

SPRING 2021

Healthy Together

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To Make Health Care Decisions, Team Up With Your Primary Care Provider

You may know the basics about what to eat or how much to exercise to be healthy. But when making new health care decisions, it can be hard to know where to start. In those cases, teaming up with your primary care provider is a good first step.

This provider is the person to call when you have questions about your health. Because they know you and your medical history, they can offer advice that is right for you.

Here is how to make the most out of every visit.

Be Honest

Your primary care provider helps you prevent health problems. They also help you manage illness.

But before your provider can give personalized advice, they need to know as much as possible about your health. Even if you think something is embarrassing, it will help you both when you share:

- Any past operations, health conditions and treatments.
- All medications you take and how often you take them (including supplements).
- Symptoms you are having.
- Any big life changes or stress you are experiencing.

Take an Active Role

When you get advice, make sure you understand what your primary care provider tells you. If you are unsure about anything, ask questions! If you do not ask, your provider cannot help make things clearer.

Have a health problem but not sure what type of provider to see? Ask your primary care provider about that, too! They will let you know if you should see a surgeon or another specialist. Your primary care provider will then work with the specialist to help you get the best care.

Remember: It Is a Team Effort

Your primary care provider can tell you steps you can take to improve your health, but it is up to you to follow them. Together, as a team, you can make the right choices for you.

**We are here to help
any day, any time.**

24/7 NURSE ADVICE LINE

1-800-562-4620

**Call ANY TIME you
want to talk to
a nurse.**



Provided as a benefit to
Oregon Health Plan Care
Coordination Program clients



COVID-19 Corner

What to Do Now

With the COVID-19 vaccine starting to be available, you may feel hopeful. You may also feel unsure about what to expect next. With all of the changes happening, here is what you need to know now.

Continue to Stay Safe

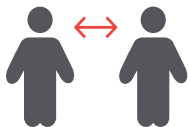
These easy steps are still a must to avoid getting or spreading COVID-19.



Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer often.



Wear a cloth face mask in public and when around people who do not live in your household.



Put at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who do not live in your household.

COVID-19 Vaccines

These are new vaccines for a new disease, so it is normal to have questions. The first may be whether or not you should get one. Doing so will help protect you against a virus that can cause serious illness and death. Ask your health care provider if you are not sure. Here are more common questions answered:

- ✓ **Yes. Even if you follow safety advice, you should get vaccinated.** The vaccine will help you fight the virus, so you do not get sick.
- ✓ **Yes. Once you get vaccinated, keep following precautions.** The more we all do to protect ourselves, the sooner life can get back to normal.
- ✓ **Yes. You will need more than 1 dose of vaccine.** So far, the available vaccines require 2 shots.
- ✓ **Yes. The vaccine is safe.** COVID-19 vaccines meet strict safety standards.
- ✗ **No. The vaccine cannot give you COVID-19.**

To Stay Healthy

You may have been avoiding your doctor's office during the past year. But you want to be well when this pandemic finally ends. That is why



you must keep in touch with your primary care provider about your current health concerns and get the care you need. They may also be your best source for getting a COVID-19 vaccine when it is your turn. If you do not have a primary care provider, we can help. Just call **1-800-562-4620**.



Resources for Updated Information

Talk with a provider you trust or find up-to-date information online at:

- www.oregon.gov/oha/PEBB/pages/covid19.aspx
- <http://covidvaccine.oregon.gov>
- www.cdc.gov/covid19
- www.cdc.gov/vaccines
- www.mayoclinic.org

+ health briefs

Chew On This

A healthy mouth is not just about a smile that sparkles. Good dental habits can protect your overall well-being, too. Visit your dentist at least once a year. Go more often if they suggest it.



See Your Eye Doctor

Even if you do not need glasses, regular exams keep your eyes healthy. Adults should have an eye exam at least every 2 years. Those who have certain health conditions or are older than age 60 should see the eye doctor every year.



Think Ahead for Good Health

Routine preventive care, such as mammograms and colorectal cancer screenings, can find problems early, when they may be easier to treat. Ask your provider what preventive care you need — and then schedule it.

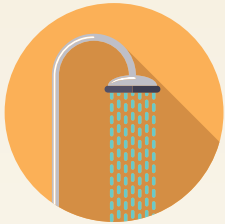


MAKING YOUR ALLERGIES AND GREEN THUMB WORK TOGETHER



Have allergies? There is a better way to get your hands dirty in the garden. Search out tree and plant options that produce less pollen.

Follow these tips for fewer symptoms all season long!



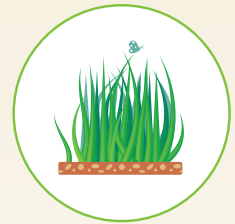
Take a shower to get pollen and dust off your hair and skin. Not enough time? Wash your hands and rinse your eyes when you are done outside.



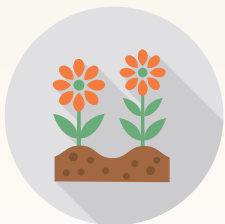
Keep your hands away from your eyes and face while working outside.



Plant trees that are less likely to cause an allergic reaction. Try cherry, pear, plum, dogwood, crepe myrtle and redwood.



Avoid allergy-causing grasses. These may include Johnson grass, timothy, Bermuda grass, ryegrass, orchard grass, sweet vernal grass, bluegrass and fescue.



Choose blooms less likely to cause allergies. Options are lilacs, daisies, geraniums, dahlias, hibiscuses, irises, roses, snapdragons and tulips.



If you are in a warm, dry climate, try succulents, such as cactus plants.



Take your allergy medicine before you head outside. If you have asthma, keep your quick-relief drugs on hand.



Ask a family member, friend or neighbor for help with mowing your grass.



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Online:

www.quitnow.net/oregon

Call **1-800-562-4620** to discuss any of the topics in this newsletter or any other health issues. Visit our Website at **www.OHPCC.org**.

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Developed by Krames

4 Things You Should Know About Alcohol

A glass of wine with dinner, a beer at the baseball game the next afternoon. It is easy to find reasons to drink. When making a choice about whether to drink, however, you should also think about its effects on your body and your safety. Here are 4 things you should know.

1. Alcohol raises your blood pressure and heart rate. It also slows brain activity. This can hurt your:

- Memory and ability to think clearly.
- Sleeping and eating habits.
- Coordination (causing unsteady walking and falls).
- Mood (making you feel irritable or sad).

2. Your body's reaction to alcohol changes as you age. A drink may affect you more now than when you were younger.

3. Drinking can up the risk for hypothermia. Even when it is above 40 degrees outside, if you are wet from rain, your body can get too cold.

4. Some health problems and medicines make drinking unsafe. This includes drugs used to treat arthritis, diabetes, heart disease and high blood pressure. Your allergy, cold and heartburn medicines can also be a risk. Read the labels. If you are unsure, ask your health care provider or pharmacist.

Think you might have an alcohol or drug problem? Talk with your provider. You can also visit **www.findtreatment.gov** or call **1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357)**.

