Summer 2021

Health & Welfare e-Newsletter

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COVID-19 vaccines play an important part in protecting ourselves, our families, and each other from the coronavirus. Arm yourself with COVID-19 vaccine details so you'll be ready to get vaccinated when it's your turn.

Fact: COVID-19 vaccines have been rigorously evaluated for safety and effectiveness.

All COVID-19 vaccines currently authorized for use have gone through rigorous studies to ensure they are safe to use. In addition, systems are in place across the country that allow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to watch for safety issues on an ongoing basis.

Fact: You can't get COVID-19 from the vaccines.

The vaccines do not contain the live COVID-19 virus and cannot give you COVID-19. They take advantage of the body's natural immune response to generate protection.

Fact: Like most vaccines, these can produce generally mild and temporary side effects.

Some people who've received the COVID-19 vaccine have reported fevers, fatigue, muscle aches, and soreness around the injection site. These side effects are normal and a sign that the body is building immunity.

Learn more at **kp.org/covidvaccine**

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(continued from front)

Fact: You should still get vaccinated, even if you already had COVID-19.

Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that reinfection with COVID-19 is possible, you should get vaccinated regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 or not. The immunity gained from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person.

Fact: Even after getting vaccinated, you still need to wear a mask, practice social distancing, and wash your hands often to help stop COVID-19.

While experts learn more about the protection that COVID-19 vaccines provide under real-life conditions, it's important for everyone to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic. That means you should continue covering your mouth and nose with a mask, washing your hands often, and staying at least 6 feet away from others, even after getting vaccinated.

Fact: COVID-19 messenger RNA, or mRNA, vaccines cannot alter your DNA.

The vaccines that use mRNA do not change or interact with your DNA. Instead, the mRNA vaccines teach your cells how to make proteins that help your body build immunity and protect you from the virus.

Visit kp.org/covidvaccine for more information about vaccination eligibility and scheduling, and vaccine availability.

Learn more at **kp.org/covidvaccine**

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COVID-19 vaccines help protect you

COVID-19 vaccines are an important step in slowing the spread of the disease. We encourage you to get a COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you are eligible.

COVID-19 vaccines make a difference

FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines will help protect you, your family and friends from getting the disease. The U.S. vaccine safety system ensures that all vaccines are as safe as possible. This includes FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines. Keep in mind that most vaccines require 2 doses. You will need both of them to get protection from the disease. Talk to your health care provider if you have any questions about the vaccine.

No charge to you

You will have $0 cost-share (copays, deductibles or coinsurance) on FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines no matter where you get the vaccine. This includes when 2 doses are required. You should not get a bill for the vaccine.

- **Plans through Employers and Individual health plans, including Student Resources, Short Term Limited Liability and Exchange plans:** Members will have $0 cost-share at both in-network and out-of-network providers through the national public health emergency period.
- **Medicare plans:** Members will have $0 cost-share at both in-network and out-of-network providers through Dec. 31, 2021. Providers should not ask you for payment, up front or after you get the vaccine.
- **For Medicaid members in UnitedHealthcare Community Plans:** Members will have $0 cost-share for both in-network and out-of-network providers through the national public health emergency period.

If you get a COVID-19 vaccine during a regular office visit, your office visit will be covered according to your plan benefits. You may have a cost-share for the office visit.

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Be ready for your appointment

Once you get an appointment, check with your vaccine provider on what to expect. Here is what you may need:

- Your photo ID, such as a driver's license, to show proof of age. You might also need proof of residency.
- Medicare plan members: Bring your red, white and blue Medicare card because Medicare is paying for your vaccine in 2021.
- Non-Medicare plan members: Bring your UnitedHealthcare member ID card.

Remember to wear your mask and to physically distance at your appointment.

Tips for staying safe and healthy

It's important to follow public health guidelines to help you stay healthy, even after you get vaccinated. Continue to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by following these simple steps:

Wear a face mask

Physically distance

Avoid crowds

Wash your hands

Remember to stay on top of your doctor appointments. This includes annual checkups and care for anxiety, depression and loneliness. Most providers also offer **telehealth visits** to help you get care from the comfort of home.

Here for you

The CDC remains the best resource for COVID-19 vaccine information. For COVID-19 vaccine coverage details and help finding vaccine resources, go to **uhc.com/COVID-19vaccines**

The information is a summary and is subject to change. This page describes general benefits we offer to all members in all states. The current FDA-authorized COVID-19 vaccines may not be appropriate for everyone. There are special considerations for people with certain conditions, of different ages, and who have had treatments such as monoclonal antibody therapy or convalescent plasma. If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine, talk to your health care provider or visit the **CDC's Frequently Asked Questions.**

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Health tip: back for health.

According to the American Chiropractic Association, experts estimate that as much as 80% of the population will experience a back problem at some time in their lives.[1]

Many back injuries are a result of strain and damage over time, but there are certain motions and risk factors to be aware of.

- Having a job that requires a lot of lifting, carrying or pulling.
- Twisting at the waist while lifting or holding a heavy load.
- Lifting or carrying objects with awkward or odd shapes.
- Working in awkward positions.
- Using a particular muscle group for long periods of time without relief.
- Weak back and abdominal muscles.
- Being overweight and inactive.

To help avoid back pain consider the following practices:

- Maintain a healthy diet and weight.
- Stay active.
- Maintain proper posture.
- Wear comfortable, low-heeled shoes.
- Sleep on a mattress of medium firmness to minimize any curve in your spine.
- Lift with your knees, keep the object close to your body, and do not twist when lifting.
- Quit smoking.
- Work with your doctor or a chiropractor to ensure that your workstation is ergonomically correct.

If you have back pain, there are steps you can take.

- Your first line of support for any health problem should be your primary care physician who can assess your symptoms to determine the best treatment options.
- If you don't have a doctor and are looking for one you can find a Premium Designated in-network provider at **myuhc.com** or through the UnitedHealthcare app.
- Call Advocate4Me using the number on your UnitedHealthcare medical ID card to help you make better healthcare decisions regarding your back health, including treatment options and determining the appropriate level of care.

Back pain.

Back pain is one of the most common reasons for missed work. In fact, back pain is the second most common reason for visits to the doctor's office, outnumbered only by upper-respiratory infections.

Maintain good posture.

Poor posture can lead to excessive strain on our postural muscles leading them to be more prone to injury and back pain. Poor posture can be caused by stress, obesity, pregnancy, weak postural muscles, abnormally tight muscles, and high-heeled shoes. In addition, a poor work environment, incorrect working posture, and unhealthy sitting and standing habits can also contribute to poor body positioning.

Sitting properly.
Some tips for maintaining a proper posture while sitting include, keeping your feet on the floor and not crossing your legs.

Standing properly.
To stand properly, stand straight with your shoulders back and bear your weight primarily on the balls of your feet.

Proper lying position.
When laying down, lay on your side or back.

Lift safely.

Lifting safely may help you avoid injury. Guidelines for lifting objects safely to reduce the chance of back pain, strain or injury include:

- Avoid unnecessary bending
- Use an aid for excessive weights
- Lift comfortably
- Avoid unnecessary twisting
- Keep objects close to body

Bend your knees and squat.

Use muscles in legs and arms. Not your back.

Keeps items close to your body.

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Sources:
[1] American Chiropractic Association: **https://www.acatoday.org/Patients/Health-Wellness-Information/Back-Pain-Facts-and-Statistics** Accessed May 2020.

This information is for general informational purposes only and is not intended nor should be construed as medical advice. Individuals should consult an appropriate medical professional to determine what may be right for them.

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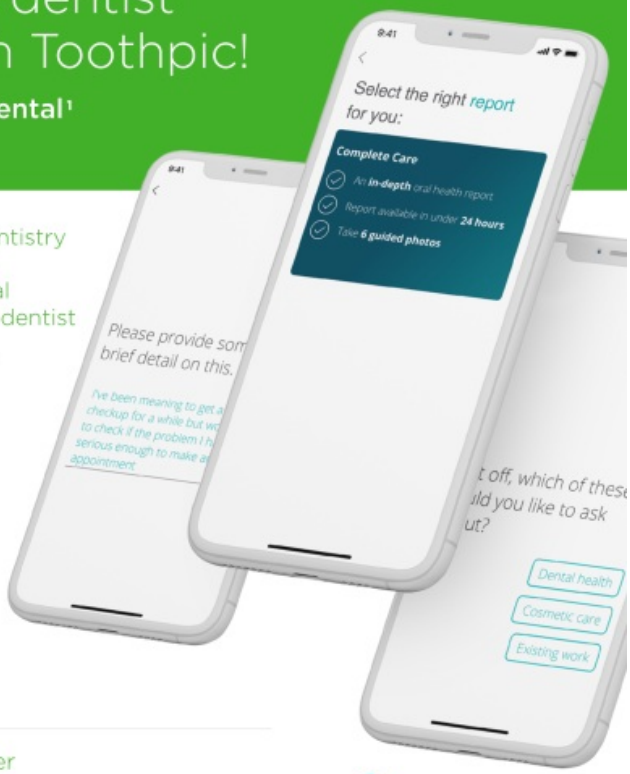

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LIBERTY DENTAL PLAN

5 Minutes to a Healthy Smile

Step 1:

Brush Your Teeth for 2 Minutes 2X per day

First, wash your hands and sink area before brushing, and check that your toothbrush is clean and fresh.

1 Squeeze toothpaste onto the brush, then hold the brush at a 45-degree angle. Start brushing the back outer tooth surfaces.

2 After brushing the back outer tooth surfaces, brush the front outer tooth surfaces.

3 Then brush all inner tooth surfaces, starting in the back, then the front.

4 Then brush all top teeth chewing surfaces, then all bottom teeth surfaces.

5 Then brush the front inside tooth surfaces - top then bottom.

6 Finish by brushing your tongue.

Step 2:

Floss Your Teeth for 3 Minutes 1X per day

1. Use a disposable floss pick, or standard dental floss around 18 inches long.
2. If using dental floss, wrap the floss around both index or middle fingers until 4-5 inches of floss is between the fingers.
3. For each tooth surface, unwind and wind the floss so that a new section of floss is exposed.
4. Start at the top teeth and using your index finger and thumb to guide the floss. Gently follow the floss up and down and back and forth over the tooth's surfaces a few times. Be sure to go reach below the gum line also.
5. For the lower teeth, use both index fingers to guide the floss.
6. If you have braces, use a special proximal brush or a water pick.

It is important to floss your teeth at least once every day to remove plaque buildup in-between your teeth where a toothbrush cannot reach.

A proximal brush cleans between teeth and between teeth and braces.

www.libertydentalplan.com

Making members shine, one smile at a time™

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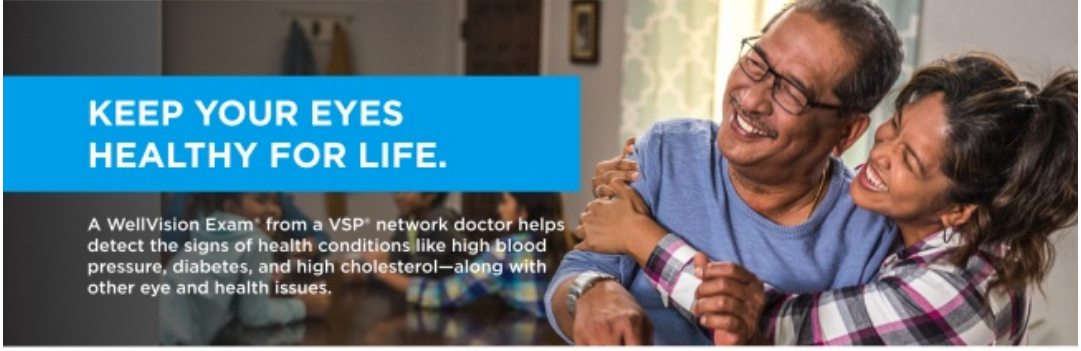

YEARLY EYE EXAMS ARE IMPORTANT.

VSP Vision care for life

BABIES & TODDLERS
Approximately 80% of what children learn is through their eyes.[1] Impaired vision can affect a child's cognitive, emotional, and physical development by potentially limiting their exposure to a range of experiences and information. Be sure to schedule their first eye exam at six months old and then every year.

CHILDREN
More than one in four school-age children have some form of a vision problem. Studies show that 60% of students identified as problem learners have undetected vision troubles.[2] Schedule your child's yearly eye exam at the beginning of each school year.

ADULTS
More than four million Americans over the age of 40 have some form of vision impairment.[3] Vision changes are normal with age. Even if you have 20/20 vision, annual eye exams are important because eye doctors can spot signs of chronic conditions before symptoms appear.

SENIORS
As we get older, we're more susceptible to cataracts, glaucoma, and macular degeneration. Macular degeneration is the leading cause of vision loss and blindness among Americans age 65 and older.[4] Many eye diseases start with subtle symptoms and yearly eye exams can help prevent vision loss.

DON'T WAIT
until there's a vision issue to schedule an eye exam! Yearly eye exams are preventive care that can help you stay healthy at any age.

Schedule an appointment with your VSP network doctor today!

Visit vsp.com/eye-doctor to find the doctor who's right for you.
Need help? Call us at 800.877.7195.

1. University of California Los Angeles academic study, 2013. 2. American Optometric Association, 2021. 3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, June 2020. 4. National Eye Institute, 2019

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