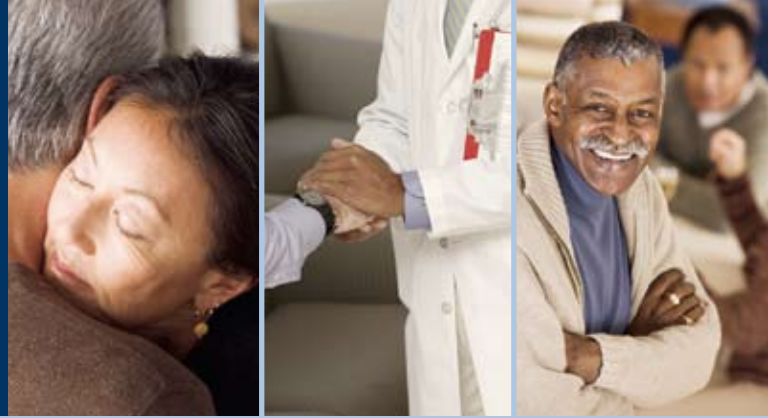


Caring Connection



Summer 2008



Ask Your Doctor!

Do You Know Your Numbers?

Before seeing your doctor, prepare a list of questions to help you learn more about your cholesterol levels and possible treatments:

- What do my cholesterol numbers mean?
- What is my cholesterol goal?
- How often should I have my levels checked?
- Do I need to change my diet or lose weight, and if so, how much?
- Will I need cholesterol-lowering medicine, and if so, what should I know about the medicine?

Summer Skin Care Tips

The summer sun and heat can be damaging to your skin. Follow these tips for soft, healthy skin all year long.

Wash with warm water. Use comfortably warm, rather than hot, water when washing your face or showering. Limit showers to 10 to 15 minutes. Hot water is drying to the skin.

Use sunscreen. Apply sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher before venturing outside and reapply every few hours if you are swimming or active. Remember, you can get burned even on cloudy days. Hats and long sleeves can also protect against sun exposure. And remember your lips. Look for a lip balm with SPF 15 to help prevent burning and chapping. If you do get sunburned, treat the burn with aloe vera and keep your skin moisturized to help manage peeling.

Avoid harsh soaps. After an afternoon tennis match, you may be tempted to hit the showers and scrub hard. But harsh soaps can strip the oils from your skin and leave it dry. Try a milder soap with a high fat content or one that contains glycerin.

Moisturize. After a shower or bath, gently pat your skin dry and follow with a moisturizing lotion while your

skin is still damp. This helps lock in moisture.

Stay hydrated. Drinking plenty of water can help your skin retain moisture, helping you look and feel better. If you live in a dry or desert climate, consider a humidifier for your home. ♡



Source: American Academy of Dermatology, www.aad.org.



Taking Charge of Your Healthcare Needs!



Care Improvement Plus offers a Complex Case Management Program to members who qualify. Our Care Managers will call you or your caregiver(s) regularly to discuss specific health concerns. Social workers are available to discuss a variety of topics such as housing issues, financial issues, end-of-life issues and provide mental health resources. We also work with your doctor to discuss medication changes, appointments or other treatment concerns. We will involve hospital discharge planners to provide assistance when you are discharged from the hospital for home health or equipment needs.

We encourage you and your doctors to self-refer to this program by contacting our Case Management Department at **1-866-447-7868** (TTY users: **1-866-766-8695**).

Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. EST.

Flu Season Is Right Around the Corner

Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May. October or November is the best time to get vaccinated.

We want to encourage you to schedule your flu and pneumonia shot. As a reminder, you can receive your flu and pneumonia shot from your primary care physician or a Care Improvement Plus participating pharmacy* at no additional cost to you!

Important Facts:

- People age 65 years and older are at higher risk for complications from the flu, including pneumonia and worsening of chronic (ongoing) medical conditions.
- For those living with chronic or long-term health problems, the flu can mean longer illness and hospitalization.

Whatever your current health status may be, we encourage you to schedule your flu and pneumonia shot to protect your health this flu season.

Call Member Services with any questions or for more information. ♡

* May vary by region and plan.



For those living with chronic or long-term health problems, the flu can mean longer illness and hospitalization.



Visit the Department of Homeland Security's READYAmerica Web site at www.ready.gov for local information by state.*

Being Prepared Can Help You Weather a Disaster

People who watched coverage of the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina probably felt sympathy for those affected and thankfulness that their own lives weren't torn apart. But even if your location keeps you from being threatened by a hurricane, other natural and man-made disasters can strike anywhere at any time.

No one likes to think that a disaster may occur, but giving some thought to the possibility – and taking action to prepare for it – can help your family survive if the unthinkable happens.

Identify Potential Disasters

Find out what types of disasters are most likely to happen in your area. Your local Red Cross chapter or emergency management office can help with this step. Visit the Department of Homeland Security's READYAmerica Web site at www.ready.gov for local information by state.* Learn how your community plans to alert people to the hazard. Also check evacuation routes.

Get the Whole Family Together

Everyone in your family should understand the need to be prepared for a disaster. Keep in mind that you and your family members may not be at home when a disaster happens. Check into disaster plans at places your family spends time. If no disaster plan exists, consider volunteering to help set one up.

Designate two places where family members will meet: one right outside your home in case of fire or other sudden emergency and one outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home. Also arrange for an out-of-state friend or relative to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it may be easier to place a long distance call than a local one. If family members are separated, everyone should call the contact person to relay messages.

Gather Supplies

Be sure that emergency numbers are posted by each phone in your home. Stock emergency supplies and assemble a portable disaster

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Prepare a Disaster Supplies Kit

Your family should have the following supplies on hand at home. If you need to evacuate, you'll have to decide how much you'll be able to carry with you.

Water. Each person needs at least 1 gallon of water per day for drinking and sanitation. Stock at least a three-day supply.

Food. Store at least a three-day supply of nonperishable food. Pack a manual can opener and eating utensils.

Warmth. Stash a complete change of clothing and footwear for each person. Also include blankets or sleeping bags, plastic sheeting and duct tape.

Clean air. Include a dust mask or cotton T-shirt to help filter impurities from the air.

First aid kit. Assemble or purchase a first aid kit for home and one for each car.

Tools, supplies and documents.

You should have a battery-powered radio, flashlight and extra batteries; cash to last a few days; prepaid phone card; matches in a waterproof container; and a whistle to signal for help. Have contact information for your insurance agent and bank, and know your account numbers.

Sanitation. Stock moist towelettes, toilet paper, feminine hygiene items, chlorine bleach and plastic garbage bags with ties.

Medication. Prescription medications you take every day such as insulin, heart medicine and asthma inhalers. You should periodically rotate medicines to account for expiration dates.

Medical Supplies. Prescribed medical supplies such as glucose and blood pressure monitoring equipment and supplies.





Being Prepared Can Help You Weather a Disaster *...continued from page 3*

supplies kit. When preparing a kit, think first about the basics of survival: fresh water, food, warmth and clean air. See the accompanying article (page 3) for ideas about what to include. Keep your car's gas tank filled if it appears you may have to evacuate.

Stay Prepared

Every six months or so, practice emergency drills with the whole family and replace stored food and water. Replace batteries once a year. 🗣️

* Web site for information only. No endorsement is implied.

If you need to evacuate, you'll have to decide how much to carry with you. Think first about the basics of survival: water, food, warmth and clean air.

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