

# HEALTH letter<sup>®</sup>

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You're #1 with us!

WINTER 2013



## Have You Had Your Checkup?

Visit the doctor every year.

Everyone—young and old—needs to see the doctor every year. A checkup is an important part of staying healthy. It could even save your life.

During the visit, a doctor will ask you questions. Do you smoke or drink alcohol? What are your exercise and diet habits? Illness in your family will come up, too.

Your height and weight will be recorded. A blood pressure check is also standard. This information helps doctors find health issues you might have.

Your children need to visit the doctor regularly, too. The doctor will measure their growth. You'll learn about vaccines that they need.


A checkup is your time to ask health questions. Be honest with the doctor about any health issues. That way you can get the help you need.

Need help finding a doctor? We can help. Call our MetroPlus Customer Services department at **1-800-303-9626 (TTY: 1-800-881-2812)**.



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MEN

# Coping with Tough Times

Manage your stress for better health.

Stress is a fact of life. But with money concerns and natural disasters, we seem to have even more to worry about. Too much stress can make you feel tired, nervous or sad. Your health may depend on knowing when it's time to seek help.

Signs of stress include trouble sleeping, skin problems, headaches, upset stomach, being easily angered or frustrated and increased use of alcohol or drugs. But there are ways to keep stress under control:

- **SLEEP EIGHT HOURS A NIGHT.** A good night's rest can help you manage stress.  
  
If you think stress might be hurting your health, talk to your doctor. There's no shame in asking for help. He or she can guide you about the best treatment option for you. Also, ask your friends and family for support. They can go with you to the doctor.  
  
Manage stress with help from MetroPlus. We offer a Case Management program that can support you and help you find a doctor that treats stress. To learn more, call Case Management at **1-800-303-9626 (TTY 1-800-881-2812)**.
- **EAT A HEALTHY DIET.** This will help your body function at its best.
- **TAKE TIME TO RELAX.** Sing, laugh or listen to music to keep your mind and body at ease.
- **GET MOVING.** Even a short, brisk walk can boost your mood.



## REMINDERS

- ▶ **Do you have trouble hearing? Please use a TTY machine to call Customer Services: 1-800-881-2812.**
- ▶ **If you moved or have a new phone number, we need to know. Please call Customer Services: 1-800-303-9626.**
- ▶ **Are you turning 65? MetroPlus offers Medicare programs. Call 1-866-986-0356 to learn more. You may be able to change from your current health insurance to Medicare very easily.**

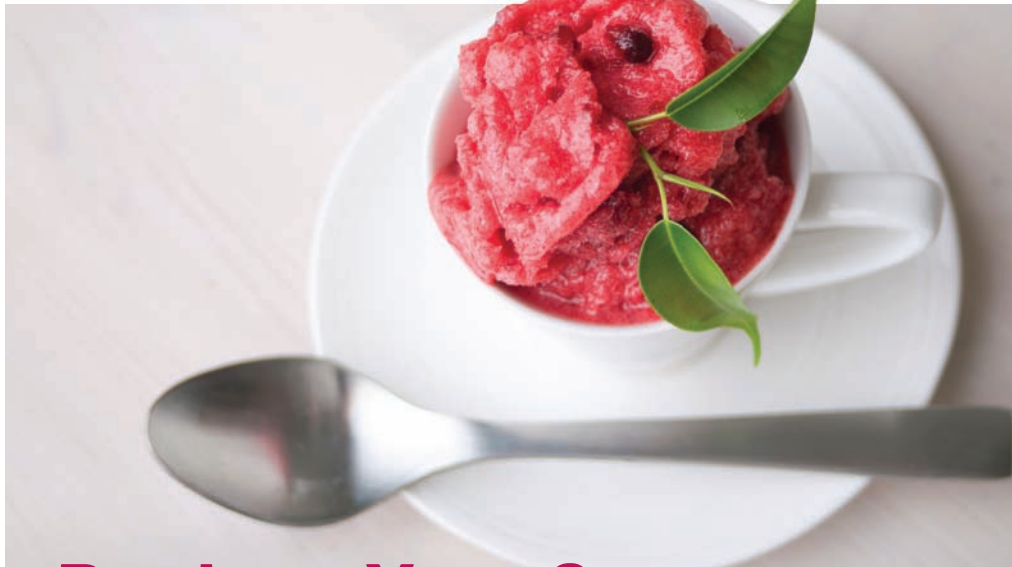


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[www.facebook.com/metroplushealth](http://www.facebook.com/metroplushealth) or use your smartphone to scan this code. You'll find great health tips and fun ideas for activities in the city.





## Replace Your Sugar

Small changes can make a better diet.

Are you overweight? It's a common problem in New York City. According to the New York City Obesity Task Force, more than half of adults carry too much weight. Many kids have the same problem.

Being overweight can lead to serious health problems—including diabetes, heart disease, stroke and even cancer. The good news? Small changes to your diet can help you ditch those extra pounds.

Here are some smart ways to replace sugar, which has empty calories.

- Have a piece of fruit or a small handful of nuts instead of a candy bar.
- Put down that can of soda. Have a glass of water or unsweetened tea instead. Add a splash of lemon juice if you want more flavor.
- Replace ice cream with sorbet.
- Instead of a rich dessert, offer your family a small fruit salad.

## KEEP THAT SMILE SPARKLING

How to keep your mouth healthy and your teeth clean.

It's important to take care of your teeth. If you don't, you can get infections like gingivitis. You could also get cavities and have bad breath.

Brushing your teeth is the best thing you can do to keep your mouth healthy. Here are some other easy tips to maintain your oral health:

- Brush at least twice a day and floss at least once a day. Floss before brushing, so your toothbrush can remove what you uncover.
- Use toothpaste to brush the front and back of your teeth.
- Brush your molars in a back-and-forth motion. Brush the rest of your teeth either up-and-down or in small circles.
- Gently brush your tongue to remove any bacteria and massage your gums to promote good circulation.



## → #1 Plan in Quality and Patient Satisfaction!

MetroPlus Health Plan was ranked as the #1 Medicaid Managed Care Plan in New York City in Quality and Patient Satisfaction in the Consumer's Guide to Medicaid Managed Care in New York City. This makes MetroPlus the #1 plan in the

city for quality of services and customer satisfaction for the last four years in a row—and for 7 of the last 8 years!

The ratings are based on a comparison of plan rates and quality measures based on information

submitted by a plan as well as patient satisfaction ratings gathered by the Department of Health.

We are proud to be your number one health plan! Thank you for being a member of MetroPlus Health Plan.



# Two Steps to Avoid Cancer

Cancer screenings are key to your health.

Cancer. It's the word no one ever wants to hear. But ignoring cancer will not make it go away. There are many things you can do to reduce your chances of getting cancer.

## 1 LIVE HEALTHIER

Two-thirds of all cancers are a result of lifestyle choices. Non-smokers have a lower chance of getting lung, bladder, cervical and kidney cancer. Want to lower your risk for breast, prostate, colon and kidney cancer? Then you need to exercise, eat well and maintain a healthy weight. Using sunscreen will reduce your risk of skin cancer.

## 2 GET SCREENED

Adults should follow this screening schedule:

CANCER TYPE	SCREENING GUIDELINE
<b>Breast Cancer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Yearly mammogram starting at 40</li><li>■ Clinical breast exam every three years beginning at 20</li><li>■ Regular self breast exam beginning at 20</li></ul>
<b>Colorectal Cancer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Beginning at 50, talk to your doctor about the best screening schedule for you</li></ul>
<b>Cervical Cancer</b>	<p>Pap tests beginning at age 21, regardless of sexual activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Women ages 21-29: every two years</li><li>■ Women over age 30: every three years after three consecutive normal results</li></ul>



## Fire Safety

Prevent burns and fires this winter by following these guidelines:

- Replace smoke alarm batteries at least once a year.
- Keep anything that can burn easily away from hot appliances.
- Make sure your electronics are plugged in correctly.
- Keep matches and lighters away from kids.
- Don't leave children alone in the kitchen.
- Keep hot foods and liquids away from the edge of tables or stoves.
- Do not use your stove or oven to heat your home.

If you get a minor burn, pour cool water over the injury for at least 10 minutes. Cover with a soft, dry bandage. Cold water or ointments will make the damage worse. Call 911 in case of an emergency or severe burn.