

ManageYour Health



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Arm yourself against the flu!

Flu season is upon us! You can help stop the spread of flu by getting the flu shot. Everyone 6 months of age and older should get the vaccine. It is not too late to protect yourself and your family. You can get the flu shot at your doctor's office or a drug store.



Texas Children's Health Plan
P.O. Box 301011
Houston, TX 77230-1011

Texas Children's
Health Plan



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4 steps to keep your child well in the flu season



1 Get the FLU SHOT (influenza vaccine). The flu shot will not prevent every cold or virus, but it will help to prevent one of the worst. The flu is the most common vaccine preventable killer of children in the US. The flu shot CANNOT give you the flu.



2 Wash your hands and/or use a hand sanitizer. You get the cold or flu when you touch a surface that has the virus on it, then touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. By keeping the hands clean, it keeps the viruses off of your hands.



3 Keep the hands clean and try not to let your child touch things in the doctor's waiting room. The doctor's office is where sick kids go for care. The waiting room is often where they share their viruses with other kids.



4 Keep your home and car smoke (and vape) free. Smoke makes colds and flu worse. It increases risk for asthma, pneumonia, and ear infections. For free help to stop smoking call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** or **1-800-YES-QUIT**.

*Harold J. Farber, MD, MSPH
Associate Medical Director
Texas Children's Health Plan*



You might think of barley as an addition to hearty, wintery soups, such as mushroom-barley or beef-barley soup, but it also works well in lighter soups like this one with chicken, asparagus and peas.

Chicken & Barley Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ cup finely chopped onion
- ½ cup finely chopped celery
- 2 cloves garlic, divided
- 6 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 large bone-in chicken breast, (10-12 ounces), skin removed, trimmed
- ½ cup pearl barley
- 1 15-ounce can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup trimmed and diagonally sliced asparagus, (¼ inch thick)
- 1 cup fresh or thawed frozen peas
- ½ teaspoon coarse salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- ½ cup lightly packed torn fresh basil leaves
- 1 strip orange zest, (½ by 2 inches)

Instructions:

1. Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat; add onion and celery and cook, stirring, until beginning to soften, 2 to 4 minutes. Grate or finely chop 1 clove garlic; add to the pan and cook, stirring, until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add broth, chicken and barley. Bring to a gentle simmer. Cover and cook over low heat until the chicken is cooked through, about 20 minutes. Transfer the chicken to a plate with a slotted spoon. Return the broth to a simmer and cook until the barley is tender, 20 to 30 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, shred the chicken or cut into bite-size pieces; discard the bone.
3. When the barley is done, add the chicken, tomatoes and juice, asparagus, peas, salt and a grinding of pepper; return to a simmer. Cover and cook over low heat until the asparagus is tender, about 5 minutes more.
4. Coarsely chop the remaining garlic clove. Gather basil, orange zest and the garlic and finely chop together. Ladle the soup into bowls and sprinkle each serving with a generous pinch of the basil mixture.



Fall into **good habits this autumn!**

Fall is a great time for renewal and fresh starts. Harvest new routines and take advantage of the health opportunities the new season brings with the following tips.



Eat your autumn colors!

The arrival of the new season is the perfect time to change your diet. Buying food in season is not only budget friendly, but specially nourishing for your body. Embrace the vibrant and colorful apples, yams, winter squash, sweet potatoes, collard greens, turnips, pears, figs, and cranberries. And once in a while, it's ok to make a little room for a homemade, healthier version of that pumpkin spice latte or crisp apple pie you've been craving!



Slow down

While moving is important for optimum health, autumn is also a nice time to slow down and enjoy some internal reflection. As the season shifts, give yourself permission to spend time relaxing at home. The shorter days and longer nights are the perfect excuse to take time to sleep more and nurture yourself. Wear your favorite pajamas, drink chai tea, read a book, or start journaling.

Keep moving during the cooler season

Fall is the perfect time to enjoy more time walking or jogging outdoors. But as temperatures drop, one way you can keep moving is to bring your activity inside. Think living room Pilates or yoga, go to the gym, or join a dancing class! This autumn, get yourself organized so that you are well prepared to exercise during the cooler months.



4 steps to feel better with a cold or the flu

1

Water, water, water! Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of fluids. Chicken soup counts!

2

Try some yummy honey. If your child is bothered by a cough from a cold or flu, honey can help to soothe the throat and ease the cough. But **don't give honey to a baby under 1-year-old**, there is a risk for infant botulism (food poisoning from ingesting botulin). Though not infectious, it affects the central nervous system (CNS) and can be fatal if not treated promptly.

3

For fever. If your child is uncomfortable from a fever, you can use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®) to help take the fever down. Always consult a doctor.

4

DO NOT USE cough medicine. The cough is the best protection the lungs have. Getting the mucus out of the lungs helps to prevent pneumonia. Cough suppressants have never been shown to work and can be dangerous for young children. The FDA recommends that cough suppressants not be used by children.

*Harold J. Farber, MD, MSPH
Associate Medical Director
Texas Children's Health Plan*



Halloween health and safety tips

Check out these tips to help make the festivities fun and safe for trick-or-treaters and party guests.

Going trick-or-treating?

Swords, knives, and other costume accessories should be short, soft, and flexible.

Avoid trick-or-treating alone. Walk in groups or with a trusted adult.

Fasten reflective tape to costumes and bags to help drivers see you.

Examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before eating them. Limit the amount of treats you eat.

Hold a flashlight while trick-or-treating to help you see and others see you. WALK and don't run from house to house.

Always test make-up in a small area first. Remove it before bedtime to prevent possible skin and eye irritation.

Lower your risk for serious eye injury by not wearing decorative contact lenses.

Look both ways before crossing the street. Use crosswalks wherever possible.

Wear well-fitting masks, costumes, and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips, and falls.

Go only walk on sidewalks whenever possible, or on the far edge of the road facing traffic to stay safe.

Enter homes only if you're with a trusted adult. Only visit well-lit houses. Never accept rides from strangers.

Never walk near lit candles or luminaries. Be sure to wear flame-resistant costumes.

Eat only factory-wrapped treats. Avoid eating homemade treats made by strangers.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/family/halloween/index.htm>



Treat your child's **ADHD**

If your child has ADHD and has been getting treatment, be on the lookout for a welcome packet from Texas Children's Health Plan ADD/ADHD Program.

This packet has helpful information about ADHD. It also has a doctor's visit and medication log. This will help you keep track of doctor and therapy visits.

Texas Children's Health Plan and the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) are checking key parts of care for children who are given ADHD medication. You may get follow-up calls to help remind you about the visit.

- Your child should go to a follow-up visit by the prescribing doctor during the first 30 days from the first date the medicine was given.
- Your child should also go to 2 follow-up visits within the next 9 months from a prescribing doctor.

7- and 30-day mental health follow-up

Has your child been in acute psychiatric care? If so, you may have been informed that your child must have a 7- and 30-day follow-up visit with a mental health professional.

Take your child to an in-network provider within 7 days of release. And again within 30 days of release. We urge you to see a therapist for the 7-day follow-up and a psychiatrist for the 30-day follow-up. This makes sure your child is seen post release when they may be at the most risk for relapse. If needed, your child can work through any issues in therapy on an outpatient basis. And he or she can see the psychiatrist to check his or her medications.

Does your child have a Written Asthma Action Plan?

An Asthma Action Plan includes:

- A daily care plan to help keep your child well and meet goals for asthma control.
- A rescue plan to help your child deal quickly with increasing symptoms.
- A guide for asthma emergencies to help you know when to call the doctor and when you need emergency help.



MY EVERYDAY ASTHMA ACTION PLAN

DATE _____
 PATIENT NAME _____
 NEXT VISIT _____
 PROVIDER NAME/NUMBER _____

GREEN ZONE I FEEL GREAT

When I am in my GREEN ZONE:

- No cough
- No wheeze
- No chest tightness

I take this medicine EVERY DAY to keep my ASTHMA in CONTROL:

- _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), _____ times a day.
- _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), _____ times a day.

Before exercise I take _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), _____ times a day.

Other EVERY DAY medicines I take are: _____

Use a spacer with metered dose inhalers. Rinse mouth after using inhalers. Avoid asthma triggers including: smoke, strong chemicals, colds and flu, and things I am allergic to such as _____

YELLOW ZONE I AM FEELING BAD

When I am in the YELLOW ZONE:

- Early asthma symptoms
- A slight cough or wheeze
- The start of a cold

For QUICK RELIEF of asthma symptoms I take: _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), every _____ hours.

For ASTHMA CONTROL I take: _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), _____ times a day.

I also take these medicines: _____

I CALL MY DOCTOR if symptoms don't get better after _____ days

I go back to my GREEN ZONE plan when my symptoms go away

RED ZONE I NEED IMMEDIATE HELP

When I am in the RED ZONE:

- A persistent cough
- A persistent wheeze
- Breathing fast

For QUICK RELIEF of asthma symptoms I take: _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), every _____ hours.

For ASTHMA CONTROL I take: _____ (NAME OF MEDICINE) _____ (DOSE), _____ times a day.

I also take these medicines: _____

CALL DR. _____ AT _____

CALL 911 or go to nearest emergency room if:

- Breathing very hard or fast
- Breathing so hard I can't walk or talk
- Sucking in the stomach or ribs to breathe
- Lips or fingertips look blue

Overcoming barriers (check family's most common barriers to care)

Barrier	Action point
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty refilling medication	Request refills 7 days before empty; sign up for automatic refills
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty remembering to take daily medications	Discuss finding a good routine with school nurse and/or healthcare provider
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty remembering to take daily medications	Discuss concerns with your healthcare provider
<input type="checkbox"/> Do not have transportation to medical appointments	Call TCHP Member Services (insert number)
<input type="checkbox"/> No transportation to medical appointments	Discuss with healthcare provider and/or call TCHP Member Services to request a case manager
<input type="checkbox"/> Have other questions about diagnosis or medications	Call TCHP Member Services line (insert number)
<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty making appointments	Call TCHP Member Services line (insert number)
<input type="checkbox"/> Worried about medication side effects	Discuss concerns with your healthcare provider; Call the TCHP Nurse Help Line

QUESTIONS? Call the 24 hour, 7 days a week TCHP Nurse Help Line: 1-800-686-3831

CM-XXXX-027

Texas Children's Health Plan is offering interactive asthma education classes for qualifying pediatric members ages 6-18. The program is a series of 6 one-hour classes held at The Centers for Children and Women. Members must attend all 6 classes in order to receive a \$50 gift card upon completion. If you have a diagnosis of asthma and are interested in participating, please call 832-828-1005 for more information.

Call us at
 832-828-1430 or call Member
 Services at 1-866-959-2555 (STAR)
 or
 1-866-959-6555 (CHIP) if you need
 an Asthma Action Plan.



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Director, Marketing
Cristina Garcia Gamboa

Editor
Sara Ledezma

Layout designer
Scott Redding

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 Houston, Texas 77230-1011
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