Get Your Flu Shot

Did you know that everyone 6 months of age or older should get a flu shot every year?

The flu can make you and your loved ones very sick. The best protection you can get is with a flu shot. The flu season usually lasts from October through May. It is best to get the flu shot as soon as it is available. But as long as 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. They also are more likely to have complications from the flu.

- Children younger than 5. Children younger than 2 are at highest risk.
- Adults age 65 and older.
- Pregnant women.
- People living in nursing homes or other long-term care.
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives.

In addition to getting a flu shot, you can do other things to keep from getting the flu. Stay away from sick people. Wash your hands 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, talk to your doctor or pharmacist.
The best way to manage stress is to prevent it. Get enough sleep. Eat a proper diet. Avoid too much caffeine and alcohol. Take time out to relax every day. These things may help reduce your stress level.

You can’t avoid all stress in your life. And everyone responds differently to stress. Stress not only affects our mental health but can cause physical illness too. Learning some ways to cope can help you get through stressful times.

Try these tips from the Anxiety and Depression Association of America to manage anxiety and stress:

- **Take a time-out.** Practice yoga, listen to music, meditate, get a massage or learn relaxation techniques. Stepping back from the problem helps clear your head.
- **Eat well-balanced meals.** Do not skip any meals. Do keep healthful, energy-boosting snacks on hand.
- **Limit alcohol and caffeine.** These can make anxiety worse and trigger panic attacks.
- **Get enough sleep.** When stressed, your body needs more sleep and rest.
- **Exercise daily.** This will help you feel good and maintain your health.
- **Take deep breaths.** Inhale and exhale slowly.
- **Count to 10 slowly.** Repeat, and count to 20 if you need to.
- **Do your best.** Don’t aim for perfection—it’s not possible. Be proud of what you accomplish.
- **Accept that you cannot control everything.** Put your stress in perspective: Is it really as bad as you think?
- **Welcome humor.** A good laugh goes a long way.
- **Maintain a positive attitude.** Make an effort to replace negative thoughts with positive ones.
- **Get involved.** Volunteer or find another way to be active in your community. This creates a support network. And it gives you a break from everyday stress.
- **Learn what triggers your anxiety.** Is it work, family or school? Or is it something else you can identify? Write in a journal when you’re feeling stressed or anxious. And look for a pattern.
- **Talk to someone.** Tell friends and family you’re feeling overwhelmed. Let them know how they can help you. Talk to a pastor or priest. You may want to see a physician or therapist for professional help.

Learn more about how to manage stress. Go to MDwise.org/wellness-tools/managing-stress.
Have you ever paid for your health care out of your own pocket? Have you wondered what it costs to go to the doctor? Health care costs going up is a popular topic in the news right now. Being aware of the costs of health care can affect how and when you get the services you need.

Starting October 1, 2015, MDwise is offering a new service to Healthy Indiana Plan members. Your doctor may or may not take part in this service. If your doctor’s office takes part in this service, they will be able to provide you with a receipt showing the cost of the services for your visit. These costs are estimates of what will come out of your POWER Account. For more information about the cost estimator tool, visit MDwise.org/costestimator.

Did You Know You Can Get Information in Other Languages?

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

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

Member information such as your member handbook is available in Spanish and Burmese at MDwise.org. You can also call MDwise customer service to have materials mailed to you. If you do not understand something you got in the mail from us call customer service. We can help explain what it says.

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 getting any of the services offered by MDwise in a culturally acceptable way, please call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 if you are in the Indianapolis area. We need to know about any problems in order to help.

Keep a Food and Activity Diary

Keeping a food diary may be a key to losing extra weight. Experts say that this simple activity can encourage you to eat less. For some people, having to write down everything they eat helps prevent overeating.

It can take time to reach physical activity goals. Using an activity log is a good way to measure your progress. This way you can see small improvements over time. This can help give you a sense of satisfaction. It can boost your confidence. This helps keep you motivated.

Use the MDwise Food and Activity Diary at MDwise.org/weightwise to track the foods you eat each week. Doctors recommend drinking eight glasses of water a day. Check a glass on the chart for each glass you drink. Write down what physical activity you do. Include how long you do it.

Learn more about healthy eating and physical activity through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity at cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating.

Cost Estimator Tool for HIP Members

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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/rewards to learn more.

Areas in which MDwise improved in 2014:

- Well-care visits for children.
  - 0–15 months of age.
  - 3–6 years of age.
  - Adolescents, 12–21 years of age.
- Pregnant women getting the prenatal care that they need.
- Getting members in to see their doctor after an inpatient hospitalization.

While MDwise did better on well-care visits for children in 2014, we are still working to make more improvements.

- Babies should have eight well-child visits by 15 months of age.
- Children ages 3–21 years of age should see the doctor at least once each year for a well-care visit.

MDwise is working to improve in these areas in 2015:

- Getting pregnant women to their first prenatal appointment in the first three months.
- After delivery of a baby, women getting in for their postpartum exam within 21–56 days.
- Members quitting tobacco use.
- Getting adults in for annual well-care.
- Members using the emergency room wisely.

Each year MDwise reviews the care and services provided for members. Here are the results of the review.

MDwise Quality Program Summary for 2014
Medical emergencies can be frightening and stressful. Knowing what to do in an emergency can help you manage it.

Sometimes you know right away you should go to the emergency room. The following signs and symptoms are examples of common emergency problems. These are only some examples. This information is not intended to, and does not, serve as or replace the advice of your doctor or another health care professional.

**Warning Signs and Symptoms**

- Difficulty breathing. Shortness of breath.
- Chest or upper abdominal pain. Or pressure lasting two minutes or more.
- Fainting, sudden dizziness or weakness.
- Sudden changes in vision.
- Trouble speaking.
- Confusion or changes in mental status. Unusual behavior. Difficult to wake up.
- Any sudden or severe pain.
- Bleeding that won’t stop.
- Severe vomiting or diarrhea.
- Coughing up or vomiting blood.
- Wanting to harm yourself or others.
- Unusual abdominal pain.

There are other times when it is best to make an appointment with your MDwise doctor. For example:

- If your symptoms come on gradually.
- You think your child has an ear infection.
- You or your child has cold or flu symptoms.
- You sprain your ankle.

Your primary doctor knows your health history best. He or she will have your medical records. Unless you are sure it is a medical emergency, it is always best to call your doctor first.

Sometimes it is not clear when to go to the emergency room. Here are some hints to help you decide:

- Call your usual doctor. They may tell you to go to the emergency room right away. Or they may make an appointment for you.
- Call MDwise NURSEon-call 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 usual doctor. NURSEon-call is available 24 hours a day.
- If you can’t reach your usual doctor or NURSEon-call, 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.

You can learn more about emergency warning signs and what to do. Take a first aid class and learn CPR. Contact your local hospital, American Red Cross or American Heart Association. They may have first aid classes in your area. Or they can tell you who to call.
**Second Opinions**

Making decisions about your health care is very important in your life. It can be hard sometimes to know what is best for you. MDwise knows how important it is for you to know you made the right choices about your health. There are times you may want to talk to another doctor about your care. Second opinions are a way to learn more about your condition. They also help you make choices for treatment. Most doctors will welcome another physician’s input. Your doctor may be able to recommend a specialist. It should be another doctor in your MDwise network. You will want to get a copy of your medical records and test results. Share these with the new doctor that you see for the second opinion.

Call MDwise customer service at 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 if you are in the Indianapolis area if you need help. We can help you find another in-network doctor so you can get a second opinion.

**Women’s Health**

MDwise wants our members to get routine preventive care. Female members can get this care from women’s health specialists. You do not need a referral from your primary medical provider for this. Some examples of women’s health specialists are:

- Obstetricians.
- Gynecologists.
- Certified nurse midwives.

Some examples of routine preventive health care services are:

- Prenatal care.
- Breast exams.
- Mammograms.
- Pap tests.

Prenatal care is care before and during pregnancy. It is important to see a health care provider during your first trimester. And keep all appointments during your pregnancy. This helps keep you and your baby healthy.

A Pap test can save your life. It can find changes in your cervix that may lead to cancer. Cervical cancer can almost always be prevented. Having regular Pap tests is the key.

A mammogram is an X-ray exam of the breasts. It looks for changes that are not normal. Women who are 50 and older should have a mammogram every year. If you are younger than 50, you should ask your doctor if you should have a mammogram. The doctor will order one if you have risk factors for breast cancer. This includes a family history of breast cancer.

Talk to your doctor about these important exams.

**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.

MDwise.org

Information in STEPS TO WELLNESS comes from a wide range of medical experts and is not intended to provide specific advice to any one individual. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider.

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HHW-HIPM0402 (9/15) APM0193 (9/15)