



Missouri Care
HEALTH PLAN

Summer 2009

www.missouricare.com

your family's health

Things to Know

Upcoming outreach events

Missouri Care Health Plan is gearing up for lots of summer activities. Some of those activities include swim parties, back-to-school fairs and other health fairs.

We will be hosting our annual swim parties in the following cities: Sedalia, Macon, Lebanon, Hannibal, Jefferson City, Columbia, Moberly, Rolla, Eldon and Marshall. You will be receiving your invitation in the mail soon.

Missouri Care will also be participating in many back-to-school fairs and other health fairs this summer. We are in the process of setting up dates and times for these events. Look for us at your next event. We hope to see you there!

Bugs: Avoid the zings of bites and stings

They buzz, creep and hover. And sometimes bugs bite or sting.

Most people aren't bothered too much by bug bites. But others can have bad reactions and need to get help fast.

Bugs can also carry disease, such as Lyme disease and West Nile virus.

You can't prevent all insect bites, but to help keep bugs from bugging or harming you:

- Use insect repellent with DEET to stop bites from mosquitoes, ticks, fleas, chiggers and biting flies. Repellents for children should have only 10 percent DEET. Don't use repellents on babies.



- Don't use scented soaps or perfumes, which attract bugs.
- Stay indoors at dawn and at

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Medication and children

You may have heard about the public health advisory regarding over-the-counter medications for cough and colds. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a warning because of reports of serious side effects from these

medications. We see these medications every day at grocery stores and pharmacies.

The FDA issued a statement that these should not be used in children younger than 2 without a provider's guidance. These medications have not been found

to control symptoms. Drinking more fluids is more effective with less risk. Getting plenty of rest and good nutrition is also important.

Part of the problem is that the small amount is not measured well. This makes overdoses more likely. Also, more than one adult may give medications to a child. This means a child can receive too much of one kind of medicine. This can be very dangerous to the heart, brain and other organs. Use the measuring device in the package and never use a kitchen spoon.

Medicine for adults should not be used by children. Call your child's provider if the child does not improve or the condition worsens. Usually these medications are only used for a few days—if at all—for cough and cold symptoms.

Advance health care directives

You have the right to accept or refuse any medical care. A time may come when you are too sick to talk to your Primary Care Provider (PCP), family or friends. You may not be able to tell anyone what health care you want. The law allows adults to do two things to prepare for this:

- Make an advance directive, which allows you to leave

written directions about your medical treatment decisions.

- Ask someone to decide your care for you.

If you do not have an advance health care directive, your PCP may not know what health care you want. Talk to your PCP or call Missouri Care at **800-322-6027** for information on an advance health care directive. Your PCP must keep a written and signed copy of what you want. An advance directive becomes part of your medical record.

If there is a problem with things not being done the way they should with an advance directive, you may file a complaint with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services at **573-751-6400** or write them at P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, MO 65102.

Advance health care directives are available from the Missouri Bar: 326 Monroe, Jefferson City, MO 65101, **573-635-4128**.



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Important Missouri Care Phone Numbers

Member Services	800-322-6027
MTM Transportation	800-695-5791
Informed Health Line	800-556-1555
(24-hour nurse advice line)	
Behavioral Health	800-889-4073

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About abuse

What it is and how to protect yourself

Someone who loves you should not hurt you.

But each year, many women are hurt by their husbands, boyfriends and ex-partners. Many men also get hurt.

Abuse can be physical. It involves shoving, kicking, beating—or worse.

But abuse takes other forms too. Does your partner make threats? Does he or she always criticize you? That's emotional abuse.

Does your partner force you to do things sexually that you don't want to do? That's sexual abuse.

Facing the truth

Admitting you are abused can be painful.

At first, your partner may be very loving. Your partner may also tell you how sorry he or she is after hurting you—and promise never to do it again. Your partner may even say you're to blame.

So remember:

- Someone who hurts you may hurt your children.

- Abusers often get more violent.
- Abuse can get worse if you're pregnant.
- You're not the one with a problem. Your partner is.

Getting help

If you are abused, let someone know. Consider turning to:

Your Primary Care Provider (PCP). Your PCP can treat any health problems caused by the abuse. He or she may also help you find an emergency shelter or counseling services.

A trusted friend. Ask your friend if you can keep a bag of your

Someone who hurts you may hurt your children.

belongings at his or her home. Include cash, credit cards and other things you'll need if you have to leave your home quickly to protect yourself and your children.

The police. Call 911 if you are in danger.

Sources: American Psychiatric Association; National Women's Health Information Center

Do you have an anger problem?

We all get angry—it's part of being human.

But too much anger can cause problems in our lives and in our relationships.

Think you might have an anger problem? Do you:

- Get angrier than you should over little things?
- Feel bad about things you say or do when you are upset?
- Fight or damage things when angry?
- Have family or friends who have told you that you need help handling anger?
- Have lasting physical symptoms? This can mean things such as stomach troubles or feeling worried a lot.

Stay cool

Finding ways to deal with anger is important.

One good way to deal with anger is to let others know how you feel without being pushy or hurtful.

To calm down when angry:

- Take a walk to blow off steam.
- Take deep breaths. Think before you say or do things you might be sorry for later.
- Say calm words to relax yourself.
- Remind yourself that anger won't solve things. You might only feel worse.

Help is available

If your anger seems out of control, tell a provider or a counselor. Mental health experts can help people learn how to deal with anger.

Sources: American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy; American Psychological Association



Important toll-free numbers

Missouri Care Health Plan	800-322-6027
Member Services	800-322-6027
Transportation Line (if included in benefits)	800-695-5791
Informed Health—24-Hour Nurse Line	800-556-1555
Mental/Behavioral Health	800-889-4073
Dental Care	888-696-9533
MO HealthNet Eligibility Specialist	888-275-5908
MO HealthNet Enrollment Helpline	800-348-6627
MO HealthNet Participant Services	800-392-2161
Child Abuse/Neglect Missouri Hotline	800-392-3738
Missouri School Violence Hotline	866-748-7047
Child support employer information	800-585-9234
Child support general information	800-859-7999
Food Stamp Hunger Line	800-392-1261
TTY voice access (for deaf/hard of hearing)	800-735-2966
National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-SAFE (800-799-7233)
Parents as Teachers	866-728-4968
Poison Control	800-222-1222
Smoking Cessation—Missouri Tobacco Quitline	800-QUITNOW (800-784-8669)

Water safety is a serious issue, no matter a swimmer's age. Young or old, some basic rules of safe swimming should be taken to heart.

Keep these key points in mind the next time you or your kids decide to go for a swim.

Know how. Learning to swim is the first step toward staying safe. Teach your child to swim. Or enroll your child in a swimming class.

Buddy up. Every swimmer—child or adult—should always swim with a buddy.

Use the right gear. If your child

isn't a strong swimmer, have him or her wear a life jacket. Don't use water wings or other air-filled items to try to keep your child safe.

Pay attention. Get out of the water if you are too cold or too tired or if there are signs of bad weather. Don't swim too far from safety.

Keep in touch. It's very important to watch carefully any time children are in or near water. Even better, use the touch rule—an adult should be within touching distance of a young child in the water at all times.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; American Red Cross

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Bugs

dusk, when there are more bugs around.

- Stay away from bug hangouts, such as puddles of water, garbage cans and flower gardens.

- Make sure garbage cans are covered.

- Keep food and drinks covered if you have them outdoors.

- Wear long pants, long-sleeved shirts and shoes—not sandals—in grassy or wooded areas. Check your clothes and skin for ticks.

- Wear a bracelet that tells people you are allergic to stings.

Source: American College of Emergency Physicians