Why Is Dental Care So Important?

Did you know that your oral health can offer clues about your overall health? Or that problems in your mouth can affect the rest of your body?

Research shows that gum disease may lead to other health problems. This can include stroke and heart disease. Also, women with gum disease are more likely to have pre-term, low birth-weight babies. Regular dentist visits can do more than keep your smile attractive. They can tell dentists a lot about your overall health. They can tell if you may be developing a disease like diabetes.

Health behaviors that can lead to poor oral health include:

• Tobacco use.
• Excessive alcohol use.
• Poor dietary choices.

It is important that dental care starts at a young age. To protect your oral health, practice good oral hygiene every day. For example:

• Brush your teeth at least twice a day.
• Floss daily.
• Eat a healthy diet and limit between-meal snacks.
• Replace your toothbrush every three to four months or sooner if bristles are frayed.
• Schedule regular dental checkups.

Also, contact your dentist as soon as an oral health problem arises. Remember, taking care of your oral health is an investment in your overall health.

Sources: HealthyPeople.gov – Healthy People 2020 Topics – Oral Health
National Institutes of Health – National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research
Academy of General Dentistry

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.
MDwise wants to be sure you understand your pharmacy coverage with the Healthy Indiana Plan. This will help you get the best care possible.

Visit our website at MDwise.org/hip/pharmacy for information such as:

- How the prescription benefit works.
- Which drugs are covered.
- Medications that require prior authorization.
- Limits on refills, doses, or prescriptions.
- Copayment information.
- How to locate a pharmacy.

You can find more information in your member handbook at MDwise.org/hip/handbook.

You can call 1-844-336-2677 if you have pharmacy questions or problems.

---

**Getting Help with a Problem**

The quality of service you get from MDwise is important to us. If you have a concern or are not satisfied, call MDwise customer service. You must do this within 60 days of when the problem occurred.

If you are dissatisfied with a service you receive, a MDwise customer service representative will file a grievance. He or she will try to solve your concerns right away.

**Filing an Appeal**

If you do not agree with a MDwise decision about your health services, you have the right to ask for further review. This includes if MDwise has decided that a request for services cannot be approved. You will receive written notification of the decision. This notice will include your right to appeal. It will include the steps to start an appeal. You can ask someone else, such as your doctor, to file an appeal on your behalf.

For more information on filing a grievance or an appeal, please visit MDwise.org/help.
Control Portion Sizes for a Healthy Weight

Portion sizes of many foods have increased a lot over the past 20 years. Larger portions are now offered all around us. This includes:

- Restaurants.
- Vending machines.
- Packaged foods in grocery stores.

Studies show most people don’t think they are eating as much as they actually are. Larger portions have more calories. But they also encourage people to eat more than they usually would.

With a little practice, portion control is easy to do. It can help people reach and maintain a healthy weight. Most people don’t like to measure or weigh their food. You can estimate portion sizes. Just compare them to common household items.

This should help you eat healthy portion sizes. You should eat a healthy mixture of different types of food. You should also include regular physical activity. All these things together will help you get the best results. Always talk to your doctor before starting a new diet or exercise program.

Sources:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
US Department of Agriculture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Compares To</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rice or pasta</td>
<td>½ cup cooked</td>
<td>Computer mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ a baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leafy vegetables</td>
<td>1 cup raw</td>
<td>1 baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked vegetables</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>Computer mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruit (like apples or oranges)</td>
<td>1 medium</td>
<td>Tennis ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berries</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>Tennis ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chopped or canned fruit</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>Computer mouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard cheese</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 pair of dice or your thumb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt</td>
<td>8 ounces</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat, fish or poultry</td>
<td>3 ounces</td>
<td>Deck of cards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>Ping-pong ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked beans</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>Baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuts</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>Golf ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooking oil</td>
<td>1 teaspoon</td>
<td>Fingertip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mustard, ketchup or mayonnaise</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>Thumb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here is What You Had to Say
Every year a survey is sent to member homes. It asks members about services they get from MDwise. A total of 2,251 members answered our survey to help us serve you better. Members who respond are kept private. MDwise does not know which members answered the questions.

In general MDwise members were happy with their doctors and with the MDwise health plan. You thought we did better on:
• Customer service.
• Shared decision making with doctors on medicines.
• Coordination of care.
• Specialists.

Members found several things they thought could be better:
• Being able to get care quickly.
• Getting routine care.

MDwise members were asked whether they or their child had been to the doctor for a check-up or routine care. An average of 71 percent said they had made an appointment to see their doctor in the past six months. Adult members also told us whether or not they smoke or use tobacco. 34 percent of adults in Hoosier Healthwise and HIP said they use tobacco. 32 percent of adult Hoosier Healthwise and 40 percent of adults in HIP said that they got the flu vaccine.

Here are some important things to remember:
• Check-ups and other preventive care are important for everyone in the family. This should happen at least once each year for those age three years and older. Babies and children under the age of three need appointments more often. See the MDwise member handbook for more details.
• Always call your doctor first when you need medical care. Your doctor has someone who can help you 24 hours a day.
• NURSEon-call can answer your health questions 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call customer service and choose option #4.
• If you smoke or use tobacco, talk to your doctor about quitting. There are programs and medications to help you. Go to MDwise.org/wellness/smokefree for more information.

Our goal for next year will be to improve all areas of service. This will allow us to serve our members better in the future. We will especially work to improve the things you thought could be better.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Question</th>
<th>Hoosier Healthwise Children</th>
<th>Hoosier Healthwise Adults</th>
<th>HIP Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Using any number from 0 to 10 (10 is the best) what number would you use to rate your personal doctor?”</td>
<td>86.7% rated their doctor an 8, 9 or 10</td>
<td>74.6% rated their doctor an 8, 9 or 10</td>
<td>79.0% rated their doctor an 8, 9 or 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“When you needed care right away for an illness, injury or condition, how often did you get care as soon as you needed?”</td>
<td>94.1% said usually or always</td>
<td>76.9% said usually or always</td>
<td>82.2% said usually or always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“How often did your personal doctor explain things in a way that was easy to understand?”</td>
<td>94.2% said usually or always</td>
<td>92.1% said usually or always</td>
<td>92.8% said usually or always</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Would you recommend your health plan (MDwise) to your family or friends?”</td>
<td>96.3% said probably or definitely yes</td>
<td>93.1% said probably or definitely yes</td>
<td>96.7% said probably or definitely yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
Lead is a very strong poison. It can affect many different parts of the body. It usually builds up slowly over time. Even small amounts of lead can cause serious health problems. The health problems get worse as the level of lead in the blood gets higher. Lead poisoning can severely affect mental and physical development. At very high levels, lead poisoning can cause death.

Lead is much more harmful to children than adults. It can affect their developing nerves and brains. Children under the age of six are more vulnerable to lead poisoning. Unborn children are the most vulnerable. Pregnant women must avoid lead exposure.

Where does lead poisoning come from?
Lead is everywhere. It is in dirt, dust, new toys and old house paint. Unfortunately, you can’t see, taste or smell lead. When a person swallows an object made with lead or covered with lead dust or breathes in lead dust, some of the poison can stay in the body.

Older buildings often have lead-based paint and dust with lead in it. This is the most common source of lead poisoning in children. Children living in cities with older houses are more likely to have high levels of lead.

What are the symptoms?
Because lead poisoning often builds up gradually, there may not be any obvious symptoms. If symptoms do occur, they may include:

- Abdominal pain and cramping (usually the first sign of a high, toxic dose of lead poison).
- Aggressive behavior.
- Anemia.
- Constipation.
- Difficulty sleeping.
- Headaches.
- Irritability.
- Loss of previous developmental skills (in young children).
- Low appetite and energy.

What can you do to prevent lead poisoning?
The goal is to prevent lead exposure to children before they are harmed. The key is stopping children from coming into contact with lead. You can reduce exposure to lead with the following steps:

- Keep your home dust-free.
- Have everyone wash their hands before eating.
- Throw out old painted toys if you do not know if the paint has lead.
- Let tap water run for a minute before drinking or cooking with it.
- Add water filters or switch to bottled water for drinking and cooking.

Talk to your doctor about lead screening. Lead poisoning is a common health problem. Every MDwise child should be tested for lead. If you are pregnant, you should also talk to your doctor to see if you have been exposed to lead. To learn more about lead poisoning, visit the CDC website at [cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips.htm](http://cdc.gov/nceh/lead/tips.htm).

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health
The MDwise website has many helpful member resources. You can:

- View the most recent member handbook.
- Find a doctor or pharmacy in your area.
- Go to MDwise.org/INcontrol to get helpful information about certain health conditions.
- Learn more about our other special programs to help your family stay healthy.
- Review the MDwise privacy policy.
- Review member rights and responsibilities.
- View and print copies of previous or current newsletters.
- View the MDwise community events calendar.

You might not have a computer at home. Your public library has computers with access to the Internet for free. Please visit us at MDwise.org. Information for members is in both English and Spanish.

MDwise medical management makes prior authorization decisions based on appropriateness of care and coverage rules. MDwise medical management staff and our delegates who perform prior authorization do not receive incentives or rewards, financial or otherwise, for making denial decisions. They are also not rewarded for making utilization management (UM) decisions that decrease use of services by MDwise members.

Earn MDwiseREWARDS Points for being SMOKE-free

If you smoke or use tobacco you can earn MDwiseREWARDS points for trying to quit. To earn points, you must complete a cessation program.

Examples of some programs include:
- Indiana’s Tobacco Quitline.
- Baby and Me Tobacco Free.
- A program through your hospital or clinic.

Ask your doctor about the programs he/she recommends. Once completed, ask for a certificate or letter of completion. Then send a copy to MDwise by mail, fax or email to get your points.

Mail to:
MDwiseREWARDS
P.O. Box 441423
Indianapolis, IN 46244
Fax (toll-free) to: 1-844-759-8551
Email to: rewards@mdwise.org

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

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.

STEPS TO WELLNESS is published for members of MDwise by MDwise, Inc. P.O. Box 441423, Indianapolis, IN 46244-1423, telephone 1-800-356-1204 or 317-630-2831 in the Indianapolis area.

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.

Stock photography is used for all photos and illustrations. Copyright © MDwise, Inc.