It’s that Time of the Year to Get Your Flu Shot

Everyone over 6 months old should get a flu shot every year. The flu can make you and your loved ones very sick. In some cases, it can cause death.

The best protection you can get is with a flu shot every year. Flu season usually lasts from October through May. It is best to get the flu shot as soon as it is available. If it is still flu season, it’s not too late to get the flu shot.

Some people are at higher risk for getting the flu and are more likely to have complications from the flu.

- Children younger than 5.
- Children younger than 2 are at highest risk.
- Pregnant women.
- People of any age with certain chronic conditions like asthma, COPD, diabetes, heart disease or a weakened immune system.
- People living in nursing homes or other long-term care.
- Adults over 65.
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

Flu symptoms include:
- Fever.
- Chills.
- Tiredness.
- Cough.
- Sore throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Body aches.
- Headache.

Other things you can do to help avoid the flu are stay away from sick people and wash your hands often to reduce the spread of germs.

If you are sick with the flu, stay home from work or school. And stay away from people who are at higher risk of getting the flu. This helps prevent spreading the flu to others.

If you have questions about the flu shot, talk to your doctor or pharmacist. Remember that you can earn REWARDS points for getting an annual flu shot. Visit MDwise.org/MDwiseREWARDS to learn more!

Need help deciding whether to see your doctor or go to the emergency room?

If your doctor is not available, talk to a nurse about the type of care you need. Call MDwise NURSEon-call at 800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area. Choose option #4 for NURSEon-call. NURSEon-call is available 24 hours a day. Other languages are available.
Is this an Emergency?

Medical emergencies can be scary and stressful. Knowing what to do in an emergency can help you manage it. The following signs and symptoms are examples of common emergency problems. These are only some examples:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
- Chest pain or pressure lasting two minutes or more.
- Upper abdominal pain or pressure lasting two minutes or more.
- Fainting, sudden dizziness or weakness.
- Sudden changes in vision.
- Confusion, changes in mental status, or unusual behavior.
- Bleeding that won’t stop.
- Severe vomiting or diarrhea.

This information does not replace the advice of your doctor - your primary doctor knows your health history best. Unless you are sure it is a medical emergency, it is always best to call your doctor first.

There are other times when it is best to make an appointment with your MDwise doctor. Here are some reasons to call your MDwise doctor first:

- If your symptoms come on gradually.
- You think your child has an ear infection.
- You or your child has cold or flu symptoms.
- Rash or insect bites.

If you are still unsure what to do you can call the MDwise NURSEon-call line at 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area. Choose option #4 for NURSEon-call. The nurse can tell you whether to go to the emergency room or wait to see your doctor. NURSEon-call is available 24 hours a day. If you can’t reach your usual doctor and you think you or your family member will have a bad outcome if you don’t get help right away, you may need to go to the emergency room.

Details about your health are personal. MDwise does all we can to protect your privacy. We make sure your health records and information about you are kept safe. Only staff who need to see your files to help you can get them. Even then, our staff signs statements promising not to share information about you. Our doctors follow these rules too.

If other people ask us for your records, you must first say it is okay. You have to give that permission in writing. The only time we do not check with you first is when someone has a need and a right to see the files. That’s determined by law.

We often review the way we keep your information safe. We want you to have good care and peace of mind. Our privacy policy is in your member handbook starting on page 49. The most recent version is at MDwise.org.

You can also have a copy of our general privacy policy mailed to you. Call MDwise customer service if you’d like a copy (1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area).

Second Opinions

MDwise knows how important it is for our members to know they made the right choices about their health. You might not be happy with your doctor’s opinion or plan. If not, you can ask for a second opinion. It should be from another doctor in your MDwise network. Call MDwise customer service if you need help. We can help you find another in-network doctor, so you can get a second opinion.

Call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204 if you need help. If you are in the Indianapolis area call 317-630-2831.

Communication of Personal Health Information use and disclosure

Your member rights and responsibilities include:

1. Being treated with dignity and respect.
2. Receiving health care that makes you comfortable based on your culture.
3. Being able to make complaints about MDwise, its services, doctors and policies.

If you have trouble with any of the services offered by MDwise, please call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204. If you are in the Indianapolis area please call 317-630-2831. We need to know about any problems so that we can help.

You Can Get Information in Other Languages

When you call MDwise customer service we can talk to you in your own language. If we do not have someone who speaks your language, we will get an interpreter on the phone.

Many MDwise doctors can talk to you in Spanish or other languages as well. This includes sign language. It is a free service to you.

Member information is available in Spanish at MDwise.org. We have some information in Burmese as well. You can also call MDwise customer service to have materials mailed to you. If you do not understand something you get in the mail from us, call customer service. We can help explain what it says.

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MDwise wants to help you stay healthy. The MDwise care management program can help you manage your health conditions. MDwise case managers help you and your doctor plan for your care. As your needs change, the level of care management you need may change. Care management will help you become more independent and able to manage your own health care needs. MDwise care managers can help you with mental health and physical conditions.

MDwise care managers can help you make goals for your health. They work with you, your doctors, and your family and caregivers to do this. They want you to make the best choices for your health. Care managers can help you understand your health conditions and how to best manage them. Care management also assists you with:

- Understanding your condition.
- Understanding your medications.
- Getting supplies and equipment you need.
- Finding care from special doctors.
- Getting information about your condition.
- Scheduling appointments.
- Talking to doctors about your condition(s) and how you are doing.
- Getting help from other organizations.

You, your provider, family members or caregivers can all request case management by completing an online referral form or by calling customer service. The online referral form is located at MDwise.org/cmdm-referral and MDwise customer service can be reached at 1-800-356-1204. Once MDwise receives your request, a case manager will contact you and you can discuss your needs or the needs of the person requesting care management.

What is an Asthma Attack?

During an asthma attack your airways get smaller. This is because you have recently breathed in one of your asthma triggers and it is causing your airways to swell. Talk to your asthma doctor about how to know when you are having an asthma flare-up. Most happen gradually and get to a point that it really bothers you. Others seem to happen suddenly. If you pay close attention to your symptoms you can act early and not be caught off guard.

You may have warning signs hours to days before a flare-up or an attack begins. Everyone’s early warning signs are different. Know which ones apply to you:

- Coughing often starts at nighttime or early morning.
- Wheezing.
- More mucus.
- Drop in peak flow reading.
- Needing to use your quick-relief medicine more than two times a week.

What should you do during an asthma flare-up?

- Follow your written Asthma Action Plan and directions from your doctor, based on your asthma symptoms and/or peak flow readings.
- Take quick-relief medicines as directed by your doctor. This may require repeated doses.
- Relax! Try to breathe slowly and deeply.
- Get help. Tell someone if you notice it’s getting hard to breathe.
- If your fingertips or lips are turning blue, or you are unable to walk or talk, call 911.

Obtaining Information About MDwise Practitioners

You can find information about MDwise doctors at MDwise.org/findadoctor. You can get information about providers including practice locations, phone number, if they are on a bus line, the language they speak, and more. You can also call MDwise customer service and we can research providers for you. If you have questions about the quality of MDwise providers, please ask us. Remember, it is better for your health or your child’s health to stay with one doctor, rather than change doctors often.

You can also get quality information about health care facilities, such as hospitals, that are in the MDwise network. You can call customer service and ask about quality information, or you can find this information at MDwise.org/findadoctor. Information is collected nationally by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and statewide by the Indiana Hospital Association.
MDwise Helps Members Manage their Health

The choices you make every day are very important for managing your condition. MDwise INcontrol programs can help. MDwise care management staff can answer questions you have. They will help you:

- Learn about your condition.
- Manage your medicines.
- Learn the best ways to work with your doctor.
- Follow your doctor’s advice.
- Learn about testing that you should have.
- Take steps to keep your condition from getting worse.

Be sure to see your doctor on a regular basis. Talk with your doctor about all the questions you have. This will help keep you from having to go to the hospital or emergency room.

MDwise offers a special program for pregnant members called BLUEBELLEbeginnings. If you are pregnant, please call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area. The sooner we know you are pregnant, the more we can help you.

MDwise members can be in INcontrol if they have any of the conditions listed above. If you have any of the conditions listed above you are automatically enrolled in the program. If you do not wish to be in the program, you can tell the care management staff if they contact you, or call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area. Learn more about your health conditions at MDwise.org/INcontrol.
Open Enrollment and Redetermination

As a HIP member, it is important to understand your benefit year and eligibility period (also known as redetermination period). Your Benefit Year starts January 1 and ends December 31 each calendar year. Your eligibility period (redetermination period) is 12 months from when you are approved for coverage. This can be different for each person.

Benefits Year:

• Your benefit year does not change if you leave the HIP program and return during the year.
• Benefit limits and your POWER Account reset each January.
• November 1 – December 15 you have a chance to stay with your current health plan or change your health plan for the next benefit year.

Don’t forget to choose MDwise for your health plan every year! If you like MDwise you will not need to do anything, MDwise will automatically carry over to the next benefit year.

Eligibility (also known as redetermination period):

• You can buy-in to HIP Plus during the eligibility period.
• IMPORTANT: You must participate in the annual eligibility (redetermination) process.
• If you do not participate in the annual eligibility (redetermination) process, you may be locked out of the HIP program for up to 6 months.
• Letters for your eligibility will come from the Division of Family Resources (DFR).

Be SMOKE-free

Don’t Give Up! Quitting smoking may be the best thing you ever do for yourself. If you tried to quit but couldn't, don’t give up! Quitting is hard work. Most smokers who try to quit can’t do it the first time. If you’ve tried to quit before, try something new this time.

For further advice and support, call Indiana’s Tobacco Quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669) or go online to quitnowindiana.com. It’s available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can get tips for quitting from MDwise’s SMOKE-free program at MDwise.org.

If you smoke or use tobacco you can earn MDwiseREWARDS points for trying to quit. To earn points, you must complete a cessation program. If you complete a cessation program, ask for a certificate or letter of completion. Then send a copy to MDwise by mail, fax or email to get your points. For more information go to MDwise.org/MDwiseREWARDS and click on your health plan.

Attention HIP members: If you use tobacco, you have just a few months to stop tobacco use or you may have a higher POWER Account contribution. If you don’t stop using tobacco, your POWER Account contribution payment may have a 50 percent surcharge. For example, if your current POWER Account contribution is $10 a month, your contribution may go up to $15 if you do not stop tobacco use in 12 months of your coverage starting. If your tobacco status changes, or if you feel we have wrong information about your tobacco use, please call MDwise customer service.

Get your FREE gift card!

You don’t have to sign up for MDwiseREWARDS to earn points. You are automatically enrolled. Earn points for a variety of activities, like going to your doctor appointments. Then shop for gift cards with your points. Go to MDwise.org/MDwiseREWARDS to learn more.
Teaching Kids to be Responsible for their Health

As your child gets older help them be responsible for their health. Parents schedule doctor visits, fill out paper work and take care of insurance. You will need to help your child take on these tasks when they are an adult. This includes finding an adult health doctor. If your child sees a family medicine doctor you still need to teach your child to take care of their health.

This new time of life can be hard. MDwise is here to help.

Here are some tips:

1. Change to an adult health doctor between 18 to 21 years of age.
2. If your child has special health care needs it is even more important to plan early. Check out Family Voices Indiana for more help.
3. Talk to your child’s doctor – Got Transition has a guide on questions to ask.
4. Call MDwise Customer Service to find or choose a new doctor at 1-800-356-1204.
5. Talk to your child - Got Transition has a guide for teens on what it means to turn 18.

Find more information at these websites:

- Family Voices Indiana: fvindiana.org
- Got Transition: gottransition.org/youthfamilies
- Indiana State Department of Health Care Coordination Services: in.gov/isdh
- MDwise – For Members: MDwise.org/for-members

Questions? Comments? Complaints?

If you need help with anything about MDwise or your doctor, we can help. Please call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area.

MDwise customer service offers language services. Or we might use an interpreter. We also have services for the hearing and speech impaired.

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