin doctors recommend to ensure all exposed skin is covered. Don’t forget to reapply sunscreen after swimming or sweating. Apply sunscreen 15 minutes before you head outside to give it time to start working. And make sure your sunscreen protects against both UVA and UVB rays.
The 411 on H20
By E4

Whether you’re an avid water drinker or just starting to watch your ounces, you’re taking a strong first step to improve your health. Getting enough fluids each day prevents headaches, muscle pains, weakness, distraction, and a variety of other physical and mental issues. If you’re finding it hard to fit in fluids, try these tips:

1. Drink before you feel thirsty: if you feel thirsty, your body is already dehydrated.
2. Carry a bottle of water on errands, during exercise, at work, etc.
3. Order water with your meals so that you stay hydrated and maybe even eat less.
4. Track your water intake in a journal so that you can set goals and see your progress.
5. Drink water each time you eat including meals and snacks so that you can consume up to 12 cups per day.
6. Alternate water with caffeinated drinks so that you’re hydrating between beverages that are acting as diuretics.
7. Try sparkling or fruit-flavored water to keep it interesting and add some variety.
8. Add water to other beverages you drink, especially to juices, to sneak in some ounces.
9. Eat foods with significant water in them like vegetables, soups, fruits, etc.
10. Add flavor to water, like limes or lemons, to improve the taste and motivate you to drink more.

To see if you’re getting enough fluids, check your urine to make sure it’s light colored. Knowing the 411 on fluids helps you stay alert, feel good, and keeps you ready to take on what’s in your day. It can even prevent severe symptoms like fainting, dizziness, rapid heartbeat, lethargy, and more. Cheers!

What is a Migraine?
By AvMed

According to the National Headache Foundation, a Migraine is a chronic and episodic disorder, characterized by headache attacks that are:

- Recurrent headaches, lasting 4 - 72 hours
- One-side, pulsating, moderate to severe pain
- Reducing the ability to function in everyday situations

**Associated Symptoms:**

Often two of these three key associated symptoms are also present during an attack:

- Nausea and / or vomiting
- Sensitivity to light (Called Photophobia)
- Sensitivity to sound (Called Phonophobia)

**Migraines are very common – you are not alone.** Migraine headaches affect nearly 30 million people in the US:

- 12% of people 12 years and older.
- More common in women (17% vs 6% in men).
- Nearly 25% of migraine sufferers frequently lose time at work, home, or in social settings.
- More than 50% of sufferers have difficulty functioning or require bed rest during a headache attack.

**What are the available options for treatment?**

- Treat at the first sign of an attack – don’t wait!
- Keep medications with you when you go out or travel.
- Consider preventative therapy if you have frequent or severe attacks.

For lists of potential triggers and more information about managing and treating your migraine, you can visit [www.headaches.org](http://www.headaches.org). Speak to your health care professional about all your treatment options.

Source: [https://headaches.org/resource/your-migraine-your-symptoms-what-you-need-to-know/](https://headaches.org/resource/your-migraine-your-symptoms-what-you-need-to-know/)
When to Wash

It is important to wash your hands after touching anything that might carry germs, such as an animal, animal feed, or animal waste.

- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage
- After touching food
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After using the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

How to Wash

Follow these five simple steps to keep your hands clean:

1. Wet your hands with clean, running water (either warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
4. Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
5. Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Learn more about when and how to wash your hands with the Florida Department of Health’s handwashing video.

Washing Your Hands Can Save Lives

Did you know that one of the most effective ways to keep yourself and your family healthy is also the simplest? We’re talking about good handwashing. What your mother said is true: If you don’t wash your hands, you’re going to get sick. You can get the common cold, yes, but the risks of skipping this important health habit are much more far-reaching and can be severe.

Thorough Handwashing Can Help Prevent Disease

Think about how many things you touch throughout the day that are also touched by other people. Then, when you touch your nose or mouth, you pick up germs and infections left there by someone who neglected to wash their hands. Also, if you prepare food with unwashed hands, you pass along bacteria that can make people sick by eating the food you handled. Practicing good handwashing techniques is one of the easiest and most effective ways to avoid getting sick and spreading germs; especially those germs that cause most respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses. It can also prevent sicknesses like most types of infectious diarrhea, hepatitis A, and meningitis.

When to Wash

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing

Make a Splash! Swim Your Way to All-Around Fitness

By Florida Blue

One of Florida’s best features is its water. If you want to get into shape, swimming is one of the best ways to do it. And, it’s good for people of all ages and requires little or no equipment.

If you don’t know how to swim, check out your community pool or YMCA. Lessons are often offered from infants through adult. If you used to swim but haven’t for a while, don’t worry. It’s a lot like riding a bike—it all comes back with the first splash.

Swimming can be fun, refreshing, and good for your health. Because you’re suspended in water, it’s easy on your knees and hips. That’s great for arthritics or painful joints. Swimming laps helps lower your blood pressure and heart rate and helps prevent hardening of the arteries that can happen as you get older.

When you’re swimming, keep these tips in mind:

1. Safety first. Never swim alone. Learn and follow the rules where you swim. For example, a red flag flying at the beach means the surf is rough and getting in the water is NOT recommended because of currents or riptides. Even most family pools have rules.
2. Pace yourself. Start slowly and build your workouts. If you’re at a group swim, let the coach or swim leader know that you’re new. This way, they can give you pointers and keep an eye on you.
3. Breathe! It may sound simple, but it’ll probably take some time to build up your strength and endurance. If you get winded, try using a kick board for a few laps to bring your breathing back to normal. Or try a recovery stroke, like the breast stroke or back stroke, at a very slow pace.

So, what are you waiting for? Jump in! Make a splash! The water is a refreshing way to get fit.

Sources: clevelandclinic.org; go4life.nia.nih.gov; active at any age.ni.gov

Heart-Healthy Pancakes with Strawberries

By United Healthcare

Forget traditional white flour. Use buckwheat instead to turn pancakes into a heart-healthy food. It’s simple, different, and delicious. Any type of fruit and preserves can be used.

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups fresh or frozen strawberries
- 2 Tbsp. reduced-sugar preserves, any flavor
- 1 cup buckwheat pancake mix, Instant
- ½ cup light sour cream or low-fat vanilla yogurt

Preparation:

1. In a saucepan, mix berries and preserves and cook about 5 minutes. Set aside and keep warm.
2. In a bowl, combine pancake mix and make a slightly thin batter. Pour 1/3 cup onto griddle or into large nonstick pan (sprayed with cooking spray) so that the pancake spreads about 5-6 inches in diameter.
3. Cook until edges are dry, then flip and cook until done. Repeat with the rest of the batter.
4. Place ¼ cup of the berry mixture into the center of each pancake and roll. Transfer to a plate and serve with sour cream or yogurt on top. Drizzled with remaining strawberry mixture.