Fall 2021

Health & Welfare e-Newsletter

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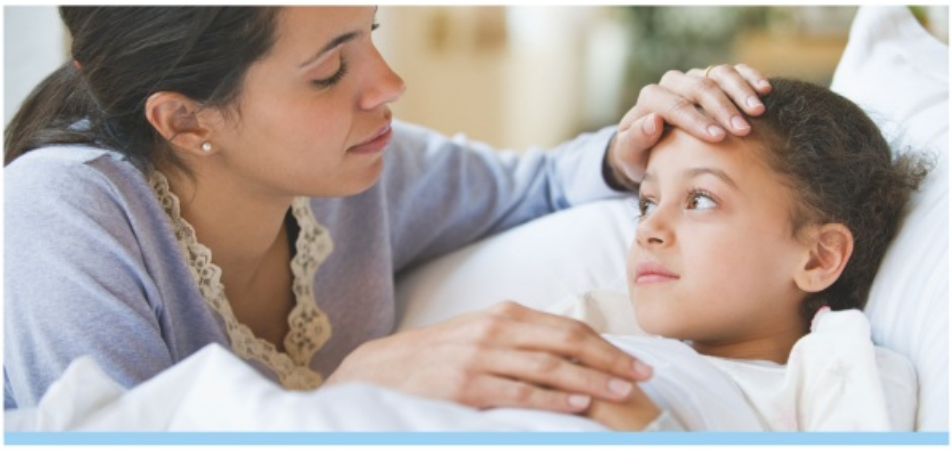
FLU PREVENTION



3 ways to fight the flu

It's never fun to be sick, but the flu is more serious than the common cold. It can be dangerous – especially for older people, children under 4, and pregnant women. Protect yourself and the people you care about with these simple tips.

Get your flu shot
It's your best defense. The vaccination can't give you the flu – but it can help protect you against this year's most common strains and prevent spreading the flu to others. Don't get the flu – get the flu shot!

Boost immunity with healthy habits
Simple things that support overall health can also help you fight the flu. Wash your hands often, and keep hand sanitizer handy. Make sure to get enough sleep, eat lots of fruits and veggies, and drink plenty of water.

Keep your germs to yourself
If you do get the flu, do yourself and your coworkers a favor and stay home. You need rest, fluids, and time to recover – and going to work sick can make symptoms worse and spread the illness around your workplace.

Visit **kp.org/flu**.

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387700707 December 2019

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Health tip: Preventing colds and flu

Did you know?

- Common colds are the leading cause for children missing school and adults missing work.[1]
- During an average flu season 20% of the population will get the flu.[2]
- The flu can be spread to others from 6 feet away.[3]
- The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated annually.[2]

Is it a cold or the flu?

The common cold and the flu are both upper respiratory infections. However, they are caused by different viruses and the symptoms may be more severe with the flu virus verses a cold. Keep in mind that symptoms alone may not be enough to tell the difference between the two.

While a common cold can be caused by more than 200 viruses (rhinovirus is the most common); the seasonal flu is caused by the influenza A or B virus. This is why there is a vaccine available for the flu and not for colds.

Cold relief[4]

There is no cure for the common cold. To help you feel better treat your symptoms while your body fights off the virus. Since the common cold is caused by a virus, antibiotics will not help it get better. A runny nose or cold almost always gets better on its own. To feel better when you have a cold, consider the following:

- Get plenty of rest
- Drink lots of fluids such as water and clear liquids. This will help loosen mucus and help prevent dehydration.
- Know that over the counter (OTC) medications may help with symptoms but do not make your cold go away faster as the virus needs to run its course. You should take all medications as directed. If symptoms do not go away call your health care provider for medical advice. Be sure to talk with your child's health care provider before using a non-prescription OTC medication for your child.

Cold facts[4]

Colds are usually milder than the flu.

People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose.

Symptoms usually include sneezing, nasal congestion, sore throat, cough, watery eyes, headache and fatigue.

Symptoms usually last for 7 to 10 days and may last up to 2 weeks.

Colds usually do not result in serious health problems such as pneumonia, infections, or hospitalizations.

Flu facts[5]

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the influenza virus.

The flu tends to occur in the colder months of the year.

Symptoms of the flu are worse than the common cold and may include fever, chills, sore throat, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue, vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children).

Fever, body aches, extreme tiredness, and dry cough are more common with the flu and more intense than when associated with a cold.

The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated annually.

continued

United Healthcare

How will I know if I have the flu?[6]

There are tests available to diagnose the flu. The most common test is the "rapid influenza diagnostic test." This test can provide results in 30 minutes or less. The ability of these tests to detect the flu can vary greatly, and may be better at detecting the flu in children than in adults. Most people with flu symptoms do not require testing because the test results usually do not change how you are treated. Your health care provider may diagnose you with the flu based on your symptoms, and their clinical judgment, or they may choose to use an influenza diagnostic test.

It is possible to have the flu, as well as other respiratory illnesses, and COVID-19 at the same time.

Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, which may make it hard to tell the difference between the two based on symptoms alone. Diagnostic testing may help your health care provider determine if you have the flu or COVID-19.

When treating the flu:[7]

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink a lot of fluids like water, broth, sport drinks or electrolyte beverages to prevent becoming dehydrated.
- Use a humidifier to help make breathing easier.
- The use of over the counter medications may relieve some flu symptoms, but will not make you less contagious.
- Know that antiviral medications can reduce the duration of your illness and the complications associated with the flu. These should be started as early as possible, preferably within 48 hours after the onset of the illness.
- Follow up with your health care provider if you experience side effects or worsening symptoms that may require emergency care.

Preventive measures may reduce your risk of developing the flu[8]

- Protect yourself and others by staying away from people who are sick and by staying home from work and social activities if you are ill.
- Wash your hands. Handwashing is the most protective way to keep germs away. When washing your hands be sure to lather well with soap including the backs of your hands, under your nails and between your fingers. Scrub for at least 20 seconds, rinse well and dry.
- Live a healthier lifestyle by eating healthier, exercising, getting adequate sleep and managing your stress levels.
- Get the annual flu vaccine. The flu vaccine may reduce flu illnesses, doctor visits, and missed work and school due to the flu, as well as prevent flu-related hospitalizations.

Sources:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Common Cold, https://www.cdc.gov/dotw/common-cold/, accessed June 2021.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, About Flu, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/index.html, accessed June 2021.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, How Flu Spreads, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/disease/spread.htm, accessed June 2021.
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Common Colds: Protect Yourself and Others, https://www.cdc.gov/features/rhinoviruses/, accessed June 2021.
5. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Flu Symptoms & Complications, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/symptoms.htm?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fflu%2Fconsumer%2Fsymptoms.htm, accessed June 2021.
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Diagnosing Flu, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/testing.htm; accessed June 2021.
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Flu Treatment, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/treatment/index.html, accessed June 2021.
8. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Healthy Habits to Help Prevent Flu, https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/actions-prevent-flu.htm, accessed June 2021.

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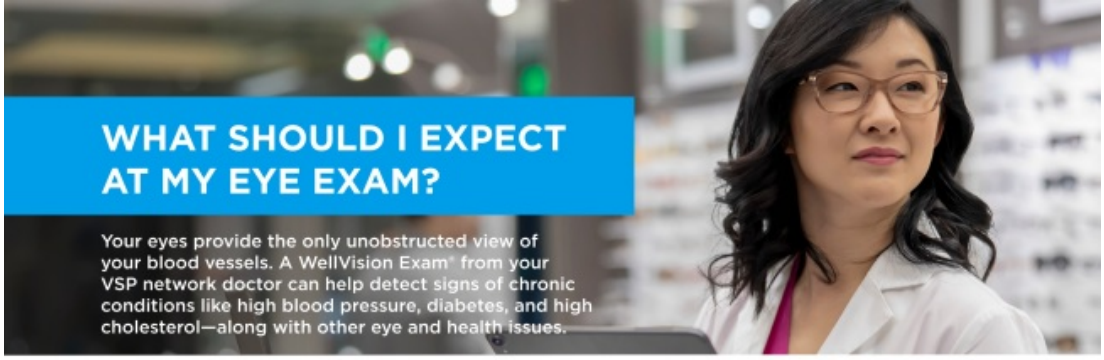

WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT AT MY EYE EXAM?

Your eyes provide the only unobstructed view of your blood vessels. A WellVision Exam® from your VSP network doctor can help detect signs of chronic conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and high cholesterol—along with other eye and health issues.

HERE ARE A FEW KEY ELEMENTS OF AN EYE EXAM.

VSP Vision care for life

What's that letter chart?
This chart with rows of letters in different sizes is called a Snellen chart. It tests how well your eyes can see at a specific distance.

Which is clearer?
You'll be asked to view the same letters at different prescription strengths to see which one is the clearest to you. This helps estimate your eyewear prescription.

Prepare for a few drops to your eyes.
Dilating drops enlarge your pupils so your doctor can look inside and at the back of your eyes. The drops may make your vision temporarily blurry and your eyes sensitive to light.

Get a closer look.
Using a slit lamp, a biomicroscope, your eye doctor gets a magnified view of the front and inside of your eyes. This is a special microscope and light that lets your doctor see your eyes in 3D.

Cover the left eye, then the right.
This tests how well your eyes work together. You will cover one eye and look at an object across the room, to determine how your eye moves to see an object.

See the big picture.
Your doctor might do a retinal screening, where they take pictures of the inside of your eye. These images provide a permanent and historical record of changes in your eye.

Schedule an appointment with your VSP® network doctor today!
Visit vsp.com/eye-doctor or call 800.877.7195

Classification: Public

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DELTA DENTAL

Build Strong Teeth

Essential vitamins and minerals for a healthy mouth

Add these building blocks to your diet to maintain your teeth and gums.

Calcium	Vitamin C	Vitamin D	Vitamin A
Strengthens bones and extends the life of your teeth. Find it in: • Cheese, milk, yogurt and other dairy products • Sardines or canned salmon • Leafy green vegetables (collard greens, kale, spinach) • Fortified soy milk	Protects against gum disease and prevents teeth from loosening. Find it in: • Oranges • Carrots • Sweet potatoes • Chili and bell peppers • Kiwi • Kale • Spinach	Helps you absorb calcium. Find it in: • Direct exposure to sunlight • Fatty fish (salmon, halibut, sardines) • Fortified milk, juice or cereal • Egg yolk • Beef liver • Mushrooms	Helps your mouth heal quickly, strengthens enamel and prevents dry mouth. Find it in: • Fortified milk • Chicken or beef liver • Leafy green vegetables (collard greens, kale, spinach) • Orange fruits and vegetables (apricots, cantaloupes, carrots, pumpkins, sweet potatoes)

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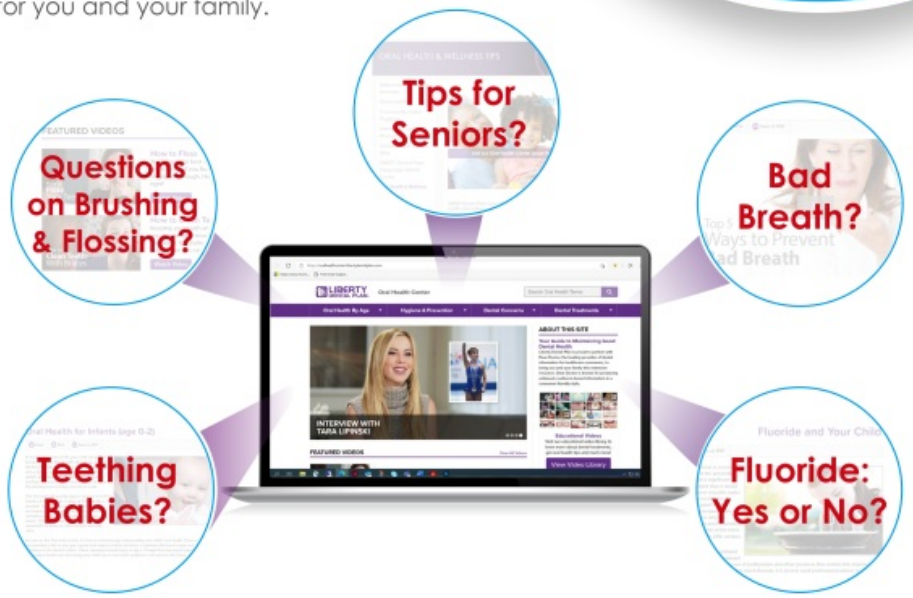
Got Questions? We've got answers!

The LIBERTY Dental Advice Portal

Your total one-stop reference for all things dental.

At LIBERTY Dental Plan we believe the more you know, the more you'll care about preventative dental care — for you and your family.



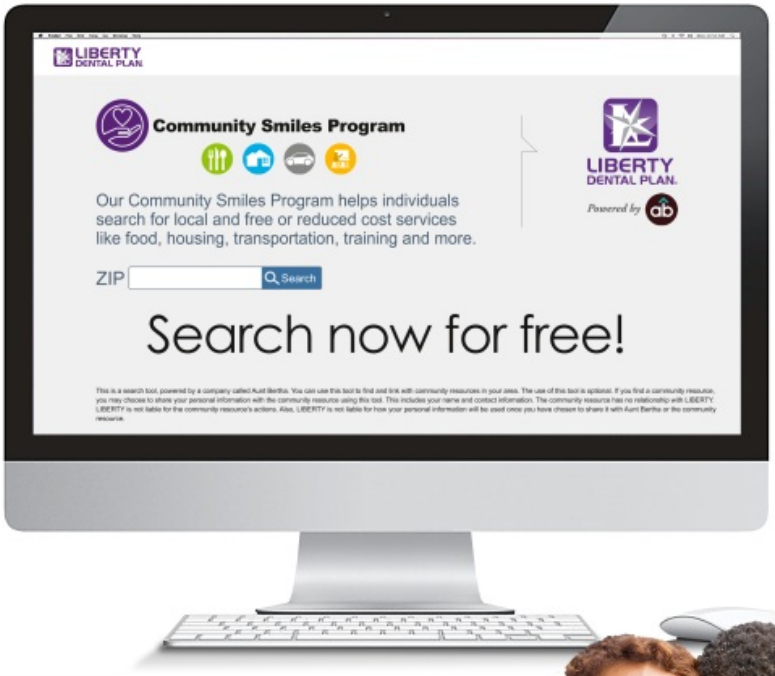
LIBERTY Dental Plan, in a partnership with **Dear Doctor** — the leading source of consumer dental information, offers its members a complete library of free resources of vital, unbiased, and evidence-based information. All in a family-friendly, easy-to-read style.

Visit us at: **https://oralhealthcenter.libertydentalplan.com**

Community Smiles Program

LIBERTY DENTAL PLAN

Need help locating food, housing, transportation, or job training?



Contact our Community Smiles Program:

Text **LDPsmiles** to **22925**

Call LIBERTY's **Member Services Call Center** for California residents between 8 am - 5 pm PST, M-F at **888.703.6999 (TTY 877.855.8039)**

Go Online to search and navigate LIBERTY's Community Smiles Program resources at: https://communityresources.libertydentalplan.com

www.libertydentalplan.com

Making members shine, one smile at a time™

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UnitedHealthcare
Health Tip

Health Tip
Healthy Dental Habits

Due to water fluoridation and fluoride toothpaste, the baby boomer generation is the first to keep their natural teeth over their entire lifetime. However, **poor oral hygiene** poses a risk of dental complications to all generations. Poor oral hygiene is correlated with other diseases including heart disease, diabetes, pneumonia and rheumatoid arthritis.[2]

Risk factors for **oral cancer** are tobacco use, alcohol use, poor oral hygiene and human papilloma virus (HPV).

Gum disease develops when plaque is allowed to build up along and under the gum line. Warning signs include bad breath, tender, bleeding gums, loose teeth, receding gums and pain.

A healthy mouth for a lifetime includes:[1]

- Regular dental visits
- Brush twice a day for at least 2 minutes and floss once a day
- DO NOT use tobacco products
- Limit sugary and alcoholic beverages

Brushing is probably the most obvious mouth hygiene component. It's recommended that you brush your teeth twice a day for at least 2 minutes. Gently brush back and forth in short strokes. Be sure to brush outer, inner and chewing surfaces of the teeth and the tongue. It is a good idea to replace your toothbrush every 3-4 months.

Other ways to maintain good oral hygiene:

- Proper nutrition
- Drink plenty of water
- Limit the number of snacks you eat
- Eat a variety of foods from each of the five major food groups, including:
  - whole grains
  - fruits
  - vegetables
  - lean sources of protein
  - low-fat/fat-free dairy foods

Did you know?[2]

27%
of adults in the U.S. have **tooth decay.**

46%
of adults 30 and older have signs of **gum disease.**

70%
of adults 65 and older have **periodontal disease.**

Oral cancer affects
51,500
people in the U.S. each year.

1. American Dental Association, https://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/b/brushing-your-teeth, accessed August 29, 2019.
2. Centers for Disease Control, https://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/basics/adult-oral-health/index.html, accessed August 29, 2019.

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