

Spring 2024

# Health letter



When you see this symbol, go to [metroplusrewards.org](https://metroplusrewards.org) to learn how you can earn a member reward.

## Take care of asthma this spring

If you have **asthma**, it's important to know how to keep it under control. This means taking your asthma medicine. You will also need to stay away from things that can make your asthma worse. If you need help making an asthma action plan, click [here](#).

### What makes asthma worse?

There are things called **triggers**. Here are some common triggers:

- Colds and sinus infections
- Pollen, dust, and pet hair
- Strong smells from perfumes or smoke
- Exercise
- Feeling stressed or scared

Your doctor can help you learn your triggers. Then you can try to stay away from them. To learn more about triggers, take a quiz [here](#).

### Take your medicine correctly

When you have asthma, you may need two types of medicine:

1. Quick-relief medicine is used when you have an asthma attack.
2. Long-term control medicine is taken every day to reduce your symptoms.

Even if you feel OK, it's important to take your long-term control medicine every day. This helps you not need your quick-relief medicine as often.



### Earn a reward



Refill your asthma control medicine to earn \$5 for a 30-day refill and \$30 for a 90-day refill. The maximum reward is \$120. To register for rewards, click [here](#).

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. Need help making an appointment? Call the Member Services Department at **800.303.9626 (TTY: 711)**.

# Make time for your child's checkups

Being a parent can keep you busy! There is so much to do, like work and taking your child to activities. But there's something very important to remember: **well-child visits**. These doctor visits are for babies, children, and teens. The visits cover many things, like shots and other health checks.

Some kids don't go to well-child visits as often as they should. This is not good because your child might not get the shots they need to stay healthy.

## When to go to well-child visits

Babies and young toddlers should see the doctor several times in their first 2 years. After they turn 3, they should see the doctor every year until they're 21. To look at the well-child visit schedule, click [here](#).

## What happens at well-child visits?

Checkups are not just for when your child is sick. The doctor may:

- Give shots
- Do a physical exam
- Check eyes and ears
- Give a lead test
- Ask your child if they're happy or sad
- Talk with teens about drinking, smoking, sexual activity, and depression

MetroPlusHealth has many services to help your family stay healthy. Call Children and Family Support Services at **800.303.9626**.



## Earn a reward

Earn a \$60 or \$20 reward, depending on completion of 6 well-child visits in the first 15 months or 2 visits between ages 16 and 30 months. To register for rewards, click [here](#).



## Is your child at risk for substance abuse?

Does your child have a lot of free time without adults around? This can make it easier for them to try drugs and alcohol.

Set rules and times when your child should be home, and stick to them. Tell your child why these rules are important. This helps your child understand why staying safe matters.

If you think your child needs help for alcohol or drugs, don't wait. Call your child's doctor. NYC Well also has many services and resources. To learn more, call **888.692.9355**.

## 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.

**The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT)** benefit provides services for children ages 21 and under to stay healthy. To learn more about EPSDT, click [here](#).

# Stay well after a mental health hospital stay

If you recently spent time in a hospital, it probably feels good to be back in your own space again. But taking care of yourself after a hospital stay isn't always easy. It can be hard if you were working through depression or another mental health issue.

These five tips can help you deal with the challenges — and avoid another hospital stay.

## 1. Follow your treatment plan

Read your treatment plan. If you have questions, call your doctor. Take your medicines exactly as prescribed. Also, write down any doctor appointments or therapy visits so you don't miss them.

## 2. Track progress

You might not feel your best after a hospital stay. New medicines can take time to work. Try to be patient. Don't stop taking a medicine before talking with your doctor.

## 3. Set a routine

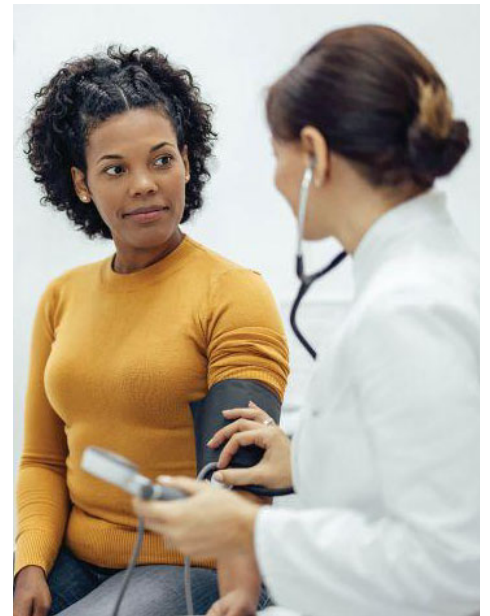
Make a daily schedule. Do your best to stick with it. For example, set regular times for sleeping, eating meals, and getting exercise.

## 4. Take it slow

Going back home is a major change. Focus on self-care and healing. Relax and do things you enjoy, like reading or listening to music.

## 5. Stay connected

Get support from friends or family while you get better. Reach out when you need help.



## Keep diabetes under control

Taking care of **diabetes** is a big job, but you can do it! Talk with your doctor about three important things:

- **Blood sugar.** An A1c test checks your blood sugar.
- **Blood pressure.** This shows how hard your heart is working to pump blood. Have your blood pressure checked every time you see your doctor.
- **Cholesterol levels.** Get your cholesterol checked once a year if you take statins.

### Diabetes support

For help managing diabetes, call the Diabetes Care Management program at **800.303.9626** or click [here](#).



**MyChart** is a free online portal. It helps you manage your health information. Use the portal to make an appointment or get a refill. You can also check test results or send a message to your doctor's office. To sign up for MyChart, click [here](#).

# Stretching can help you sleep better

These stretches can help improve:

>> How well you sleep

>> How long you stay asleep

>> How quickly you fall asleep

Try these stretches



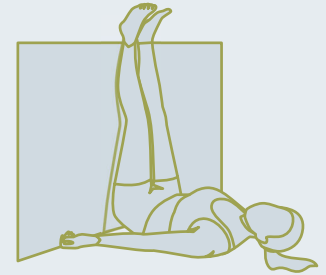
## 1 Child's Pose

Kneel on the floor, then sit on your feet. Your knees can be out wide or touching. Lean forward, resting your chest on your thighs and forehead on the floor. Stretch your arms above your head or back at your sides. Relax into this position for up to 5 minutes.



## 2 Cat-Cow

Start on all fours, with hands slightly in front of your shoulders and knees under hips. Inhale and dip your belly down, opening through your chest. Hold. Then exhale, tucking your chin and lifting your belly button in and up. Your spine should arch like a cat's. Repeat this movement a few times.



## 3 Legs-Up-the-Wall Pose

Sit near a wall and swing your legs up it. Lie back, with your hips touching the wall or up to a few inches away. Rest in this position for up to 5 minutes.

## Having sleep problems?

Talk to your doctor for advice. To take a sleep quiz, click [here](#).