

# HEALTH *Partners* TALK

Published for members of Health Partners

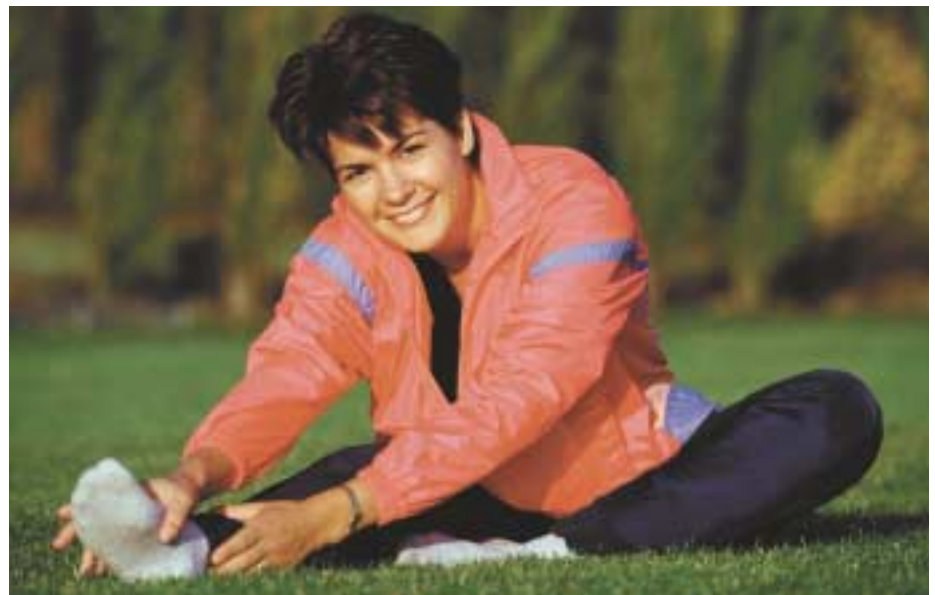
## Health Partners Fitness Program

# Strengthen your fitness goals!

**N**ow Health Partners members are eligible to use the YMCA on 1724 Christian St. as part of the fitness program benefit.

To qualify for a yearlong membership at the fitness center you choose, you must complete 18 visits within the first three months. Members under 18 years of age must complete six visits within the first three months. For these initial visits, a \$2 co-payment is required. However, after completing 18 visits in the first three months, there is no co-payment required for the rest of the year!

Members must sign an agreement form during their first visit to the fitness center.



 For more information about the fitness program benefit, please feel free to call the Health Partners disease management unit at (215) 991-4250.

Remember, the following fitness centers still participate in Health

Partners Fitness Program benefit:

- Columbia North YMCA.
- West Philadelphia YMCA.
- Northeast YMCA.
- Germantown YMCA.
- New Frankford Community Y.
- La Fortaleza Wellness Gym (must be 18 years or older).

For more information, please feel free to call the Health Partners disease management unit at (215) 991-4250.

# What is heart failure?

**W**hen your heart doesn't pump well, your blood flow slows down. This causes blood that is returning to your heart to back up in your veins. This leads to fluid buildup or congestion in your feet, legs and other parts of your body. That's why you may hear this disorder called congestive heart failure.

When your heart pumps less blood, your kidneys don't get rid of sodium (salt) and water as they

should. This increases the amount of fluid your body has to handle.

How is heart failure treated?

The goal of treatment is to help your heart pump better. Your doctor may prescribe the following:

■ **Medicine.** Certain drugs can help the heart to pump better. You may be given a medicine called an ACE inhibitor. Not everyone can take this drug. Your doctor will recommend the best drug for your condition and health history.

■ **Diet.** Your food should be low in salt (sodium). Talk to your doctor



about what foods are best for you.

■ **Weight control.** To watch for any fluid collection in your body, you should weigh yourself every morning before breakfast. Call your doctor if you gain more than 3 pounds in one day or 5 pounds in one week. Your doctor can tell you what your weight should be.

If you are being treated for heart failure, make sure to listen to your doctor and follow the advice he or she gives you.

Health Partners has a disease management program for people with heart failure. We work with your doctors and hospitals to help people with heart failure stay healthy. If you would like to contact us, please call the disease management hotline at **(215) 991-4250**.

## Symptoms of heart failure



Heart failure may be mild and develop slowly. It may progress and cause symptoms. Call your doctor if you have:

- Shortness of breath (during activity and at rest).
- Shortness of breath while lying flat and when waking up.
- Weakness and fatigue.
- Weight gain or swollen ankles and feet.
- Pounding or irregular heartbeat.
- A chronic cough.
- Upper abdominal discomfort or abdominal swelling.

Call your doctor right away if:

- Your symptoms get worse.
- You feel like you can't breathe.
- You cough up pink, frothy sputum.

## Choosing a PCP: It's all in the network

As a Health Partners member, you must use our participating providers for all your health care. These participating providers include PCPs (primary care physicians), specialists, hospitals and pharmacies. We have carefully screened these providers to make sure they work together to give you the health care services you need.

For most services, you must call your PCP first. Your PCP will watch over all of your health care. He or she will refer you to a participating specialist or hospital if needed. Remember, you can call your PCP at any time to follow up after a specialist visit or hospital stay.

There are some times when you can get health care without calling your PCP. These times include:

- Emergency situations.
- Vision exams.
- Family planning.
- Dental exams.
- OB/GYN services.
- Chiropractic Services.

Keep in mind that you must use Health Partners participating providers for these services (except for emergency care). If you don't, your services may not be covered.

If you are away from home and become sick, call 911 if it is an emergency. If it is not an emergency, call your PCP first. Tell your PCP your problem. Your PCP will tell you what to do and if you need to see a doctor. If your PCP says you need to see a doctor, Health Partners will cover the visit. Make sure you tell your PCP about any treatment you receive when you are away from home. This way your doctor can provide any needed follow-up care.

**Choosing a PCP.** When you sign up for Health Partners, look in our *Provider Directory* and pick a PCP for you and each member of your family who is a Health Partners member.

## Prenatal visits

You're pregnant. And you want to have a healthy baby.

What's the best thing you can do? See a doctor or other health care provider during your pregnancy. It's called *prenatal care*. Health Partners recommends that prenatal care begin as soon as you know you are pregnant and regularly throughout your pregnancy. The special needs unit can help arrange for transportation to your doctor's office. Please call our special needs unit at **(215) 991-4370**.

Three reasons to have early and regular prenatal visits:

### 1. For good care for you.

At each visit your weight and blood pressure will be checked. Your doctor will see how you are doing and how the baby (fetus) is growing.

### 2. For good advice.

Most pregnant women have questions—ask anything. Maybe you want to know about exercise, vitamins or what foods to eat. Or maybe you need help to stop smoking.

### 3. For a healthier baby.

Women who get prenatal care have babies of a healthier weight than women who don't receive care.

**The earlier you get care the better.** Get prenatal care as soon as you can, even if you only think you're pregnant but aren't sure.

Health Partners has a prenatal program to help pregnant women get prenatal care and have a healthy baby. Our prenatal program coordinators are available to find out what help we can give. If you would like to contact us, please call the prenatal program coordinator at **(215) 991-4281**.

# Take special care

## Advice for pregnant women with asthma

**Y**ou need to take special care if you have asthma and are pregnant.

Here's why:

Sometimes you may have a hard time breathing because of asthma. You may not be getting enough oxygen.

And if you're not, neither is your baby.

Studies have shown that babies who don't get enough oxygen may be born too small. Small babies can have many health problems.

What you can do

What's the best way to have a healthy baby?

Take care of your asthma and get *prenatal care*. Prenatal care is special medical attention for pregnant women.

With regular visits, your health care provider can keep a close watch over you and your baby. And you'll get the help you need for your asthma.

At your first visit, bring in all your medicines. Your doctor



**Taking care of your asthma can help you move safely through your pregnancy.**

will need to know what you're taking. Most asthma medicines are safe to use during pregnancy and breastfeeding. It is important to tell your doctor about any medicines you are taking as soon as you know that you are pregnant.

**Breathe easier** by staying away from things that trigger your asthma attack. Prenatal care can help keep your asthma under control. You'll feel better and you'll help your baby too.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology (AAAAI); Frank Virant, M.D., spokesperson for the AAAAI


## When to use formula only


If you have any of the following conditions, it will not be safe for you to breastfeed your baby. Talk to your doctor if you:

- Have HIV or AIDS.
- Have Hepatitis B.
- Have Tuberculosis that has not been treated.
- Get certain cancer treatments.
- Smoke, drink heavily or use drugs.





## JUST ASK Questions and Answers

 *I have diabetes.  
Can I breastfeed?*

 Yes. Breast milk is the perfect food for your baby. It can even lower his or her chances of developing diabetes. But you'll need to take extra care that your blood sugar is under control.

Talk to your health care provider. For you and your baby, you'll want to do all you can to control diabetes.

 *How do kids get ear infections?*

 There is a tiny tube in the ear (eustachian tube).

When a child has a cold or other illness the tube can become blocked. Fluid can build up in the ear.

This fluid can get infected with bacteria or a virus. This can cause swelling behind the eardrum. Pain and fever are common signs of an ear infection. If you think your child has an ear infection, see your child's doctor.



## Diabetes

# Staying healthy from head to toe

If you have diabetes, controlling your blood sugar is very important. A healthy diet, regular exercise and good medical care can help.

When your blood sugar is under control you're also at lower risk for complications from diabetes.

Abnormal blood sugar levels can damage your nerves and blood vessels. Health Partners recommends that your sugar levels (in your blood or urine) should be tested on a regular basis. A blood test that is done every six months, called a glycosylated hemoglobin or HgA<sub>1C</sub>, can also tell if your blood sugar is staying under control. Talk to your doctor about when you should get these tests done.

When levels are too high it can cause damage and disease in your eyes, teeth and feet. That's why these parts of your body need special care, according to the American Diabetes Association.

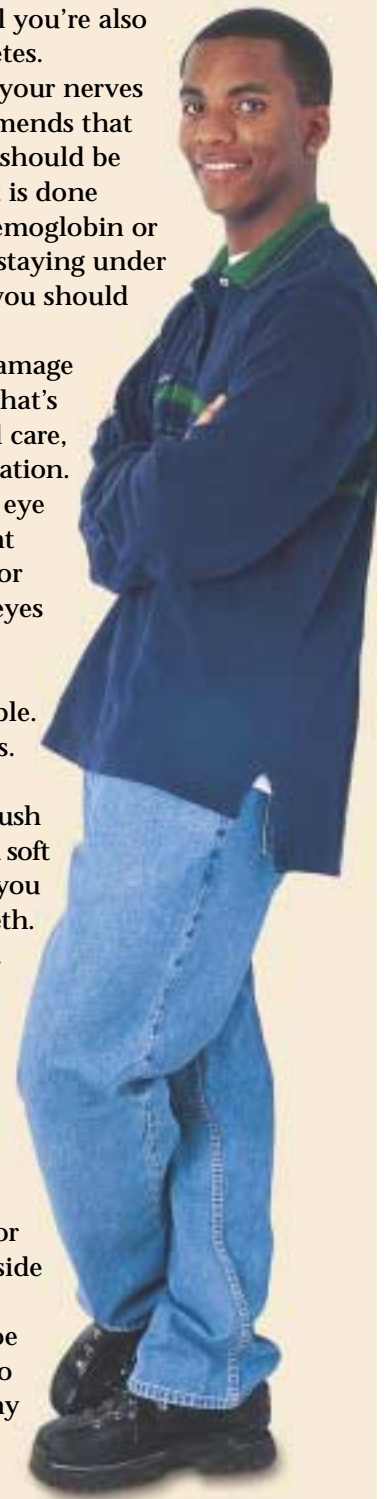
Eyes. To keep your eyes healthy, get an eye exam every year. This eye exam is different from your regular checkup. Your eye doctor will use drops to be able to see into your eyes better. The test is called a dilated retinal exam. You should also go to the doctor if:

- Your vision gets blurry.
- You see double.
- Your eyes hurt.
- You see spots.

Teeth and gums. Have your teeth cleaned and checked every six months. Brush your teeth, front and back, twice daily with a soft brush. Floss once a day. See your dentist if you notice any problems with your gums or teeth.

Feet. Wash and dry your feet every day. Use lotion to keep the skin from drying out.

Check every day for sores, blisters, calluses or swelling. Don't try to treat calluses or corns at home. Remove your shoes and socks at every visit so your doctor can check your feet. Your doctor may recommend that you see a foot doctor to have your toenails cut. Check shoes inside and out for sharp objects before you put them on. Pebbles, nails or even a torn shoe lining could cause problems. Remember to see your doctor for cuts on your feet or any sores that do not heal right away.



  
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