

Summer 2024

Health letter



When you see this symbol, go to metroplusrewards.org to learn how you can earn a member reward.

Why well-child visits are important

Taking your child to see a doctor is important when they are sick. But going to regular **well-child visits** can be just as important.

Well-child visits can help make sure your child stays healthy. Well-child visits from birth to 15 months old include:

- Measurements to see how much your child has grown since the last visit
- Physical exam to check your child's health from head to toe
- Screenings for hearing and vision problems
- Vaccines to protect your child from serious diseases

You and your child's pediatrician might also discuss:

- Feeding your child
- Keeping your child safe at home and in the car
- Supporting your child's speech and learning
- Creating bedtime routines

Your child will need certain vaccines for school. For the New York State school vaccine schedule, click [here](#).



Earn a reward

Earn a \$60 or \$20 reward if you complete 6 well-child visits in the first 15 months or 2 visits between ages 16 and 30 months. 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)**.

Help your child manage ADHD



Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) often begins in childhood. Kids with ADHD have trouble paying attention. They are more restless and impulsive than other children their age.

Treatment will depend on your child's symptoms. It will also depend on how severe the condition is. The right medication can improve symptoms. Some children may need a higher dose or a different medication as they grow.

Do you need help managing your child's ADHD? Here are some tips:

- **Set a summer routine.** Children with ADHD need structure during their day. Try to keep the same wake-up and bedtime schedules during the summer.
- **Avoid busy settings.** Try to avoid loud places that can be too stimulating. For instance, you could suggest having a playdate at your home.
- **Reward good behavior.** If you see your child being patient or getting along with other children, let your child know that they are doing well. Offer positive words or a hug to help encourage them.

Make sure to schedule a follow-up visit within 30 days of starting an ADHD medicine. Your child's ADHD medicine may need to be adjusted to get the best results.

To search for local ADHD resources, click [here](#).

How much do you know about chlamydia?

Chlamydia is a bacterial infection that you can get from sexual contact. Most people don't know they have it.

Anyone who has sex is at risk for chlamydia. Young adults are at very high risk. They may be less likely to use condoms during sex.

It is easy to test for chlamydia.

Women can get a chlamydia test done when they get a Pap test.

Chlamydia can be cured with treatment. But most people with it have mild symptoms or none at all. That is why many people don't know they have chlamydia.

Sexually active women younger

than age 25 should be tested.

Women who are ages 25 and older with new or multiple sexual partners should get a chlamydia screening every year. Certain pregnant women should be tested, too. Men who are sexually active should ask their doctor about getting tested.

Schedule a checkup every year to get any shots and screenings you need to stay healthy. You may need to see your doctor more often if you have a health condition. If you have diabetes or heart disease, for example, extra visits are good for your health.

Why are prenatal visits important?

Prenatal visits are the doctor visits you have before your baby is born. These visits can help keep you and your baby healthy. See your doctor as soon as you think you are pregnant.

Here is how often you will go to prenatal visits:

- Weeks 4 to 28: monthly
- Weeks 28 to 36: every 2 weeks
- Week 36 to birth: weekly

even if you feel OK. You may need more care while you are pregnant if you have a health condition. You may also need more care if you have any problems while you are pregnant.

See your doctor for a checkup after you have your baby. This is called a **postpartum visit**. Your doctor will want to make sure you and your baby are doing well.



Stay safe around water

Going to the beach is a fun way to spend a summer day, but it's important to know the dangers. Here are some ways to keep your kids safe:

- Never let children swim alone.
- Have your children stay within reach at all times.
- Don't let your children use toys such as water wings in place of life jackets.
- Never dive in shallow water.

It's also important to stay safe around a pool. Don't let kids run on pool decks. The deck may be slippery.

Looking for swimming lessons? The New York City Department of Parks & Recreation offers free swimming classes. To learn more and sign up, click [here](#).



Earn a reward

You can earn a reward after you complete a postpartum visit. To register for rewards, click [here](#). To learn about maternity programs and services that MetroPlusHealth offers, click [here](#).



Opioid addiction can affect anyone. Millions of people struggle with it. There are treatments for opioid addiction. Ask your doctor about treatment and resources. Recovery is not easy. But it can be done with the right help.

Protect your child's smile

More than half of children get at least one cavity by age 8. **Tooth decay** is the cause of cavities. Cavities can be painful and make it hard to eat. There are steps you can take to keep your child's teeth healthy. Here are some **dental health tips**:

Babies (0–1 year)

Wipe your baby's gums twice a day with a clean, soft cloth. Once the first teeth appear, brush them with plain water and a child's soft toothbrush.

Start regular dental checkups at age 1. Ask your child's dentist about fluoride treatments. Fluoride helps protect against tooth decay.

Young children (2–5 years)

Keep brushing your child's teeth twice a day. When your child is age 2 or 3, start adding a pea-sized amount of fluoride toothpaste to the brush. Make sure your child spits out all the toothpaste after brushing.

Floss your child's teeth once a day. This helps remove food from between the teeth, where a brush can't reach.

Older kids (6 years and older)

Talk with your child's dentist about **sealants** — a thin coating applied to the chewing surfaces of back teeth. Sealants offer extra protection against tooth decay.

By age 7 or 8, many children can brush and floss on their own. But some kids need help with flossing for a few more years.



Healthy eating matters

Limit sugary foods and drinks. They can increase the risk for cavities. Instead, focus on healthy meals that provide plenty of calcium, which helps build strong teeth. Make sure to include cheese, yogurt, juices, and nut milks with added calcium.

Earn a reward

Are you or your children due for a dental checkup? You can earn a \$20 reward for going to the dentist. To register for rewards, click [here](#).



Test for lead poisoning

How do kids get **lead poisoning**?

Lead can be in old paint and water pipes. It might also be in toys and jewelry. It happens when kids eat lead or breathe it.

Even a little bit of lead can be bad. It can make it hard for kids to learn and focus.

Ask your doctor for a lead test. Medicine can help treat lead. Also, some foods make it hard for lead to enter the body. For a list of these foods, click [here](#).



Do you have a primary care physician (PCP)?

You never know when you might get sick. Your PCP can help treat you or refer you to another doctor. It's good to have a PCP you trust to help you make good care choices. Seeing your PCP often can help build this trust.