

the checkup

Welcome!



JANUARY 2016

A monthly publication of Texas Children's Health Plan

You might notice something a little different. Welcome to The Checkup, our new and improved monthly newsletter!

The Texas Children's Health Plan Medical Leadership Team has completely revamped our approach to provider communication, in an effort to deliver more engaging information to you. In this newsletter, you will find articles written for specific audiences and a more reader-friendly format.

In addition, a new website has been created to deliver the resources you need to offer our members the

best possible care. **TheCheckup.org**, will serve as a centralized hub for provider news and education. This site will feature a medical director blog, videos, resources, and an archive for past newsletters.

Soon, you will also receive a series of e-newsletters that will include important announcements and updates, such as the launch of **TheCheckup.org**.

We appreciate your dedication to serving our member base. It is our goal to offer the tools you need to help improve the health of Texas Children's Health Plan members. **Enjoy!**

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ND-0116-272

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Talk to your patients about **goal-setting** for the New Year

The New Year is a prime time to encourage your patients to get a healthy start. It is important to introduce self-management tools to your patients and encourage goal-setting for improved outcomes.

It is important to help families understand that they are the managers of their health, and that you and their healthcare team will support and assist them.

When developing goals with your patients, ask them to determine their own health priorities. Ask about and understand their health beliefs, and address problems from the perspective of the patient. Asking about these issues and working to understand the patient's perspective will allow you to collaboratively set self-management goals that the patient wants, and meet clinical priorities.

Once the patient experiences success in achieving their own personal health care goals, they are often more open to the doctor's recommendations. Assess the patient's confidence in carrying out a plan, and be sure to follow-up to help them achieve the goal and problem-solve barriers.

Use the following tips to develop a successful action plan:

- Begin with something the patient wants to do.
- Make the goal reasonable (something the patient can reasonably expect to be able to accomplish this week).
- Strive for a change that is behavior-specific (losing weight is not a behavior; not eating in the evenings while watching television is a behavior).
- Ensure that the plan answers these questions: what; how much; when (think about the day/the week – which days, what times, etc.); how often?

Help your patients achieve their New Year's health resolutions!

Source: Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions. Bull Publishing Company, 2000.

HERE'S MORE HELP FOR **COLD & FLU**

Encourage parents to visit ColdandFluHero.org, Texas Children's Health Plan's online hub for preventing and treating cold and flu viruses.



Cold and Flu increase? **Encourage patients to get a flu shot.**

We are still in the midst of cold and flu season. You are likely to see an influx of patients with coughs and runny noses. It's not too late for your patients to get a flu shot. The flu vaccine is a good idea for all families. The single best way to protect your patients from the flu is to encourage them to get vaccinated.

Allergies and Conjunctivitis

It's Pink Eye season!

Winter can be prime time for Pink Eye, the most common eye infection seen in children. In the winter, conjunctivitis is more likely to be the result of a bacterial or viral infection that is passed by direct contact. However, many cases of conjunctivitis are also caused by allergies and irritation. Visit TheCheckup.org to read our latest article on treating bacterial, viral, and allergic conjunctivitis.

VACCINES and Pregnancy

Pregnant women are particularly vulnerable to vaccine-preventable disease-related complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has made the following recommendations for vaccines during pregnancy. To read the full article visit TheCheckup.org.

INFLUENZA

The CDC recommends an inactivated influenza vaccine for all women who will be pregnant during influenza season, including women in the first trimester.

TDAP

It is recommended that all pregnant women, regardless of previous TDAP immunization, should be vaccinated between 27 and 36 weeks' gestation.

VACCINES FOR THE FUTURE

Vaccines aimed at fetal-infant immunization are in varying stages of research and development for which the target population will be pregnant women. Two examples are group B streptococcus (GBS) and respiratory syncytial virus vaccines.

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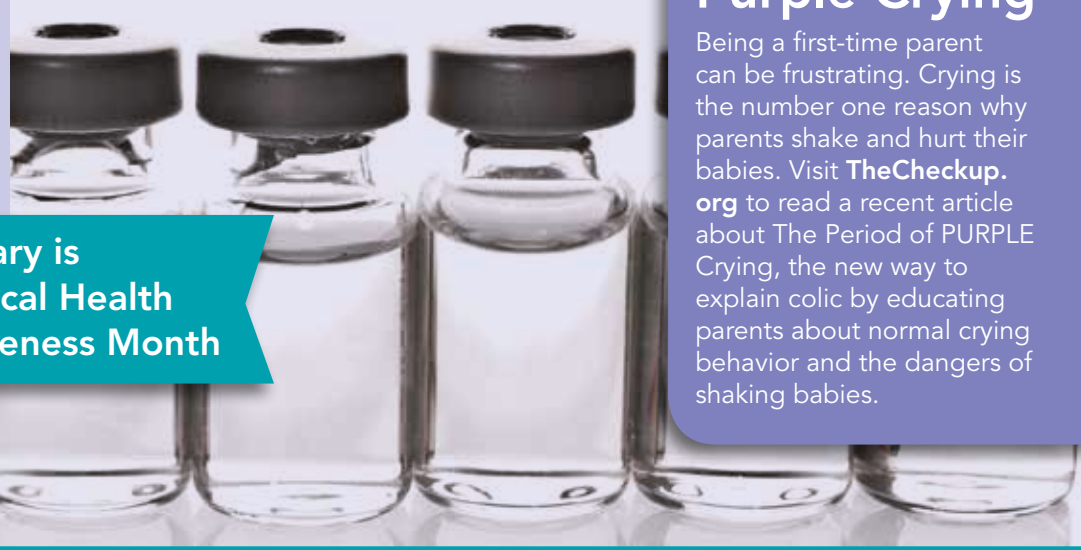
	Vaccine	Timing	Additional info
All pregnant women	Inactivated Influenza Virus (IIV)	Any trimester	Pregnant during flu season (Oct – March)
	Tetanus, Diphtheria and acellular Pertussis (Tdap)	27-36 weeks gestation	Every pregnancy
Pregnant women with specific risk factors	Pneumococcal polysaccharide 23-serotype vaccine (PPSV23)	Any trimester	See www.immunizationforwomen.org for details
	Meningococcal tetravalent polysaccharide vaccine (MPSV4)	Any trimester	See www.immunizationforwomen.org for details
	Inactivated hepatitis A vaccine	Any trimester	See www.immunizationforwomen.org for details
	Recombinant hepatitis B vaccine	Any trimester	See www.immunizationforwomen.org for details
Postpartum	Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)	After delivery and before hospital discharge	For women who are non-immune to rubella
	Varicella	First dose after delivery and before hospital discharge. Second dose can be given during the postpartum visit (6 to 8 weeks after delivery).	For women who do not have evidence of immunity



* January is Cervical Health Awareness Month

Period of Purple Crying

Being a first-time parent can be frustrating. Crying is the number one reason why parents shake and hurt their babies. Visit TheCheckup.org to read a recent article about The Period of PURPLE Crying, the new way to explain colic by educating parents about normal crying behavior and the dangers of shaking babies.



Prevent Pre-Term Deliveries

Texas Children's Health Plan follows the State of Texas Medicaid guidelines for the use and approval of all progesterone therapy both from a pharmacy and a medical benefit. Progesterone therapy is indicated to reduce the risk of pre-term birth for women with a singleton pregnancy and a history of spontaneous singleton pre-term birth. For more information, please contact Provider Relations at 832-828-1008 or visit TheCheckup.org.



It's a New Year, get organized!

tips



Use the following office organization tips to help you transform your workspace from stressful to serene:

1. Purge Your Workspace

Clean out your desk drawers and filing cabinets and throw out anything you haven't used in six months. When you're left with only necessary items and have removed excess clutter, you can more easily organize what's left.

2. Rearrange Your Office

Arrange furniture, files, and trash cans so that they're easy and quick to access.

3. Time Management

Keeping a running to-do list can make sure that you're on schedule and that appointments and deadlines don't fall through the cracks. Create a list once in the morning and once each afternoon for greater efficiency.

4. Organize Digitally

Create different folders and subfolders in your email inbox for each client and project, so when new emails arrive, you can quickly act on and file communications.

5. Ritualize Your Work Day

When you're done working for the day, devote about 15 minutes to update your to-do list, file completed projects and replace in-progress items in their proper place. That makes for a clean, fresh, organized start when you arrive at work the next morning.

Source: CIO.com

PCPs UPDATE

Providers submitting claims for exception-to-periodicity checkups without the appropriate exception modifier will be denied upon claim submission.

New billing guidelines for Texas Health Steps Services

For more information on correct billing of Texas Health Steps, visit TheCheckup.org.

ANNUAL REMINDER ON COPAYS AND DEDUCTIBLES

Texas Children's Health Plan will pay for a primary insurance deductible with proof of assignment to the deductible on the primary evidence of payment.

Texas Children's Health Plan will not pay CP001 or CP002 on a claim as these are not payable by the managed care organization per the Texas Medicaid Program. Please visit TheCheckup.org for more information on annual copays and deductibles.



OB/GYN

▶ **Get a head start! New Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC) Billing Changes are effective January 1! To learn more, visit TheCheckup.org.**

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is published monthly by Texas Children's Health Plan.

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01/16