



Simply, the right choice.
COMMUNITY HEALTH PLAN

My CHP Connection

A quarterly health publication for Community Health Plan members

Winter 2007

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POUND PLUNGE | seconds

K-JO 105.5 is going for seconds with its mega-hit weight-loss challenge, Pound Plunge! This 12-week competition will begin on January 15, 2007, and will run through April 7. Contestants compete in teams of four, and the team with the highest percentage of weight lost at the end of the 12 weeks receives a grand prize. Other teams and individuals who have high percentages of weight lost will also receive prizes.

"This is a great way to get out there and do something great for your health," explains Kim McManus, Wellness Connections team leader. "Losing just 10 to 20 percent of your body weight can have significant health benefits. Pound Plunge is an easy and fun way to get rid of those extra pounds and be a part of a team working toward a common goal."

Community Health Plan, as a Health Improvement Organization, is dedicated to encouraging our members to take advantage of opportunities to improve their health and make positive lifestyle changes. "We want our members to live the best life possible and a large part of that is by staying healthy," states Linda Bahrke, CHP plan administrator. "We have the unique opportunity to help our members and our community through this great initiative. The health benefits of eating a nutritious diet and becoming more active are tremendous. It's

amazing the advancements people have made in their quality of life and their energy level by making even small changes to their lifestyles."

Each Pound Plunge participant will receive a kit that includes an Activities Schedule, Calendar, Weigh-in Schedule, Weekly Journal Pages, the Your Healthy Weight Handbook and more.

"K-JO 105.5 is so proud to be back for 'seconds' with the K-JO 105.5 Pound Plunge," explains Teresa Hetz, Eagle Radio promotions director. "As a proud member of the community, this is the most important project our entire staff has ever been a part of. The way this event has changed the entire community is astounding. We are excited to see how this year's Pound Plunge aids in Heartland Health's continuous goal of getting St. Joseph fit and healthy! K-JO 105.5's goal is to encourage participation in the Pound Plunge and to exceed the cumulative 8,380 pounds shed last year!"

K-JO 105.5's Pound Plunge Seconds is sponsored by Heartland Health, Community Health Plan, Sam's Club and Alice's Energy Connection.

Take the Plunge with K JO 105.5 and Community Health Plan!

To register your team of four, visit www.heartland-health.com/poundplunge or www.kjo1055.com. The deadline for registration is Friday, January 5, 2007.

www.mychp.com

GOOD HEALTH | all winter long

Let's be honest. Winter can take a toll on your best health intentions. You don't have to abandon your exercise routine just because it's cold outside. Cold weather might make you feel like hibernating, but you don't have to give up your exercise and fitness goals. You can exercise indoors. And by dressing properly and heeding cold-weather safety tips, you can exercise outdoors, too.

Maintain your motivation

Focus on how you'll benefit if you keep up your exercise routine throughout the cold-weather season. Exercise can help shake those winter blues. It improves

your mood, increases your energy level and helps you sleep better. And you'll be in better shape when the weather warms up.

Try to set aside 30 minutes or more on most days of the week for physical activity. It doesn't have to be all in one stretch. You can work it in a little here or there. And it doesn't have to be strenuous. Make a workout of household cleaning. Take the stairs. Go sledding. For extra motivation, work out with your spouse or a friend.

Tips to stay healthy all winter long

Stay fit

Remember what you gain by exercising all winter. You'll burn off those holiday pounds, boost your mood, sleep better, and have more energy. Try for just 30 minutes of exercise most days of the week. Balance the four main types of exercise. Mall walk for endurance. Lift hand weights for strength. Try tai chi for balance. Stretch slowly for flexibility before and after you exercise.

Eat healthy

Remember that snacking can help control binge eating and add energy and nutrients throughout the day. Just choose snacks wisely:

Low fat, whole grain crackers, pretzels, and breads.

Fruits and vegetables. (Frozen is nearly as good as fresh.)

Nuts and seeds. (These are high in calories, so don't eat too many.)

Low fat cheese, yogurt, and other dairy products.

CHLAMYDIA | are you at risk?

Chlamydia is one of the most common diseases you can get by having sex.

Men and women can both get chlamydia, but the disease causes the most serious problems for women. If it isn't treated, it can cause pelvic inflammatory disease (PID). PID may make it impossible to get pregnant.

The good news is that chlamydia can be cured with antibiotics. But you won't know you have it unless you get tested. That's because it often has almost no symptoms.

Community Health Plan recommends a yearly chlamydia screening for women age 25 and younger, if sexually active, as well as a screening for all pregnant women. This can be done as part of your annual gynecological exam. For sexually active teenagers, a gynecological visit will include preventive health guidance as well.

YOUR HELP | makes us better

If you received a Consumer Assessment of Health Plans Study (CAHPS) survey, please complete it and send it back in. This survey will help Community Health Plan improve the health care and services we provide. We ask that you take 10 – 20 minutes out of your day to enter your feedback.

Community Health Plan's quality improvement program places a strong emphasis on customer satisfaction. This ensures you receive the personalized service we are so proud to offer. Every response is vital to ensure we continue to provide you with the best health care and service possible.

THE FACTS | about antibiotics

When you feel sick, you want to feel better fast. But antibiotics are not the answer for every illness.

Using antibiotics when they are not needed causes some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic. These resistant bacteria are stronger and harder to kill. They can stay in your body and can cause severe illnesses that cannot be cured with antibiotic medicines. A cure for resistant bacteria may require stronger treatment — and possibly a hospital stay. To avoid the threat of antibiotic-resistant infections, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that you avoid taking unnecessary antibiotics.

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria and viruses. Antibiotics can cure bacterial infections — not viral infections.

Bacteria cause strep throat, some pneumonia and sinus infections. Antibiotics can work.

Viruses cause the common cold, most coughs and the flu. Antibiotics don't work.

Using antibiotics for a virus:

- Do not cure the infection
- Do not help you feel better
- Do not keep others from catching your illness

Protect yourself with the best care

You should not use antibiotics to treat the common cold or the flu. If antibiotics are prescribed for you to treat a bacterial infection — such as strep throat — be sure to take all of the medicine. Only using part of the prescription means that only part of the infection has been treated. Not finishing the medicine can cause resistant bacteria to develop.

For more information, talk to your doctor or visit www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/community.

COVERAGE | for out-of-area dependents

Members who live out of the Community Health Plan service area, for example college students, are covered only for urgent care and emergency services.

Dependents who have the HMO product and are living out-of-area must still choose an in-network primary care provider (PCP) from the Provider Directory. When any routine care is needed such as an annual physical, well-baby check, etc., this service must be administered by the member's network PCP, to be considered a covered benefit.

For out-of-area dependents who require urgent or emergency care, we recommend contacting the Community Health Line at (800) 455-2476 for information regarding the most appropriate care in the most appropriate setting. Emergency services received outside of the service area will be covered at 100 percent. Urgent services received outside of the service area will be reviewed by the clinical review specialist and the medical director and will be covered based on diagnosis.

6 STEPS | to a healthy heart

Hear disease is still one of the leading killers in this country. Every year about 1.1 million Americans suffer a heart attack. About 460,000 of those are fatal. Age is a primary risk factor. The odds of getting heart disease go up in men older than 45 and in women older than 55.

You can't change your age. But you can reduce your risk of having a heart attack — even if you already have coronary heart disease or have had a previous heart attack. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute recommends these six steps to reducing your risk of a heart attack.

1. **Quit smoking.** Smoking greatly increases the risk of heart disease and of having a second heart attack. But one year after quitting, your risk drops by half. It continues to fall the longer you stay smoke-free. Ask your doctor about medications that can help you kick the habit.
2. **Lower high blood pressure.** If your blood pressure is more than 140/90, you have hypertension. Expect your doctor to prescribe lifestyle changes and medication. New research suggests that even “high-normal” blood pressure in the 130–139/85–89 range needs treatment.
3. **Lower high cholesterol.** The higher your cholesterol, the greater your risk. Have your cholesterol checked at least every five years. Follow your doctor's recommendations about diet, exercise, and medication. A healthy cholesterol level is below 200 mg/dl.
4. **Aim for a healthy weight.** Body mass index (BMI) measures your weight relative to your height. Heart experts recommend a BMI number under 25. That computes to less than 174 pounds for someone

5 feet 10 inches, 145 pounds for someone 5 feet 4 inches. Waistlines should be less than 40 inches for men, 35 inches for women.

5. **Be physically active every day.** To protect your heart, you only need to do 30 minutes of a moderate-intensity activity on most or, preferably, all days of the week. If 30 minutes is too much at one time, you can break it up into periods of at least 10 minutes each. Walking, cycling, or jogging are perfect for workouts. Check with your doctor before starting an exercise program.

6. **Manage diabetes.** Up to 75 percent of those with diabetes develop heart and blood vessel diseases. Fortunately, the same steps that reduce the risk of heart disease also lower the chance of developing diabetes. For those who already have diabetes, those steps, along with taking any prescribed medication, also can delay or prevent complications of diabetes.

You and Your Meds

Medications can help prevent or control coronary heart disease.

Aspirin helps lower the risk of a second heart attack. But aspirin therapy can be risky for some. Talk to your doctor first.

Beta blockers slow the heart and make it beat with less force, so blood pressure drops. They are used for high blood pressure, chest pain, and to prevent a second heart attack. Long-term beta blocker therapy after a heart attack is key. If your doctor prescribes beta blockers for you, take them without fail and do not stop taking them without consulting with your physician first.

ACE inhibitors help control high blood pressure. This drug may be prescribed after a heart attack to help the heart pump blood better.

COMMUNITY
health
LINE

If you would like more information about heart disease, contact Community Health Line at (816) 271-4000 or (800) 455-2476.

FIGHTING | the winter blues

This time of year, it's not unusual to be sleepier, eat more and even feel a little down. But some people experience a more significant change as the winter sets in. They may feel depressed for weeks at a time. They may be fatigued and lethargic, and sleep much more than usual. They may crave and overeat carbohydrates and sweets. These symptoms can be characteristic of seasonal affective disorder or SAD.

Up to 20 percent of the population may experience mild SAD. Another 6 percent fall into winter depression. Researchers think that SAD is tied to the lack of daylight we suffer through in winter. Not everyone with SAD has the same symptoms, but the most common ones, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians, include the following:

- A change in appetite, especially a craving for sweet or starchy foods.
- Weight gain.
- A heavy feeling in the arms or legs.
- A drop in energy level.
- Fatigue.
- A tendency to oversleep.

- Difficulty concentrating.
- Irritability.
- Increased sensitivity to social rejection.
- Avoidance of social situations.

SAD tends to recur year after year. If you always feel blue in winter, you may be suffering from SAD. There are simple steps you can take to combat SAD:

- Get outdoors as much as possible
- Exercise
- Eat healthy
- Avoid alcohol

If you feel that your symptoms are more severe, please contact your doctor and discuss treatment options. If your doctor prescribes medication, be sure to take it as recommended. Some medications that treat depression have adverse effects if you stop taking them, so always consult your physician before you make any decisions about your medications. We encourage follow-up visits to your physician to assess treatment and medication and make sure you are receiving the most appropriate care.

Take a walk to raise your spirits

Walking is a simple thing we do every day. But it's a powerful thing too, and not just for your body.

While many drug and counseling options successfully treat depression, these take time to have an impact. For an immediate mental boost, try taking a brisk walk. A new study suggests that a single 30-minute walk provides a temporary but significant improvement in emotional well-being. Unlike other treatments for depression, you don't have to wait to feel the effects of physical activity. People in the study reported feeling less fatigue, tension, and distress, as well as more vigor after their walk.

Walking may be preventive too. The researchers note that physically active people are less likely to suffer from depression than those who are sedentary.

Free Online Mental Health Screening

For an anonymous and confidential depression screening, visit www.mychp.com, click on Health Improvement on the left side of the home page then select Mental Health Screenings from the list provided.

WELLNESS RECIPE | brought to you by Wellness Connections

Cajun Shrimp-and-Corn Bisque

4 cups fat-free milk
2 cups diced peeled baking potato
1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning for seafood
1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper
2 (14 3/4-ounce) cans no-salt-added cream-style corn
1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined

Combine the first five ingredients in a Dutch oven, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer the milk mixture for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the corn, and bring to a boil. Add the shrimp, and cook for 2 minutes or until shrimp are done.

Nutritional facts

Serves: 4
Calories: 394
Total fat: 2.8 g
Saturated fat: 0.7 g
Cholesterol: 134 mg

Sodium: 525 mg
Carbohydrates: 64.5 g
Fiber: 2.8 g
Protein: 30.5 g

NOW ONLINE!

Plan information now online!

You can now view plan information online. Just visit www.mychp.com, click on Member Newsletter on the left side of the home page and select Missouri DOI Plan Information to view the following topics:

Privacy Notice: for members

If you do not have Internet access, please contact Customer Service at (800) 990-9247 to receive a copy of this information.

Get your healthcare information quickly through MyCHP Service.

Logging in is easy ... your username to log in to MyCHP Service will be your member number, your initial password will be "Password1" and the first time you log in, you will be prompted to change your password — be sure to remember your new password.

On the CHP home page, click the MyCHP Service graphic. A new window will appear where you can enter your username and password. Once you've logged in, you are ready to access the many services available to you:

- Eligibility information
- Claims information
- Referral status
- Ordering identification cards
- Changing your primary care provider
- Searchable Provider Directory
- And much more

If you have any questions about MyCHP Service, please contact Customer Service at (816) 271-1247 or (800) 990-9247.

YOUR SAFETY | quality health care

Community Health Plan wants to keep you informed about the quality of care available to you in your community. That's why we encourage members to research area hospitals and health care facilities to make sure you will receive exceptional care.

As a health care consumer, you want to know that you are seeking care at a facility that is focused on quality. More and more patients are becoming aware of the importance of being an informed consumer within the health care market, but you need the right tools to get the information you need about facilities in your area.

A great resource for this type of information is www.isyourhospitalsafe.com. This site offers links to HealthGrades, Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) Quality Check® and the Department of Health and Human Service's Hospital Compare information. Each of the links goes directly to the lists of hospitals in the St. Joseph and Greater Kansas City area, so you can find information quickly.

HealthGrades

HealthGrades is a health care ratings, information, and advisory services company that provides information about more than 170 hospitals nationwide. To access their website, visit www.healthgrades.com.

Quality Check

The Joint Commission provides meaningful information about the comparative performance of accredited organi-

zations to the public. In 1996, Quality Check, a directory of Joint Commission accredited organizations and performance reports, became available on their website, www.jointcommission.org.

Hospital Compare

At www.hospitalcompare.com, you can compare the quality of care information provided by acute-care hospitals. This website has information on recommended treatment measures for heart attacks, heart failure and pneumonia. You may review the performance of a specific hospital with national, state and local averages relating to these conditions.

If you are a patient, or someone helping a patient with his or her health care decisions, you may speak to your health care provider about what this information means and how it can be used to make health care decisions, review the performance of hospitals in your state, and gather information about other hospitals. In addition to helping consumers make wise health care decisions, this information will encourage hospitals to take steps in improving the quality and safety of the health care services they provide.

Consumer Hospital Safety Tips

Ask questions if you have doubts or concerns, and make sure you understand the answers.

Keep and bring a list of ALL the medicines you take, including non prescription medicines and nutritional supplements. Inform your health care provider if you have any drug allergies.

Request the results of any test or procedure. Ask what the results mean for your care.

Talk to your doctor about which hospital is best for your health needs.

Make sure you understand what will happen if you need surgery.

Developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in partnership with the American Hospital Association and the American Medical Association.

KNOW | what tests you need for colorectal health

Even people who are good at taking care of their health find excuses for putting off screening for colorectal cancer. It may seem time-consuming or uncomfortable. Yet the potential benefit is so great, those excuses don't hold water. When colorectal cancer is caught in an early stage, the survival rate is greater than 90 percent. Wait too long, and the odds for cure don't look as good.

Public education campaigns have made more people aware that screening can save their lives. But still, only 37 percent of colorectal cancer is caught in the earlier stage.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) advises men and women to start getting tested regularly at age 50. People with a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps should talk with their doctors about starting screening at an earlier age.

CHP recommends the following:

- A yearly fecal occult blood test (FOBT), and
- Sigmoidoscopy or double-contrast barium enema (DCBE) every four years or,
- Colonoscopy every 10 years

Free Colorectal Cancer Screening

In March 2007, The Cancer Center at Heartland Regional Medical Center in St. Joseph, Mo. is sponsoring a free colorectal screening for the community and the region over a two week period. This screening is available for Community Health Plan members. All members who are age 50 and older are encouraged to take advantage of this free offer. Kits will be available March 5 - 18, 2007.

This publication contains health information that is meant to complement your health care provider's advice, not to replace it. Before making changes in your medications, diet or exercise, talk to your doctor.

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