

The newsletter for NHP members



# Our Neighborhood

Winter 2010

**An easy way to stay  
active this winter**

**A smoke-free home  
is a healthier home**

**Protecting yourself  
against breast cancer**

**Using hand sanitizer  
safely and effectively**

[nhp.org](http://nhp.org)



**Neighborhood  
Health Plan™**

Your health. Our promise.

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## Time to Get the Flu Vaccine

The flu virus infects people all year round, but most people get the flu in the winter. The Centers for Disease Control say that everyone six months and older should get a flu vaccine as soon as they can in the fall. By getting the flu vaccine you can help to limit the spread of the flu. The fewer people who have it, the less it will spread.

A person with the flu can infect others one day before feeling sick and they may be able to pass the virus to others for five to seven days after they have symptoms. Signs of the flu can include fever, sore throat, cough, head and body aches.

The new 2010–2011 flu vaccine will protect against three flu viruses:

- An H3N2 virus
- An influenza B virus and
- The H1N1 virus that caused so much illness last season.

For more information about getting a flu shot, visit [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org) or call the NHP Customer Care Center at 1-800-462-5449.

## Changes in Vaccine Doses Required for School

When school age children are vaccinated, it helps keep everyone healthier. To help in this effort, the state of Massachusetts has updated the rules about the vaccines your child will need to enter school next fall. For students going into kindergarten and 7th grade, there may be added doses your child will need. Talk to your primary care provider about when your child should have the vaccines.

### New Requirements effective September 2011

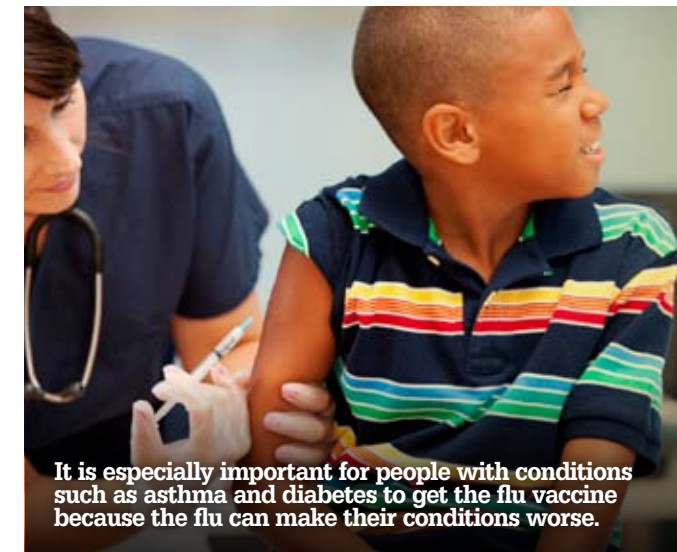
For entry into kindergarten, 7th grade:	
MMR Vaccine	2 doses of a combined measles, mumps, rubella vaccine
Varicella Vaccine	2 doses varicella

For entry into 7th grade:	
Tdap Vaccine	1 dose Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis)

Source: Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Department of Public Health

## New Tool for MassHealth and Commonwealth Care Members

You can now easily get details about the status of your health assistance benefits online or right over the phone. Access the service anytime by calling 1-888-665-9993 or going to [mass.gov/vg/selfservice](http://mass.gov/vg/selfservice).



It is especially important for people with conditions such as asthma and diabetes to get the flu vaccine because the flu can make their conditions worse.

## What to do in an Emergency

**In a medical emergency call 911 or go to the emergency room right away.**

You do not need to get a referral for emergencies. The hospital does not need to be part of the NHP provider network.

Call your primary care site the next day to tell them about your emergency room visit.

If you are not sure if it is an emergency, you can call your primary care site at any time. They will tell you when to go to the emergency room or to their office.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>When you go to your primary care provider:</b>  | <b>When to go to the emergency room:</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Skin rash</li><li>▪ Sore throat</li><li>▪ Runny nose</li><li>▪ Earache</li><li>▪ Coughing</li><li>▪ Diarrhea</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Broken bones</li><li>▪ Poisoning</li><li>▪ Very bad pain or pressure</li><li>▪ Bleeding that won't stop</li><li>▪ Trouble breathing</li><li>▪ High fever in a child who is less than two years old</li></ul> |



## Using hand sanitizer

How to use hand sanitizer safely and effectively

Hand sanitizer can help keep you healthy by killing the germs on your hands, but there are some things you should know.

When your hands are dirty, washing with soap and water is the best way to clean your skin, but when it's germs you're after, a hand sanitizer that is at least 60 percent alcohol is the right choice.

As long as the alcohol content is strong enough, a hand sanitizer will kill most bacteria.<sup>1</sup> Check homemade recipes you use because most of them do not contain enough alcohol to kill germs. It is better to buy a store brand you like, just make sure to check the label.

When you use hand sanitizer, remember:<sup>2</sup>

- Put enough on your hand so it can be spread all around both front and back of hands and between fingers
- Avoid getting hand sanitizer into your eyes
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer is flammable so never use near heat or flame
- When using with young children, make sure the sanitizer dries so the child does not ingest any of the product and do not use with children less than two years old

<sup>1</sup>Centers for Disease Control

<sup>2</sup>New York State Department of Health

## Need a Healthy Winter Activity? Try Mall Walking!

Getting exercise in the winter can be a challenge. Cold weather, rain, ice, and snow can make it hard for many people to do the activities and sports they enjoy in the warmer months.

One way to maintain good heart health and to control weight gain during those long winter months is to walk. You can walk in any weather when you walk indoors. One of the best places to walk indoors may be a nearby shopping mall.

Malls offer:

- A climate-controlled space
- A smooth surface for walking or pushing a stroller at your own pace
- No traffic, curbs, or other obstacles that could be unsafe
- Security, restrooms, USPS mail boxes, restaurants, ATM machines
- Plenty of parking and, usually, access to public transportation

Most malls are open 10:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 12:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Sundays, but many malls open two hours early for mall walkers. Just a few are:

Berkshire Mall, Lanesborough — 6:00 a.m. Monday–Saturday  
7:00 a.m. Sunday

Liberty Tree Mall, Danvers — 8:00 a.m. Monday–Saturday  
10:00 a.m. Sunday

Swansea Mall, Swansea — 8:00 a.m. Monday–Friday  
7:30 a.m. Saturdays  
10:00 a.m. Sundays

Westgate Mall, Brockton — 8:00 a.m.

Northshore Mall, Peabody — 8:00 a.m. Monday–Saturday  
10:00 a.m.

Some malls have walking clubs and may have extras just for walkers. They may have maps to let you know how far you have walked, give discounts, health checkups, or mileage rewards.

Often a medical center will sponsor a mall walking program. Lahey Clinic sponsors the Mall Walkers' Club at the North Shore Mall in Peabody. Morton Hospital provides breakfast the first Friday of each month at the Silver City Galleria in Taunton. Holyoke Mall and Baystate Health Systems joined forces to start a Mall Walkers' Club, and they publish a calendar of scheduled events.

Enjoy walking alone or with a friend any time of the year. Check with a mall near you. The information booth can tell you about their mall walking program, check the mall's website, or call the mall business office.



## Walking is Good for Your Heart

A recent Harvard study shows that walking at a moderate pace (3 miles per hour) for up to 3 hours a week—or 30 minutes a day—can cut the risk of heart disease in women by as much as 40 percent.<sup>1</sup>

But walking, like other exercise, has many health benefits.<sup>2</sup> Walking can help you:

- Lower low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol (the "bad" cholesterol)
- Raise high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol (the "good" cholesterol)
- Lower your blood pressure
- Reduce your risk of or manage type 2 diabetes
- Manage your weight
- Improve your mood
- Stay strong and fit

<sup>1</sup>Harvard School of Public Health; September 2010 Journal Archives of Internal Medicine

<sup>2</sup>Source: MayoClinic, [www.mayoclinic.com/health/walking/HQ01612](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/walking/HQ01612)

## What is Abuse?

Abuse is a pattern of controlling behavior one person uses over another to gain power and control in the relationship. Sometimes people may not be sure if they are being abused.

Has your partner ever:

- Hit, kicked, shoved, strangled, or hurt you physically?
- Screamed at you, put you down, made threats, made fun of you, or criticized you?
- Been jealous all the time or violently jealous?
- Punched the wall or broken things in anger?
- Blamed you for their problems?
- Used or made threats to use a gun, knife, or other weapon against you?
- Told you no one will believe you?
- Kept you from seeing your friends or family?
- Coerced or forced you to take part in sexual acts?
- Relentlessly called, texted, IM'd, e-mailed, or used technology to harass you?
- Followed or stalked you?

If so, you may be in an abusive relationship.

People who are abused often blame themselves, think no one will believe their story, or think their situation is hopeless with no way out. If you are being hurt or abused in any way, it is not your fault and you are not alone.

Below are resources that can help you.

RESPOND 24-hour crisis hotline: **1-617-623-5900**  
Hearing impaired callers Dial **711**  
SafeLink Hotline (multilingual): **1-877-785-2020**  
En Español: Llamanos y hablemos a **1-800-223-5001**  
TTY: **1-800-688-4889** (Pida por una conexión directa)

Source: RESPOND, Inc. [www.respondinc.org](http://www.respondinc.org)

## Preventive Care for Adults Aged 21 and Over

Routine preventive care is an important part of staying healthy. NHP urges all members to visit their primary care providers for preventive care. Examples of covered preventive care benefits include:

- Physical exams — every one to three years
- Blood pressure monitoring — at least every two years
- Cholesterol screening — every five years
- Pelvic exams and Pap tests (women) — initiate Pap test and pelvic exam at three years after first sexual intercourse or by age 21. Every one to three years depending on risk factors.
- Breast cancer screening/Mammogram — every year over age 40
- Colorectal cancer screening — fecal occult blood test annually, sigmoidoscopy every 3 to 5 years, colonoscopy every 10 years starting at age 50
- Flu shot — annually
- Eye exams — once every two years
- Diabetes screen — every three years beginning at age 45. Screen more often and beginning at a younger age for those who are overweight and if risk factors are present.
- Dental — call the NHP Customer Care Center to ask about specific dental coverage that is available through NHP or MassHealth.

NHP covers many more preventive care benefits. Talk to your primary care provider for your routine health care needs.

## Affirmation

NHP recognizes that under-use of medically necessary services has the potential to have an adverse affect on our members' health and wellness. For this reason, NHP promotes appropriate use of services. NHP's utilization management (UM) decisions are based only on appropriateness of care and service and existence of coverage. NHP does not specifically reward practitioners, or other individuals, conducting utilization reviews for issuing denials of coverage or service, nor does NHP provide financial incentives to UM decision-makers to encourage decisions that result in under-use of medically necessary services.

Many people think sports drinks are a healthy choice, but most sports drinks are just sugar water, much like soda.

A recent study<sup>1</sup> found that teens are drinking more sugar-sweetened drinks than teens were ten years ago. For the most part, kids in the study were getting about 356 calories per day from these types of drinks:

- Fruit drinks
- Soda
- Sports drinks

The surprise in the study was that kids who otherwise make healthy choices in terms of food and exercise drink so

many sugary sports drinks. About a third of teens studied said they had as many as three a day. That adds up to a large portion of a teen's daily calories. For the average teenage girl the recommended daily allowance is 2,200 calories, and for the average teenage boy, 2,500–3,000 calories. It also adds up in terms of cost. Just one sports drink a day at \$1.50 is almost \$550.00 a year.



What the teens may not know is that just like soda, sports drinks have a lot of sugar and they contain caffeine. The caffeine is more likely to cause a loss of fluids, not replace fluids.<sup>2</sup> As for the sugar, many of the drinks are as much as 18 percent sugar.

With so much sugar, drinking just one soda or sports drink a day can cause a weight gain of 15 pounds in a year unless calories are cut in some other way, or burned off with more activity.

It is a lot easier to stop drinking the extra calories than to try to burn them. To burn that amount of 356 calories a day, it would take a 200-pound person about one hour of exercise each day:<sup>3</sup>

One hour		One half hour	
Bicycling	364 calories	Basketball game	364 calories
Tai chi	364 calories	Jogging, 5 mph	364 calories
Walking, 3.5 mph	346 calories	Swimming laps	320 calories

The study also stated that while kids drink sodas and sports drinks in many places, they drink 55 to 70 percent at home and only 7 to 15 percent at school. This makes it easier to avoid sports drinks. At home there are other drinks to choose from.

So, think twice before you or your child drink that soda, sports drink, or fruit punch. Make sure to have other drinks to choose from in your home. Water, milk, or juice may be a more healthy choice for everyone.

<sup>1</sup> Dietary and Activity Correlates of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Consumption Among Adolescents" *Pediatrics*, September 27, 2010, <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/peds.2010-1229v1>

<sup>2</sup> "Sports Drink—Good or Bad?" *Women Fitness*, accessed 10/06/10, [www.womenfitness.net/sportsdrink.htm](http://www.womenfitness.net/sportsdrink.htm)

<sup>3</sup> "Exercise for weight loss: Calories burned in 1 hour, Mayo Clinic, accessed 10/06/10, [www.mayoclinic.com/health/exercise/SM00109](http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/exercise/SM00109)



## High-sugar sports drinks

Sports drinks are not much better than soda

# Breast Cancer Awareness

What women can do to protect themselves

## Tumor Sizes

A mammogram can detect breast cancer tissue at a much smaller size than it can be felt. Lumps found by women who do regular self exams, and even doctors, are larger. The average size lump found by women who are untrained in breast self-exams is about 1.5 inches.

### Size of a breast cancer tumor

A mammogram may detect, or even smaller

Your doctor may feel during a clinical exam

You may find with regular self-exams

Can go undetected without a mammogram or self-exam

Source: Women's Health Exchange  
www.womenshealthexchange.org

## NHP Coverage for Post-mastectomy Surgery

NHP, as required by the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act of 1998, provides benefits for mastectomy-related services including all stages of reconstruction and surgery to achieve symmetry between the breasts, prostheses, and complications resulting from a mastectomy, including lymphedema.

For more information, call the NHP Customer Care Center at 1-800-462-5449 (TTY 1-800-655-1761) for more information.

In the United States, 75 percent of breast cancer cases develop in women age 50 or above according to the National Institute of Health. While a woman 30 to 39 may have roughly a 1 in 233 chance of a breast cancer diagnosis, after age 50 the chances are 1 in 38. By the age of 60, 1 in 27.\*

All women need to be aware of their breast cancer risk. It becomes more important as women get older because the risk of breast cancer increases with age.

Women who do nothing take the chance that any cancer found will be a late stage. That could add to the health care, meds, and surgery needed to treat the cancer. There is also a greater chance of the cancer being deadly if found at a late stage.

### The three most important things you can do to protect yourself:

## 1 Know your personal risk factors

No one knows what causes breast cancer. We do know that some risk factors can raise the odds that you may get cancer. While many women who have risk factors never get breast cancer, talking to your primary care provider (PCP) about how to lower your risk is a big first step to avoid cancer.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) say these risk factors may raise your chances of getting breast cancer:

- Getting older
- Being younger at first menstrual period
- Starting menopause at a later age
- Being older at the birth of first child
- Never giving birth
- Not breastfeeding
- Personal history of breast cancer or other breast disease
- Family history of breast cancer
- Treatment with radiation therapy to the breast/chest
- Being overweight
- Long-term use of hormone replacement therapy (estrogen and progesterone together)
- Having changes in the breast cancer-related genes
- Using birth control pills
- Drinking more than one alcoholic drink a day
- Not getting regular exercise

**The National Institute of Health says that nearly 97 percent of women who find breast cancer are cancer-free 5 years later if the cancer is found while still small and in the same location where it started.**

## 2 Know the warning signs and symptoms

There may be no signs or symptoms when cancer cells begin to grow, but at some point the cancer may cause one or more of these warning signs, says the CDC:

- New lump in breast or underarm
- Thickening or swelling in breast
- Irritation or dimpling of skin
- Redness or flaky skin in nipple area or breast
- Pulling in or pain in nipple area
- Discharge other than breast milk
- Any change in size or shape
- Pain in any area of the breast

Call your PCP right away if you notice any of these signs when doing your regular self-exam. Your PCP will make sure cancer is not the cause.

While the signs listed above do not always lead to cancer, only your PCP or OB/GYN will know for sure.

## 3 Have an annual mammogram

There are no warning signs in some cases of cancer. That is why it is very important to have a mammogram each year starting at age 50. If you have any of the risks listed on the left, your PCP may suggest a mammogram at a younger age.

Getting a mammogram may be easier than you think. For instance, if you are a member of Neighborhood Health Plan:

- Mammograms are free for women aged 50 or above
- There is often no co-pay
- There is no need to be referred by a provider
- There are many locations
- Routine mammogram only needs to be taken once a year

\*National Cancer Institute — [www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet](http://www.cancer.gov/cancertopics/factsheet)

## Get Connected — Check these Local Resources

Neighborhood Health Plan — [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org)

Mammography locations — [www.massmammography.com](http://www.massmammography.com)

Dana Farber Mammography Van — 617-632-1974

YWCA Boston — [www.ywcaboston.org](http://www.ywcaboston.org)



## NHP and YWCA Team up for Breast Health Phone-a-thon

In early October, NHP sponsored the YWCA Boston Breast Cancer Awareness Phone-a-thon. Thirty NHP staff members worked overtime to make 600 phone calls to both YWCA and NHP members.

Staff members were able to talk to over 150 women about their physical and breast health, answer questions, and give details about:

- Mammography locations
- Dana Farber's mammography van
- The NHP Mammography Hotline

Both the YWCA and NHP were pleased with the results. Besides information, callers helped members:

- Schedule a mammogram clinic visit
- Sign up for the YWCA breast health text message reminder service
- Sign up for the YWCA breast health workshop

If you have questions about breast health or getting a mammogram, call NHP at 1-866-455-1344.





## Get answers to health questions, any time, day or night.

**The Nurse Advice Line** gives you access to a registered nurse 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can call about any health concern that you have, large or small. This service is free for all NHP members.

### When you call the Nurse Advice Line you get:

- Free access to nursing advice on any subject.
- Recorded information about health and wellness. Over 1,000 topics are in English and over 500 are in Spanish.
- Nurses who speak both English and Spanish. We will translate for any non-English speaking members at no cost.
- Total privacy. Your call, and what you discuss with the nurse, are all private. The information will only be shared with your doctor, or other NHP health care professionals, if appropriate.

There is no limit to how many calls a member can make. Call as often as you need. Reach the service by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at the NHP Customer Care Center 1-800-462-5449 (toll-free) or online at [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org).

If there is an urgent medical need, please contact your primary care provider. If there is an emergency, call 911.

## Do you have an Advance Directive?

### What is an Advance Directive?

It is a legal document that protects you when you can no longer speak for yourself and make decisions because of an illness, disability, or injury. This document allows someone to speak for you and protects your right to refuse treatment if you don't want it, or to ask for treatment if you want it.

It is important to talk to your doctor about an Advance Directive. Your doctor can be helpful in answering questions about medical care if you can no longer speak because of an illness, disability, or injury. If you are 18 years old or older, you should have an Advance Directive.

You can choose someone in your family or a close friend that you trust to make serious health care decisions. You should tell the person that you choose your wishes about what should happen in case you can no longer speak and make decisions for yourself. It is always good to choose a second person in case the first person finds it too hard to make decisions or needs help making decisions. You should not choose your doctor as the person to do this for you, because then a different doctor would have to take care of your health care.

Once you have chosen someone and have told them your wishes, you will have to have a written document that says who you have chosen to make your health care decisions if you are unable to make them for yourself. This document has to be signed by you and you must have two people witness and sign the document to prove that you signed it. You can find this document at [www.massmed.org](http://www.massmed.org) and go to **Patients > End Of Life Care > Health Care Proxy Information And Forms**. Or you can call NHP at 1-800-433-5556 and speak to one of our Customer Care Center representatives who can send you a copy of this form.

Once you have signed an Advance Directive, you should give copies to your spouse or partner, your doctor, the hospital you use, the person you chose to make decisions, and the second person you chose. Be sure to keep a copy for yourself. If you want, you can give a copy to other family members, close friends, or your clergy.

If you ever change your mind about the person that you chose to make health care decisions when you are not able to make them, you can tear up the Advance Directive and start over.

## Member Rights and Responsibilities

As a valued member of Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP), you have the right to:

- Receive information about NHP, our services, our providers and practitioners, your covered benefits, and your rights and responsibilities as a member of NHP.
- Receive oral interpretation services free of charge for any materials in any language.
- Have your questions and concerns answered completely and courteously.
- Be treated with respect and with consideration for your dignity.
- Have privacy during treatment and expect confidentiality of all records and communications.
- Discuss and receive information regarding your treatment options, regardless of cost or benefit coverage, with your provider in a way which is understood by you. You may be responsible for payment of services not included in the covered services list for your coverage type.
- Be included in all decisions about your health care, including the right to refuse treatment.
- Change your primary care provider.
- Access emergency care twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- Access an easy process to voice your concerns, and expect follow-up by NHP.
- File an appeal or complaint if you have had an unsatisfactory experience with NHP or with any of our contracted providers, or if you disagree with certain decisions made by NHP.
- Make recommendations regarding NHP's member rights and responsibilities.
- Be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation.
- Freely apply your rights without negatively affecting the way NHP and/or your provider treats you.
- Ask for and receive a copy of your medical record and request that it be changed or corrected.
- Receive the covered health services you are eligible for as outlined in your member handbook or covered services list.

As a member of NHP, you also have responsibilities. It is your responsibility to:

- Choose a primary care provider, the provider responsible for your care.
- Call your primary care provider when you need health care.
- Tell any health care provider that you are an NHP member.
- Give complete and accurate health information that NHP or your provider needs in order to provide care.
- Understand the role of your primary care provider in providing your care and arranging other medical services that you may need.
- To the degree possible, understand your health problems and take part in making decisions about your health care and in developing treatment goals with your provider.
- Follow the plans and instructions agreed to by you and your provider.
- Understand your benefits what's covered and what's not covered.
- Call your primary care provider within forty-eight (48) hours of any emergency or out-of-area treatment. If you experienced a behavioral health (mental health and substance abuse) emergency you should contact your behavioral health provider, if you have one.
- Notify NHP and MassHealth of any changes in personal information such as address, phone, marriage, additions to the family, eligibility of other health insurance coverage, etc.
- Understand that you may be responsible for payment of services you receive that are not described as covered in your member handbook or covered services list for your coverage type.

## Care Management and Disease Management Support

If you have health concerns you find hard to take care of, NHP may be able to help. As an NHP member, you have access to care managers who can support you and your health care provider while you are being treated. We can also help with other things in your life that make it hard for you to get and stay healthy.

At no cost to you, NHP offers personalized care management and disease management programs with services such as:

- Health counseling specific to you and support to prevent or control your chronic disease or health issues
- Treatment plans just for you to help you stay healthy
- Someone who can explain your benefits and the services you can get
- Educational materials that help you to manage your healthcare
- Help with community resources for support and special needs
- Someone to coordinate care with your health care provider and other care givers to make sure you're getting the care you need
- Health resources and tools

NHP care managers include nurses, social services professionals, therapists, and behavioral health clinicians who have expertise helping children and adults with a range of complex health needs.

Among other things, care management is for:

- Adults with severe physical disabilities
- Care after a hospital stay
- Complex care needs, injuries needing rehabilitation
- HIV/AIDS
- Organ transplant
- Pre- and post-pregnancy care
- Pediatric care and special care for children with severe physical disabilities
- Quit smoking program
- Social resources
- Special educational needs
- Asthma disease management program
- Diabetes disease management program
- Behavioral health

Along with our asthma and diabetes disease management programs, NHP also offers other disease management programs for members with chronic and rare medical conditions, such as:

- Heart failure
- Chronic lung disease
- Cystic fibrosis
- Sickle-cell anemia
- Coronary artery disease
- Seizures/epilepsy

You can call us directly at 1-800-462-5449 (TTY 1-800-655-1761) to see if one of the programs is right for you or you can find more information about our programs in your Member Handbook or go to the NHP website at [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org) and click on Members, then Your Health.

## We've Got the Tools for You!

Tools for learning more about the state of your health are all on the NHP website on our Interactive Tools page. Go to [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org) and select For Members, then Your Health, and under We've Got the Tools for You! click on "state of your health." Take a quiz or enter your information to find out about your own health. Some topics include:

### Health and Fitness Tools

- Which Health Screenings Do You Need?
- Are You at Risk for a Heart Attack?
- Is Your Weight Increasing Your Health Risks?
- What Is Your Child's BMI?
- How Many Calories Did You Burn?

### Lifestyle Checkup Tools

- How Does Smoking Affect Your Lifespan?
- Do You Have a Drinking Problem?
- Are You Depressed?
- What Is Your Stress Level?

### Pregnancy Tools

- From Embryo to Baby in 9 Months
- When Are You Most Fertile?
- What Is Your Due Date?

Find these tools and more at [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org)



## NHP's Physician Compensation Agreement

We pay NHP providers in one of two ways. Some providers are paid on a fee-for-service basis, meaning they are paid each time you receive care. This is the way most specialists are paid. Some primary care providers receive a fixed amount per member per month. This is called "capitation." Please see your NHP provider directory if you want to know how your provider is paid by NHP.

## Do You Need a Provider Directory?

NHP's Provider Directory is available on the NHP website at [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org).

To obtain information on contracted providers, or to request a copy of the NHP Provider Directory, members who do not have access to the Internet may call the NHP Customer Care Center at:

1-800-462-5449 (TTY 1-800-655-1761)  
Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.  
Thursdays, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

## Access and Utilization

For information about the utilization management (UM) process, and authorization requests and decisions, you have access to NHP Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Call 1-800-462-5449 (TTY 1-800-655-1761) or send a fax 1-617-772-5512.

The Clinical Operations staff is accessible to members seeking information about the UM process Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. by calling 1-800-462-5449 (TTY 1-800-655-1761). You may leave a message or send a fax after hours. The lines are available 24/7. All messages left after hours will be read the next business day.

## A Smoke-Free Home is a Healthier Home for Everyone

*By Angel Cosme, Master Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist  
NHP Smoking Cessation Program*

In Massachusetts, it is against the law to smoke at work places, restaurants, and bars. Recent studies have shown that such bans protect our children from harm by tobacco. They have even lowered the time children have had to spend in the hospital. In other words, saving our children from tobacco is one of the best things we can do as a society.

Now we need to do the same thing in our homes. Each adult who smokes can choose to not smoke in their home even if they are not ready to quit. Smoking in certain places or with windows open is still not safe.

Tobacco smoke that stays in homes because it is in clothes, carpets, sofas, and other fabrics after the smoking has ended is called "third-hand" smoke. New research has shown that even third-hand smoke is a danger to people.



One of the ways we can protect children from all smoking dangers is to make a clean home free of tobacco. If you smoke, you can make the choice to not smoke in your home, a choice that will have very real health benefits for your loved ones.

If you are ready to quit, call NHP at 617-204-1447 to learn about our quit smoking supports.

**In an effort to protect non-smokers, the Boston Housing Authority has a goal of ending smoking in all 64 public housing sites by 2013.**



## New Name for NHP's Common Chronic Conditions Program

The name of the chronic disease program at NHP is changing from AccordantCare to Alere.

For those members in a program, there is no change in the level or type of service. The nurses that you have worked with will stay the same. The only change is that you will now see the name "Alere" on letters and other mail.



Alere has the same goal, to help you to make the best healthcare decisions. They can help you learn how to lead a more healthy lifestyle or learn self-care skills to cope with an illness.

As it did before, the program includes:

- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)
- Heart Failure

Alere services are free. Your health records are private. Any NHP member who has questions about an Alere program can contact Alere 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at their Health Management Program line 1-800-227-3728.

Alere is a trademark of the Alere group of companies.

## Important Information for Members

Neighborhood Health Plan (NHP) is a licensed health maintenance organization (HMO). As an HMO, we have certain requirements that you, as a member, must meet in order to ensure coverage of health care services that you receive. NHP also has certain obligations to you that we must fulfill as part of our agreement with you. These requirements and obligations are found in your NHP member handbook. If you are a commercial member, please also refer to your Benefit Summary. If you are a MassHealth member, please refer to your NHP covered services booklet and excluded services list. All of these documents can be found on NHP's website at [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org).

Your NHP member handbook and your benefits or services documents are important and contain the following:

- NHP's toll-free number and hours of operation
- The name and customer services telephone number of any of NHP's subcontractors

- The availability of interpretation services by telephone for non-English members
- The availability of written materials in different languages or alternative formats and how to obtain them
- Benefits and services included in, and excluded from, coverage and how to access those benefits and services
- Pharmacy benefits, procedures, and programs
- Behavioral health benefits
- Copayments and other charges for which you are responsible
- Benefit restrictions and non-covered services, your access to them, and the cost
- How to submit a claim for covered services
- How to obtain information about providers who are in NHP's network
- How to obtain primary care services, the role of primary care providers, and where to access them
- How to obtain specialty care services and hospital services and the referral process
- How to obtain behavioral health services
- How to obtain services after normal office hours
- How, when, and where to obtain emergency services
- How to obtain care and coverage when you are out of the service area
- How to obtain information on advance directives or end of life planning
- How to voice a complaint or grievance
- How and when to appeal an NHP decision and the effects on your covered services
- How to obtain a hearing on an NHP decision at the Board of Hearings or the Office of Patient Protection
- How NHP evaluates new technology
- What your rights and responsibilities are as an NHP member

As an NHP member, you are required, with certain exceptions, to obtain services from NHP-contracted providers in the NHP network. You can choose a provider by going to NHP's Provider Directory on our website at [www.nhp.org](http://www.nhp.org), or you may request a printed copy by calling NHP at 1-800-433-5556.

### The following information can be found in your NHP Member Handbook:

Clinical guidelines and Utilization Review criteria at NHP are developed with input from practicing physicians in NHP's Network and in accordance with standards adopted by national accreditation organizations. NHP guidelines are evidence-based, wherever possible, and are applied in a manner that considers the individual's health care needs. NHP guidelines are reviewed every two years or more often as new drugs, treatments, and technologies are adopted as generally accepted medical practice.

For information about NHP if you have one of the following NHP health plans (NHP Care and Business Choice, NHP Commonwealth Care, NHP Commonwealth Choice, GIC HMO), you may contact the Office of Patient Protection (OPP) at any time by telephone, 1-800-436-7757, or fax, 1-617-624-5046, or on the Internet at [www.mass.gov/dph/opp](http://www.mass.gov/dph/opp)

Additional information about physicians licensed to practice in Massachusetts is available from the Board of Registration in Medicine. Visit [www.massmedboard.org](http://www.massmedboard.org) to find information on your physician's education, hospital affiliation, board certification status and more.

If at any time you, or your PCP, have trouble finding needed services in NHP's network, you or your PCP can call NHP for referral help. If you request it, NHP will also confirm the availability and arrange for or obtain services not available in the network.

## NHP News

### NHP Asthma Care Management Team Honored with EPA Award



Four members of the NHP Asthma Care Management team travelled to Washington, D.C. to accept the award

In June, NHP received the National Environmental Leadership Award in Asthma Management from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

NHP was one of only five programs in the country to receive this award. The EPA presented the engraved crystal award to NHP at its "Recognition Ceremony" held during the *Communities in Action National Asthma Forum* in Washington, D.C.

Dr. James Glauber, NHP's senior medical director and the asthma program leader, travelled to Washington with other members of the team to receive the award from Mike Flynn, director of the EPA Office of Radiation and Indoor Air on June 17. "It is an honor to accept the National Environmental Leadership Award for NHP," said Dr. Glauber. "I am very proud to be a part of an organization that has the commitment, vision, and talented staff to combat the burden of asthma affecting so many of our members."

To learn more about the award, visit [www.epa.gov/asthma/leadership\\_award\\_2010.html](http://www.epa.gov/asthma/leadership_award_2010.html)

## Thumbs Up Health Guides

*Thumbs Up for Healthy Food Choices* and *Thumbs Up for High Blood Pressure Control* are two guides from NHP. Both guides are in English and Spanish, use photos and graphics to show useful health facts, and are easy to use by adults as well as children. Thumbs-up and thumbs-down pictures help you learn about healthy choices and actions. Ask for a copy by calling the NHP Customer Care Center at 1-800-462-5449.





# Neighborhood Health Plan™

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## Preventive and well-child care for all children

Children who are under age 21 should go to their primary care provider for checkups even when they are well. As part of a well-child checkup, your child's doctor will offer screenings that are needed to find out if there are any health problems. These screenings include:

- Health
- Vision
- Dental
- Hearing
- Behavioral health
- Developmental
- Immunization status

NHP pays for your child's checkups. At well-child checkups, your child's Primary Care Provider can find and treat small problems before they become big ones.

The ages to take a child for full physical exams and screenings are:

- 1 to 2 weeks
- 1 month
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months

Ages 2 through 20 — children should visit their doctor once a year.

Children should also visit their doctor any time there is a concern about their medical, emotional, or behavioral health needs, even if it is not time for a regular checkup.

## Our Neighborhood

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