

Summer 2023

Health letter



Take care of your health and earn a reward! If you see this symbol, go to metroplusrewards.org to learn how you can earn member rewards.

How to keep your child's teeth healthy

Fluoride can help make teeth strong. Fluoride is put in toothpaste to help fight cavities. Your child's dentist may also put fluoride varnish on your child's teeth. The fluoride varnish dries quickly and is safe for your child.

Here are some other ways to **keep your child's teeth healthy**:

- Take your child to the dentist within 6 months of getting their first tooth or by the time they turn 1.
- Brush teeth with a soft brush after each feeding and at bedtime. At age 3, brush teeth with a pea-sized drop of fluoride toothpaste.
- Use floss every day.
- Don't put your child to bed with a bottle of milk, formula, or juice.
- Go to dental checkups two times a year.

If you have questions about your child's teeth, talk with their doctor or dentist. A healthy mouth is something to smile about.



You can earn a reward!



Take your child to the dentist for a checkup to earn \$15 per calendar year.

VISIT US AT [METROPLUS.ORG](https://metroplus.org)

Do you speak a language other than English? MetroPlusHealth has Member Services staff who speak your language. If you need help making an appointment, call the Member Services Department at **800.303.9626 (TTY: 711)**.

Schedule your first prenatal care visit

Do you think you might be pregnant? Remember to schedule your first **prenatal care visit**. This checkup helps prepare you and your baby for the next 9 months.

Your blood pressure, height, and weight will be checked at the prenatal visit. Your doctor may also do a pelvic exam and Pap test. The pelvic exam checks the size and shape of your uterus. The Pap test looks for any problems in your cervix.

Your doctor will also have you take blood and urine tests. The blood test helps your doctor know if you'll need medicine or treatment for any problems. The urine test will look for any signs of diabetes.

See your doctor right away when you find out you're pregnant. This will help your doctor find any problems and keep you and your baby healthy. Call to make an appointment today.



Get extra help for your baby

There are many resources available through MetroPlusHealth. Learn more about our **maternity programs and services**.

What you need to know about chlamydia

Chlamydia is a common sexually transmitted disease (STD). Young adults are at high risk. Chlamydia can spread to others through unprotected sex. This includes vaginal, oral, or anal sex.

Chlamydia can cause pelvic problems for women. It can also cause ectopic pregnancy and infertility. People who are pregnant can give chlamydia to their baby during birth.

Most people who get chlamydia won't have symptoms. Testing is important so you don't give it to someone else. Women who have symptoms

may have discharge or feel burning when they pee. Make sure to see your doctor for treatment. Also, if you have vaginal, oral, or anal sex with someone who has an STD, see your doctor.

Women who are younger than age 25 and are sexually active should get a chlamydia test every year. Women who are older than age 25 should get a test if they have risk factors. Risk factors include having more than one sex partner and not using a condom. People who are pregnant should always get tested for chlamydia.

Do you want to find a MetroPlusHealth doctor or make an appointment?
Call Member Services at **800.303.9626 (TTY: 711)** or visit **metroplus.org**.

Opioid addiction: It can happen to anyone

Many people have the wrong idea about what an opioid addiction looks like. Here's the truth: **Opioid addiction** can affect *anyone*. In fact, millions of people struggle with it.

Opioids are drugs such as:

- Fentanyl
- Heroin
- Oxycodone
- Hydrocodone

Addiction to any of these drugs can lead to big problems in a person's life. The person sees the harm being done. Yet, they feel like they can't control their drug use. Why? One reason is that addiction changes how the brain works.

Opioid addiction is a medical condition. Just like you shouldn't feel ashamed of having heart disease or asthma, there's

no shame in having an opioid addiction.

The good news is that you can get help. There are treatments for opioid addiction, just as there are treatments for other common diseases.

Sadly, many people with opioid addiction don't seek help. Often, they fear being judged. But that can be deadly. Opioids are the biggest cause of overdose deaths in the U.S.

Ask your doctor about treatment and resources. Recovery isn't easy. But it can be done with the right help.



Help your child manage ADHD

Does your child have attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (**ADHD**)? It might be hard to manage, but there are things you can do to help your child live well.

Here are some things you can do to help:

- Take your child to follow-up appointments. These visits will help the doctor see how well the medicine is working.
- Talk with your child's doctor about other doctors who will be involved in your child's care. Your child's care team will depend on your child's needs and how serious the ADHD is.
- Follow the doctor's treatment plan. Tell the doctor about any side effects. Sometimes the treatment plan may need to change.

New York City has many **ADHD resources**. It may be helpful to reach out for support from others.

What are the symptoms of ADHD?

Each child with ADHD may have different symptoms. They may have trouble paying attention. A child may also be impulsive and hyperactive. These symptoms most often happen together. But one may happen without the others. Learn more about other symptoms of **ADHD**.



ARE YOU UP-TO-DATE? Get your flu shot and COVID-19 shots and boosters if you haven't already. You will **receive a \$10 member reward** for getting your flu shot. Also, ask your doctor when you should get the pneumonia and shingles vaccines.

It's time for back-to-school exams

Many parents put shopping for school supplies and backpacks on their to-do lists. Another important thing to put on your list is a school checkup. When your child is healthy, it helps them learn better.

The **back-to-school exam** will cover important things, like height, weight, a vision test, and a blood pressure check. Your child will also need **important shots** before starting school. Shots help protect your child from serious diseases. The number of shots your child needs may vary. The doctor will make sure your child gets all shots they need during the exam.

Does your child play a sport? The doctor can sign any release forms during the exam.



You can earn a reward!

Take your child to a well-child exam to earn \$10 per calendar year.



Protect your child from lead

Lead poisoning happens when children get lead into their bodies. Lead gets into the body when kids eat it or breathe it in. Don't let your child chew on anything covered with paint.

Lead poisoning can cause serious health problems. It can cause learning and behavior problems.

The best way to find lead in your child is with a test. The doctor can give your child a blood test. If the test is positive for lead, your child may need to take medicine to help get rid of the lead.

Ask your child's doctor about doing a lead test. You can also lower your child's lead levels with these **five tips**.

See your doctor to stay healthy

Your doctor wants to help you stay healthy and well. See your doctor every year for a checkup. If you need any screenings or shots, you will get them during the exam.

Do you have any health conditions that need regular care? You may need to see your doctor more often. If you have diabetes or heart disease, for example, extra visits are good for your health.

TCNY helps the community live healthier

Take Care New York (TCNY) 2020 is a plan to give everyone the chance to live a healthier life. TCNY reviews the health and social needs in each community and looks for ways to make improvements.