

health letter[®]

www.metroplus.org

Summer 2010

SIMPLE STEPS TO A Healthy Smile

Can't remember the last time you visited the dentist? Then it's probably time to make an appointment.

For a healthy smile, visit your dentist twice a year. Flossing and brushing every day also help keep teeth and gums in good condition. You may need to visit your dentist more often if you are pregnant or have diabetes. Children should have their first dental exam between 6 and 12 months of age.

During your visit, the dentist removes any stains or plaque from your teeth. A dental checkup can also find cavities and signs of gum disease and oral cancer early, when they are easier to treat.

Need a dentist? Medicaid members can call the Medicaid Referral Line at **1-800-541-2831** to find one nearby. When you see the dentist, bring your Medicaid card with you. CHP and FHP members, call DentaQuest (formerly Doral Dental, see below) at **1-800-417-7140**. Any member who needs help can call Customer Services at **1-800-303-9626**.



DORAL DENTAL IS NOW DENTAQUEST Doral Dental, which administers dental benefits for MetroPlus Medicare members, changed its name to DentaQuest. All of DentaQuest's phone numbers and addresses remain the same. The Web address has changed to dentaquest.com.

PRSRST STD
U.S. Postage Paid
MHP Inc

REMINDERS



- If you have trouble hearing, please use a TTY machine to call Customer Services at **1-800-881-2812**.
- Everyone—adults, kids and teens—needs a complete physical exam once a year. Make your PCP (Primary Care Provider) appointment now.
- Did you move? Change your phone number? If so, please call Customer Services at **1-800-303-9626**.

Recertify to Keep Your Healthcare Coverage

We phone **MetroPlus Medicaid and Family Health Plus** members who need to recertify. We also mail a reminder notice. **MetroPlus Child Health Plus** members get a notice in the mail 90 days before recertification is due and a telephone reminder. Call **1-800-303-9626** for help at your home or on the phone. Be sure to recertify so you keep your health insurance.

LESSEN YOUR STRESS

➔ **Start by calling Customer Services and talking with a MetroPlus case manager.**

Stress is part of everyday life. Stress that goes away is usually not a problem. But, if you are stressed for a long time, your health can suffer. Long-term stress is linked to health problems like heart disease, gum and tooth problems, high blood pressure, skin problems and more.

Money worries can cause stress. It can be stressful to live with an illness like diabetes or asthma. Maybe you care for a sick person. Perhaps you live in a dangerous neighborhood and worry about yourself or your family.

If you feel like you can't cope, let MetroPlus help. Call **1-800-303-9626**. We will find someone you can talk to, like one of our case managers. Whatever you say will be entirely confidential (only you will know).



Cancer Care Second Opinion

For the diagnosis of cancer, recurrence of cancer or a recommendation regarding cancer treatment, MetroPlus will pay for a second opinion from a participating cancer specialist, including one affiliated with a participating

specialty cancer center. If MetroPlus does not have a provider in its network qualified to treat your specific type of cancer, then we will provide you with a referral to an appropriate non-participating provider.

A Heart to Heart For Women



By David Rubinstein, M.D.,
MPH, Director of Cardiology,
Elmhurst Hospital Center

→ **Heart disease** doesn't just happen to men. Women often fear cancer, especially breast cancer, but heart attack is the single leading cause of death for American women.

In the movies, people have dramatic heart attacks. In real life, many heart attacks begin with vague symptoms. People are not sure what is happening to them and may wait too long before getting help.



Common signs of a heart attack include: chest discomfort such as a feeling of fullness or pressure; discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck or jaw; shortness of breath; or a cold sweat. However, when women have a heart attack, they often don't have chest pain. They may have shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting or fatigue. Doctors know the differences in symptoms between men and women.

If you think you might be having a heart attack, call **911** immediately. It's important to describe how you feel as well as you can. If you need a translator, tell the **911** operator what language you need.

Everyone can and should take steps to prevent heart disease. These include not smoking, controlling high blood pressure and cholesterol, maintaining a healthy weight, staying active, managing diabetes and visiting your primary care provider regularly.



Don't Suffer In Silence

→ Domestic violence can happen to anyone—man or woman, straight or gay, old or young. The angry partner may hit or yell. He or she may try to control you. Or put you down. These are all forms of abuse. Emotional abuse can hurt as badly as being hit.

You don't have to live in fear. If you're afraid of your partner, call MetroPlus at **1-800-303-9626**. Our case managers will listen to you without telling anyone you called. You can also call the National Domestic Abuse Hotline at **1-800-787-3224**.



Having Your 65th Birthday?

MetroPlus offers several Medicare programs. Please call **1-866-985-0356** to learn more. You may be able to change from your current health insurance to Medicare very easily.

Prenatal Care for MOMS-TO-BE

→ You just learned you are pregnant. Congratulations! It is time to start prenatal (before birth) care. This means regular visits to your doctor. Seeing the doctor when you're pregnant is the most important thing you can do for yourself and your baby. Most pregnant women don't have problems. But if you do, a doctor can find and treat them early.

Start with a doctor you like and trust. Tell your doctor everything about you and your medical history. The more the doctor knows, the better he or she can help care for you and your baby.

Plan to see your doctor once a month during your first trimester (three months of pregnancy); every two weeks in your second trimester; and weekly during your last month. This is the usual plan, but your doctor may adjust it for you. Our case managers can also help you get the care you need during pregnancy. Call **1-800-303-9626** to learn more.



Laboratory Provider Update

Effective February 15, 2010, MetroPlus expanded our agreement with Laboratory Corporation of America Holdings (LabCorp) and designated them as our Preferred Laboratory Partner. This way, MetroPlus and LabCorp continue providing access and high-quality testing services to members throughout our service area. Note that MetroPlus' other contracted regional and hospital-based laboratories remain participating and will continue to serve our members. Please contact MetroPlus Customer Services at **1-800-303-9626** with any questions about your lab benefit or lab providers.

Have a Disability? We Can Help

A disability can be many things. It can be a physical problem with hearing or vision. It could be a "learning disability" or a mental health problem. Or it might mean you have trouble getting around that makes it harder for you to get healthcare.

If you have a disability, MetroPlus can help you get information so you can get the healthcare you need. We can also help caregivers of MetroPlus members with a disability. Call Customer Services at **1-800-303-9626**. We are here to help.





PRIVACY NOTICE

→ **MetroPlus Health Plan respects your privacy rights.** This notice describes how we treat the nonpublic personal financial and health information (“Information”) we receive about you, and what we do to keep it confidential and secure as required by New York State Insurance Law (Regulation 169).

Categories of Information We Collect and May Disclose

MetroPlus collects Information about you from the following sources:

- Information you give us on applications and other forms, or that you tell us.
- Information about your dealings with us, the healthcare providers we work with, and others.

What We Do With Your Information

We do not disclose Information about our members and former members to anyone, except as permitted by law.

We do use Information as permitted by law for health plan purposes, such as the following:

- To provide the healthcare benefits you receive as a member of MetroPlus Health Plan; for example, to arrange for treatment that you need and to pay for services you receive.
- To communicate with you about programs and services that are available to you as a MetroPlus member.
- To manage our business and comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

How We Protect Your Privacy

- We limit access to your Information to employees and other persons who need it to conduct MetroPlus Health Plan business or comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

- Employees are subject to discipline and may be fired if they violate our privacy policies and procedures.
- We also use physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to keep Information confidential and secure, in accordance with state and federal regulations.

Former Members

If your membership in MetroPlus Health Plan ends, your Information will remain protected in accordance with our policies and procedures for current members.

You Can Contact Us at the Address or Phone Number Below to:

- Request more information about our privacy policies and practices.
- File a privacy-related complaint with us.
- Request (in writing) to review Information about you in our records.

Member Services

MetroPlus Health Plan

160 Water Street, New York, NY 10038

Phone: 1-800-303-9626

(TDD 1-800-881-2812)

A “Notice of Health Information Privacy Practices” Is Also Available

MetroPlus has a “Notice of Health Information Privacy Practices” that describes in detail how we may use and disclose medical information about you. The notice also tells you about your rights under federal privacy regulations (HIPAA). You can get a copy of this notice by calling Member Services at the number above, or by visiting our website at www.metroplus.org and clicking on the Privacy Policies link.