

WELL. being

WINTER 2010

THE PATH TO GOOD HEALTH

The Facts About Cataracts

FACT: Cataracts affect nearly 22 million Americans age 40 and older.

A cataract is a clouding of the lens in the eye that occurs in people as they age. Common symptoms of cataracts include cloudy, blurry or faded vision, glare or frequent eyeglass prescription changes. You may also experience double vision, or multiple images in one eye.

People in their 40s and 50s may have cataracts, but it is usually only around age 60 or older that they might begin to affect a person's vision.

If you are age 60 or older, you should have a comprehensive dilated eye exam at least once every two years. This will allow your doctor to check for cataracts, as well as other vision disorders like glaucoma.

If you have a cataract in one or both eyes, talk to your eye doctor about your treatment options. The symptoms of a cataract may be improved with new eyeglasses or brighter lighting. But if your vision loss is affecting everyday activities like reading or watching TV, it may be a sign that you need cataract surgery.

Cataract surgery is effective and safe. Your doctor can help you decide if this routine procedure is right for you.

**NEW LOOK, NEW PLAN,
SAME GREAT SERVICE** →

You may notice *Well Being* looks a little different this issue. That's because we've expanded our family of Medicare products to bring you the MetroPlus Platinum Plan (HMO). Flip to page 4 to learn more.



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www.metroplus.org
New York, NY 10038
160 Water St., 3rd Floor

M E T R O P L U S
M E D I C A R E



Fight Indoor Allergies

INDOOR ALLERGIES

can really take a toll on your body—whether you get a runny nose, itchy eyes or sinus headaches. Luckily, there are ways to reduce dust, pet dander and mold in your home.



➔ **DUST** Wash bedding weekly in hot water (130°F) and dry it in a hot dryer. Be sure to vacuum carpets at least once a week.



➔ **PET DANDER** If you have pets, keep them off furniture and out of your bedroom.



➔ **MOLD** Always turn on a fan while showering or bathing. Don't pile damp towels or laundry. Use a dehumidifier to keep the air and surfaces in your home dry.

How to Live Well With Seasonal Affective Disorder

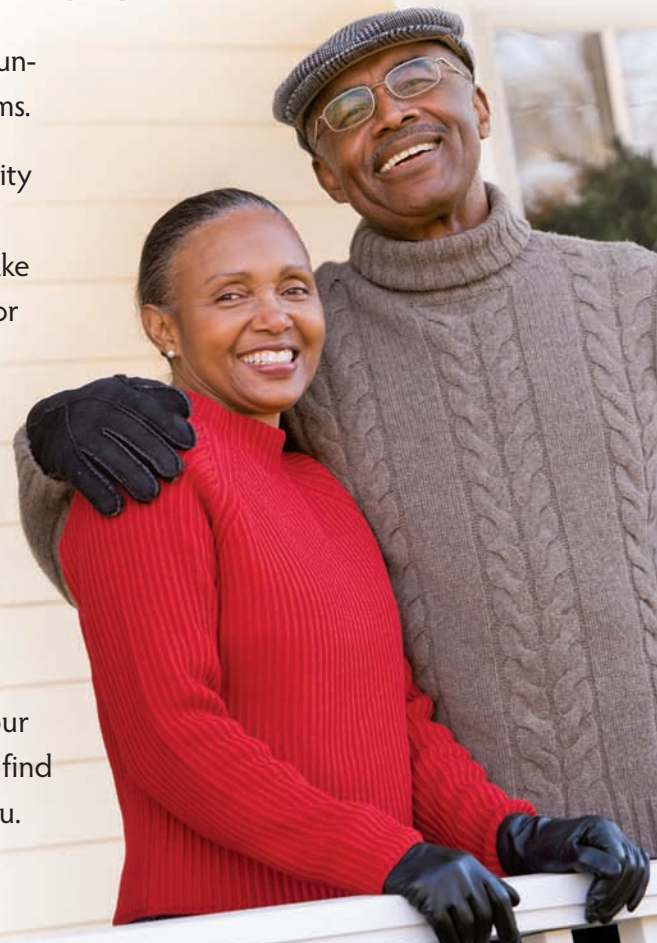
We've all experienced a bout of the blues during the winter months. But for people with seasonal affective disorder (SAD), feelings of depression return each winter. Other symptoms include appetite changes, loss of energy, anxiety or withdrawal from social activities. Treatment for SAD often includes light or drug therapy. But experts suggest that certain lifestyle changes may help minimize SAD symptoms or prevent them from happening in the first place.

- **Seek out sunshine.** Spend time outdoors whenever possible. Even a cloudy day can be helpful in

increasing your exposure to sunlight and easing SAD symptoms.

- **Exercise daily.** Physical activity can help fight fatigue and depression. Bundle up and take a walk on a cleared walkway or try doing some of the indoor exercises listed on page 4.
- **Spend time with friends and family.** Their company can help keep the blues away, too.

If you think that you may be suffering from SAD, talk with your doctor. He or she can help you find the treatment that's right for you.



GET COUNTED THIS YEAR

→ Find out what the 2010 Census can do for you.

Respond to the 2010 Census, and make a difference. If everyone in your household is included in the census form, your community will have more power in Washington, D.C. This means New York will get more money for services like education, healthcare, job training and more.

The census form will be mailed in March 2010. Fill it out with information about everyone in your household. Then, drop it in a mailbox by April 1, 2010. Postage is prepaid.

The census is absolutely confidential. The form has only 10 questions, and it does not ask about your immigration status. Get counted.



Renew to Keep Your Coverage

To remain a MetroPlus Advantage, Select or Medicare Partnership in Care Plan member, you must renew your Medicaid.

Renewal is free. Do you know your renewal month? Do you know the MetroPlus renewal representative in your area? Visit us at your healthcare site or our office at 160 Water Street, Manhattan. You can call **1-866-986-0356** and we will help you by phone.

Don't be without health insurance! Renew your Medicaid so MetroPlus can keep giving you great healthcare.

Home Fire Safety

Did you know that heating and electrical fires are a leading cause of home fires and injuries during the winter months? Follow these tips to keep your home fire-safe.

✓ **Put smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in your home.**

Test them monthly and make sure to change their batteries once a year.

✓ **Give space heaters and candles room.** Keep them at least 3 feet away from things that can burn, like clothing, curtains and paper. Turn off space heaters and blow out candles before leaving the room or going to bed.

✓ **Have an escape plan ready.** And keep a list of emergency telephone numbers next to your phone.



Easy Indoor Exercises

Staying fit is a big part of staying healthy. But in winter, getting the recommended amount of exercise isn't always a walk in the park. The last thing you want to do is spend time in the cold outdoors. But that is no reason to give up fitness for the season! Here are a few ways to get a great workout indoors.

Climbing stairs is good for the heart. It also tones the leg and butt muscles. Just be sure the stairs are well lit. Also, make sure to put your entire foot on the step.



Lifting weights helps tone muscles and builds strong bones. Make arm weights by putting coins in a sock. Knot the end of the sock so they don't fall out.



Chair exercises strengthen muscles and improve range of motion. Check your local library for exercise videos or DVDs you can rent for free.



FEND OFF FLU

When it comes to the flu, prevention is the best medicine. Cut your risk of getting sick by following these tips:

- **Make healthy choices.** Eat a balanced diet with lots of fruits and veggies. Drink plenty of water. Exercise regularly and get enough sleep. Doing so will keep your immune system strong.
- **Wash your hands.** You can catch the flu when you touch something an infected person has touched, or coughed, sneezed, or breathed on. To kill bacteria, wash your hands with soap and warm water many times during the day.
- **Get your seasonal flu shot.** If you are between 25 and 64 and have a chronic health condition, ask your doctor if you need to get the H1N1 flu (swine flu) vaccine in addition to your seasonal flu shot.



Announcing MetroPlus Platinum Plan (HMO)

GREAT NEWS! MetroPlus Health Plan now offers MetroPlus Platinum Plan (HMO), a Medicare plan available to those turning 65 or others who are eligible for Medicare and live in Manhattan, Brooklyn, the Bronx or Queens. You do not have to have Medicaid to join. You can sign up during the open enrollment period from January 1 to March 15 if you qualify. Call us today at **1-866-986-0356** to learn more.