

ManageYour Health



SPRING 2017

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Be active! Stay healthy! **Keep fit!**

Learn how to live a healthier life.

Members from 10 to 18 years old can sign up for our **Keep Fit Club** and learn fun, easy ways to stay active and make smart food choices. And it's no cost to you!

Keep Fit offers:

- Healthy cooking and easy recipes.
- Fun exercises you can do at home.
- Special activities.

Sign up: [TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/Keep Fit](http://TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/KeepFit) or call 832-828-1430



Saturdays

March 25 (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

April 1 (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

April 8 (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

April 22 (11 a.m. to 1 p.m.)

Tom Wussow Park

Pavilion Building

500 Greens Rd.

Houston, TX 77060



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P.O. Box 301011
Houston, TX 77230-1011

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Springtime renewal: a great time to stop smoking!

If you smoke or use another form of tobacco, the best thing that you can do for your health – and the health of your family – is to stop your tobacco use. Tobacco and nicotine are among the most addictive drugs known.

For some people, stopping tobacco and nicotine use is easy. For most people it is very, very hard. That is why help is available. You can call 1-800-784-8669 (QUIT NOW) for help at no cost to you. You can also go to Smokefree.gov for free support and lots of practical tips. Teen.smokefree.gov is a beautifully designed site that provides help just for teenagers. QuitSTART App for the Apple or Android smart phone is designed to provide personalized help to teens in stopping tobacco.

Medicines for tobacco dependence are very helpful in stopping tobacco use. The Nicotine Patch, Nicotine Gum, and Nicotine lozenge are available over the counter – without a prescription. Other medicines can be prescribed by your doctor. The goal in use of the medicine is to use enough so that you can feel comfortable when not using tobacco. If you are not comfortable, you may not be using enough medicine, or you may have stopped the medicine too soon.

I don't recommend e-cigarettes. There is no regulation on what they can put in e-cigarettes. The more research that is done the more problems we find with them. Much better and much more effective medicine is available. Talk to your doctor or call 1-800-784-8669 (QUIT NOW).

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



Does your child have a **Written Asthma Action Plan?**

An Asthma Action Plan is a written guide to help keep your child well and deal with asthma problems. You make this plan with your child's doctor. The plan may change as your child's asthma needs change. You should have a copy at home and at school and with other caregivers.

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.

Call us at 832-828-1430 if you need an Asthma Action Plan.

Manage your asthma better this spring and summer

What is pollen? Pollen are the tiny grains produced by plants. Weeds, grass, and trees produce pollen in the spring and summer months. Many people are allergic to pollen. Pollen can be a problem for people with asthma because it can cause wheezing, coughing, chest tightness, and difficulty breathing.

THINK AHEAD

If you have asthma, spring can be season of alert. Be prepared. Talk with your doctor about goals for your asthma control. They will help you establish an asthma action plan.

REMEMBER

- Always have your inhaler with you.
- Stay away from things that may cause asthma attacks.
- Take your medicine as directed. Don't skip it or take less of it because you feel better.
- Follow the asthma action plan you have made with your doctor.

TAKE CONTROL OF ASTHMA

- Call your doctor when you start to wheeze or cough without cold symptoms.
- Know what triggers an attack and stay away from those things. Animal dander, dust, and pollen are common asthma triggers.
- Don't run out of medications. Make sure you have your medicine at all times.

If these symptoms occur, take action immediately. Often just a few puffs from an inhaler can help.

Flare-ups can be handled, but asthma attacks can be serious. Don't ignore the attack or hope it will go away on its own.

Routines— the secret of how to remember to take daily medicine

Many people with chronic health problems, such as asthma, high blood pressure, and diabetes, have to take daily medicine to stay well. But when you feel well, taking medicine is probably the last thing you want to do. Life gets busy and you probably have a lot to do and think about. It is hard to remember to take medicine when you feel good. The trick to taking daily medicine is to have a routine. Link taking the medicine to something that you are already doing without thinking about it. Leave it in the bathroom and take the medicine before brushing your teeth. Or, leave the medicine in the kitchen and take it before breakfast and dinner. Put an alarm in your phone to remind you.

Think of a routine that will work for you. What works for me may not work so well for you. Watch out for routines that may not work so well. If I leave it for just before going to bed, I am probably asleep before doing it. If I leave it to just before leaving in the morning, it will probably still be sitting on the kitchen table after I have left.

So, if you or your child have to take a medicine every day, think about your routines. Fitting it into your routines helps to make doing the right thing the easy thing.

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

You can grow an herb garden!

Gardening is a great way to get out and enjoy the spring weather. And you get to grow yummy things to eat! Here is how to plant your first herb garden.

Supplies:

- One large pot (8-inch diameter or more) with draining holes at the bottom OR several smaller pots with draining holes.
- Trowel (garden shovel).
- Small watering can (or large pitcher).
- Potting soil that is made for containers (not garden soil).

How to:

- Buy your seedling herbs (easier to start with than seeds) from a farmer's market, local hardware store, or plant nursery. Ideas for what to grow: Try basil, chives, scallions, cilantro or leafy greens like spinach, lettuce or arugula.
- Read the instructions so you know how much light and water they need.
- Fill pot $\frac{3}{4}$ full with potting soil. Make a small hole in the soil to place your seedling. Then cover roots. Place in sun, partial sun, or shade based on instructions.
- Watch and wait! Watch your herbs grow! Wait until herbs are a few inches tall and bushy before harvesting.
- Eat what you grow! Herbs add delicious flavor to many dishes.

Jenny Rowlands, MPH, CHES, Health Educator
Texas Children's Health Plan

Source: Better Homes and Gardens & the herb gardener blog

Tomato Herb Pizza

What you need:

- 1 whole-wheat English muffin
- 2 tablespoons tomato sauce
- 2 slices of a tomato
- 2 tablespoons shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 1 tablespoon fresh basil, chopped
- 1 teaspoon fresh oregano, chopped

What to do:

1. Preheat broiler.
2. Slice the English muffin in half.
3. Place two English muffin halves on a small baking sheet.
4. Top the muffins with tomato sauce.
5. Add the tomato slice.
6. Add cheese.
7. Add basil.
8. Broil until cheese is brown and sauce is bubbly.
9. Serve right away. Careful it's hot!

Source: KidsHealth.org



For all ages:

SworKit - Simply work it with personalized video workouts that feel like having your own personal trainer! You can use the 20 pre-built workouts or create your own. You can set your workout length and watch the exercises before you do them. There is also a SworKit Kids app for kids ages 7-14.

Cost: Free features and Premium Features (for purchase)

Available for iPhone, iPad, Android and Web and in multiple languages (including Spanish)

www.sworKit.com

Steps Pedometer and Step Counter Activity Counter

- tracks your steps to help you reach the daily goal of 10,000 steps. Set step goals, track calories burned, and challenge yourself to take more steps.

Cost: Free

Available for iPhone and iPad

www.itunes.apple.com/us/app/steps-pedometer-step-counter/

Jenny Rowlands, MPH, CHES,
Health Educator
Texas Children's Health Plan



So many apps, so little time!

Often we intend to exercise and get fit but there are so many options that we feel overwhelmed. There are many apps out there to give us new ideas. But how do we end up picking just one? Here are the highlights of a few apps that are great for you and your kids! Give one or two of them a try.

Here's one just for Kids:

7 minute workouts with Lazy Monster - offers several 7-minute workouts that a cute, animated monster leads you through. Offers several different workouts like the Lazy workout, super hero workout and moves quick enough to keep younger kids engaged.

Cost: Free

Available for iPhone, iPad

www.itunes.apple.com/us/app/7-minute-workouts-lazy-monster



Moody Gardens Beach Party

Are you ready? It's almost time! Our Spring Moody Gardens Beach Party is back.

Bring your family and join us on the white sand at Palm Beach. Float in the lazy river. Zoom down the water slides. Ride the waves in the wave pool. Watch the little ones play on the splash pad!

Saturday, May 13.

10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Sign up begins April 26 at TexasChildrensHealthPlan.org/moodygardens.

You can only register for one beach party.



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.



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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.