

Remember when you taught them to share ...

The arrival of fall means the start of the flu season, which typically lasts from October to May. It is critical for all SoonerCare members to get the annual flu shot to avoid the flu and be healthy this fall season.

Getting a flu shot protects you from coming down with the flu. And although the flu shot doesn't always provide total protection, it's worth getting.

SoonerCare covers the flu shot for both children and adults. This can be done at your Medical Home (MH). Sometimes drugstores, senior centers, and workplaces also offer flu shots. If you have questions about getting a flu shot, contact your Medical Home.

This year's annual flu shot will offer protection against H1N1 flu (swine flu) virus, in addition to two other influenza viruses that are expected to be in circulation this flu season. A new vaccine that protects against four strains of the virus will also be available, as will a high-dose flu vaccine for adults age 65 and older.

Influenza is a respiratory infection that can cause serious complications, particularly to young children and to older adults. Flu shots are the most effective way to prevent influenza and its complications. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months of age or older be vaccinated annually against influenza.

Who should get the flu vaccine?

The CDC recommends annual influenza vaccinations for everyone age six months or older. Vaccination is especially important for people at



high risk of influenza complications, including:

- Pregnant women
- Older adults
- Young children
- Chronic medical conditions can also increase your risk of influenza complications.

Examples include:

- Asthma
- Cancer or cancer treatment
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Diabetes
- HIV/AIDS
- Kidney or liver disease
- Obesity

Who shouldn't get the flu shot?

Check with your medical home before receiving a flu vaccine if you:

- **Are allergic to eggs** as some flu vaccines contain tiny amounts of egg proteins. If you have an egg allergy or sensitivity, you'll likely be able to receive a flu vaccine — but you might need to take special precautions, such as waiting in your MH office for at least 30 minutes after vaccination in case of a reaction. There's also a flu vaccine that doesn't contain egg proteins, Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved, for use in people age 18

everyone needs a flu shot!

and older. Consult your MH about your options.

- **Had a severe reaction to a previous flu vaccine.** The flu vaccine isn't recommended for anyone who had a severe reaction to a previous flu vaccine. Check with your MH first, though. Some reactions might not be related to the vaccine.

FAQ's

Can the vaccine give me the flu?

No. The flu vaccine can't give you the flu. But you might develop flu-like symptoms — despite getting a flu shot for a variety of reasons, including:

- **Reaction to the vaccine:** Some people experience muscle aches and fever for a day or two after receiving a flu shot. This may be a side effect of your body's production of protective antibodies. The nasal vaccine can cause runny nose, headache and sore throat.
- **The 2-week window:** It takes about two weeks for the flu shot to take full effect. If you're exposed to the influenza virus shortly before or during that time period, you might catch the flu.

What kind of protection does the flu vaccine offer?

Flu vaccines aren't 100 percent effective. According to the CDC, in past flu seasons when the match between flu vaccine and circulating strains of flu virus is close, a flu shot is between 60 and 70 percent effective in warding off influenza in all age groups combined.

(Source: Mayo Clinic)



Safe Sleep for Your Baby

Safe Sleep Top 10

Despite the existence of compelling research and statistics about the importance of safe sleep in reducing our nation's high rate of infant mortality, the number of babies who die in adult beds and other unsafe sleep environments is on the rise.

In fact, of the more than 4,500 sudden, unexpected infant deaths each year, statistics show that as many as 80-90 percent are the result of unsafe sleep practices. These are preventable deaths.

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the leading cause of death in babies after one month of age to one year of age. To reduce infant deaths from SIDS, we encourage using safe sleep strategies. See the list of top ten tips.

Sources: *FirstCandle.org, Oklahoma State Department of Health*



By Sylvia Lopez,
M.D., FAAP and
OHCA Chief
Medical Officer

A Special Note

“Over the last decade, we have made good strides in decreasing the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). One of the reasons for this has been the “Back to Sleep” campaign promoted by the American Academy of Pediatrics, doctors, and other health care personnel. This campaign encourages parents to place their baby on his/her back when they sleep. It is the safest position for the infant, and a baby’s sleep is so important. Also, do not put the infant to sleep in an adult bed; do not cover the baby’s head with blankets or sheets; and do not allow the baby to sleep with another sibling or a pet. Remember to always remove soft bedding, crib bumpers and toys from the baby’s bed. Additionally, the baby should never be exposed to smoke. Make sure the bed is not near mini blinds or other hazards. Our babies are so precious so let’s do everything we can to keep them safe and healthy.”

- **Always place your baby on his or her back to sleep, every time.** The back sleep position is the safest, and every sleep time counts.
- **Place your baby on a safety-approved crib mattress, covered by a fitted sheet.** Never place your baby to sleep on pillows, quilts, sheepskins, or other soft surfaces.
- **Keep soft objects, toys, and loose bedding out of your baby’s sleep area.** Do not use pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins, or crib bumpers in your baby’s sleep area, and keep all objects away from your baby’s face.
- **Do not allow smoking around your baby.** Do not smoke before or after the birth of your baby, and do not let other people smoke around your baby.
- **Keep your baby’s sleep area close to, but separate from, where others and you sleep.**
 - An adult bed is never a safe place for a baby to sleep
 - It is not safe for a baby to sleep with other children, adults or pets
 - If you feed your baby in your bed, put your baby back in the crib or bassinet to sleep
- **Think about using a clean, dry pacifier when placing the infant down to sleep,** but do not force the baby to take it. (If you are breast-feeding your baby, consider waiting 4-6 weeks or until breast-feeding is well established before introducing the pacifier.)
- **Do not let your baby overheat during sleep.** Dress your baby in light sleep clothing, and keep the room at a temperature that is comfortable for an adult.
- **Avoid products, including home monitors, that claim to reduce the risk of SIDS** because most have not been tested for effectiveness or safety. If you have questions about using monitors for other conditions, talk to your health care provider.
- **Reduce the chance that flat spots will develop on your baby’s head:** provide “tummy time” when your baby is awake and someone is watching; change the direction your baby lies in the crib from one week to the next; and avoid too much time in car seats, carriers, and bouncers.
- **Make sure everyone who takes care of your baby follows these simple steps.**

Adapted from: Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), Source: Oklahoma City-County Health Department

SoonerCare pregnancy-related services changes

With the changes coming to your health care services due to the Affordable Care Act, it is important to be aware of changes coming to the SoonerCare program. The following changes specifically affect members who receive or will receive pregnancy-related services. The availability of these services is different between SoonerCare's full scope of obstetrical care coverage and the Soon-to-Be-Sooners (STBS) coverage. Some services may need a referral, prior approval by your doctor, or small copay.

The following changes take effect on January 1, 2014 for the two types of coverage:

Full Scope Services for Pregnant Women:

- Routine visits
- Specialty visits (when medically necessary)
- Delivery services
- Ultrasounds
- Limited dental coverage while pregnant
- Prescriptions
- Labs & diagnostics related to pregnancy
- Maternal & infant health social work
- Lactation consultation services
- Smoking cessation
- Diabetes testing supplies
- Genetic counseling
- High risk obstetric care (when medically necessary)

Soon-to-Be-Sooners Services for Pregnant Women:

- Routine office visits related to the baby – prenatal care
- Pregnancy-related medications
- Two ultra sounds during pregnancy; additional ultra sounds are approved when medically necessary
- Lab services related to the pregnancy
- Some specialty services when it impacts the baby (requires medical approval)
- Hospital services for the baby – delivery services only

Income Guidelines for Pregnancy Services

Pregnant Women: Full Scope Benefits

Size of Household	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1	\$1,274	\$15,282
2	\$1,720	\$20,629
3	\$2,165	\$25,975
4	\$2,611	\$31,322
5	\$3,056	\$36,669
6	\$3,502	\$42,015
7	\$3,947	\$47,362
8	\$4,393	\$52,708

Pregnant Women: Soon-To-Be-Sooners (STBS)

Size of Household	Monthly Income	Annual Income
1	\$1,772	\$21,257
2	\$2,392	\$28,694
3	\$3,011	\$36,131
4	\$3,631	\$43,568
5	\$4,251	\$51,005
6	\$4,871	\$58,442
7	\$5,490	\$65,879
8	\$6,110	\$73,316

If you have questions on coverage, please call the Oklahoma Health Care Authority SoonerCare Helpline at 800-987-7767.

This newsletter is for SoonerCare Choice members. It will tell you about any changes or updates to your SoonerCare benefits. It will also give you other useful news to help keep you healthy. However, if you have specific questions about your health, please talk to your doctor.

Disclaimer: Clinical, legal and other comments are offered for general information only. Please talk to your doctor about specific health concerns.

SoonerCare Helpline
800-987-7767 or 711(TDD)

SoonerRide
877-404-4500 or 711(TDD)

SoonerCare provider list
800-987-7767

Si usted quiere leer este artículo en español, visite la pagina web del OHCA al <http://www.okhca.org/sooner-care-companion>.

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SNWENG-COMPAN-FALL 2013



Lost the fight for his leg but won the war for his life

In the summer of 2006, Jonah White started complaining that his ankle was hurting.

“We didn’t think much of it at first but noticed that it was always his right ankle. We noticed that it looked swollen so

we took him to the doctor,” said Amy White, Jonah’s mother. Jonah’s primary doctor performed an x-ray and wasn’t sure exactly what was wrong, so the Whites were referred to The Orthopedic Center of Tulsa. The family was informed that Jonah had a cyst in his bone, and that it would eventually reabsorb back into the body.

Jonah was casted for a hairline fracture under the cyst. After Jonah got the cast off, he was still in a lot of pain and his walking was worse. An orthopedic surgeon with the facility ordered an MRI and agreed that it was just a cyst but “never cancerous.”

“However, he did refer us to a pediatric orthopedic surgeon in Oklahoma City to look at his ankle and possibly remove the cyst so that it wouldn’t hurt his growth,” Amy said.

Nov. 13, 2006, is a day the White family will never forget. Jonah had his surgery scheduled to remove the cyst that four different doctors believed to be benign.

“You can imagine our shock and horror when the surgeon came in saying words like malignant, aggressive chemotherapy, and amputation. It was soon confirmed that Jonah had Osteosarcoma, a bone tumor in his right fibula near his ankle. Soon after, we were thrown into the world of hospitals, medicines and a life that revolved around helping our little boy fight for his leg but more importantly for his life,” Amy said.

Jonah started chemotherapy rounds in December 2006 at St. Francis under the care of a pediatric oncologist.

After the third round, it was evident that Jonah’s foot was going to have to be removed. If his foot was not removed, he would have a life full of surgeries, a fused ankle, limited mobility, and a 60 percent risk of the cancer coming back. Jonah had his amputation surgery on April 6, 2007. Jonah was fitted for his first “new leg” on June 20, 2007. Jonah is now on his fifth and current leg, which is decked out in hunting camo. Amy said each leg has been unique and fun- showing off a little of Jonah’s vibrant personality.

Jonah has been cancer free since treatment ended Sept. 15, 2007.

He has continued to grow and thrive since his cancer treatment. However, cancer has definitely left its mark. Jonah has lost his high frequency hearing and wears hearing aids. He continues speech and physical therapy on a regular basis.

When Jonah was first diagnosed, he was on SoonerCare and continues to receive SoonerCare services through the TEFRA program.

“My first thoughts were, will Jonah survive this; will my family survive this; will we lose our home because surely SoonerCare won’t cover this kind of medical treatment,” said Amy. “We were a young family, and it was a very scary thing to deal with the emotional, physical and financial struggles of all of this but when I found out that SoonerCare was going to help us and that Jonah was going to be able to get the quality treatment he needed and the therapies he needed to survive- I felt so blessed. We are so thankful for SoonerCare!”

Remember, if you have a story to share about how SoonerCare has helped you or your family, visit our website at www.okhca.org/tellus. Whether it’s a quote of how SoonerCare helped you take your child to get a check-up or a full story on how SoonerCare helped save a life, we want to hear it!



Keep The Smiles Bright Throughout the Holidays

As the holiday season comes upon us again, it is important for all SoonerCare (Oklahoma Medicaid) members to place a high priority on oral health, especially with the amount of candy and sugar consumed by children

during this season.

Remember to practice and encourage healthy habits during this holiday season that will improve dental health, such as drinking more water, brushing twice a day with ADA-accepted fluoride toothpaste, and also cleaning between teeth daily with floss.

If you or your children have not been to a dentist recently, there's no better time than now to check up on your oral health than this holiday season. SoonerCare pays for preventive, diagnostic, and restorative services for qualified members under the age of 21. Some limited exams, limited x-rays, and emergency extractions are covered for qualified members age 21 and over. SoonerCare has recently increased the number of dental providers available throughout the state, so make an appointment today!

The Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA) has also implemented the Perinatal Dental Access Program for pregnant women. Examinations and cleaning (including scaling and planning) are examples of covered dental services. Members do not need a referral from their pregnancy provider to obtain these dental services. Dental care and treatment should be given as early in the pregnancy as possible.

Dealing with the leftover candy that piles up during the holidays can be a fun task for children who enjoy sorting out their favorite candies from the lot. But parents should be aware of creative ways to use the leftover candy to teach good habits and lessons to your children. The following are suggestions for your family to use to creatively use leftover holiday candy:

1. Set up a candy bank. Allow your child to make daily withdrawals from the bank and monitor the progress. This way, you can control how much candy your child consumes.
2. Participate in a candy exchange. Some dentists and orthodontists offer candy exchanges. You turn in some candy and get healthy treats in exchange. Or you turn in some candy, and they pay you \$1 per pound. They donate the candy to soup kitchens or to troops overseas.
3. Wouldn't it be cool if some of your candy went halfway around the world? Your holiday candy could be included in care packages that are sent to soldiers serving their country far from home. Here are two organizations that ship packages to the troops: Operation Gratitude (www.operationgratitude.com) and

Operation Shoebox (www.operationshoebox.com).
Heat-resistant candy only. Chocolate melts, you know!

4. Children can ask their parents if they can exchange your candy for something else — like a book or a toy. Make it fun by using a scale to weigh your stash — for example, maybe you could earn a book for every pound of candy you trade in.
5. Reduce by recycling. If you have a birthday or other party coming up, offer to use your candy to fill up goodie bags.
6. Make a special holiday version of trail mix by tossing in a handful of candy pieces with your pretzels, nuts, raisins, and dried fruits.

Sources: KidsHealth.com; Academy of General Dentistry; MensFitness.com and American Dental Association.

Don't Let Holiday Sweets Play Tricks on Your Teeth

By Leon Bragg,
D.D.S., M.Ed.

OHCA Chief Dental Officer



Every time we eat, we form plaque, which is a sticky film of bacteria that constantly forms on the teeth and gums. When these bacteria come in contact with sugar in the mouth, they produce acid that attacks the teeth for twenty minutes or more. Repeated acid attacks can cause tooth enamel to break down, eventually resulting in tooth decay.

One way to deal with holiday sweets is to let your child eat them with meals rather than as snacks. When possible, also let your child have the candy as treats with their meals. Saliva production increases during a meal, helping to rinse food from the mouth and neutralize plaque acid. Sticky candies like gummies and taffy stay on your teeth longer than something like chocolate. Hard candies are held in the mouth longer, giving bacteria in the mouth more time to create acid that weakens tooth enamel.

Keeping Your Kids Safe While Driving:

Child Car Seat Safety Can Save Lives



Following these suggested guidelines from SeatCheck can help to avoid a serious injury or fatality in the event of a crash:

1. Safety experts recommend that children ride rearward-facing in the vehicle until they are two years old or until they reach either the height or weight limit of their rear facing child safety seat.
2. Infant carriers are only used rearward-facing in the vehicle. Convertible child seats can be used either rearward-facing or forward-facing in the vehicle. Convertible child seats often have a higher weight limit in the rearward-facing direction than infant carriers do, so they can be used rearward-facing by children who have outgrown their infant carrier but are still less than at least two years old. Children should remain rearward-facing until they reach the highest weight or height allowed by their convertible child seat.
3. Never place a rear-facing infant seat in front of a passenger air bag.
4. Children who are two years old or who have outgrown their rear-facing convertible child seat can ride forward-facing in the vehicle. Forward-facing child seats and convertible child seats used in the forward-facing direction are for children who are over two years old or who have outgrown the rear-facing weight or height limit of their rear-facing convertible

- child seat. Children should remain in a forward-facing child seat with a harness for as long as possible, up to the highest weight or height allowed by the child seat.
5. All children whose weight or height is above the forward-facing limit for the child seat should use a belt-positioning booster seat until the vehicle's seat belts fit properly. If the child cannot sit with knees bent over the vehicle's seat cushion while the child's back is against the seatback, they should use a belt-positioning booster seat.
6. After outgrowing a booster seat, children under age 13 should always use a seat belt and ride in the back seat. Remember, kids of all ages are safest when properly restrained in the back seat.
7. Old/used child safety seats should not be used unless you are certain they have never been in a crash and you have all the parts (including instructions). Seats that are six years old or older should be discarded and never used. Visit http://www.seatcheck.org/tips_seat_recall_list.html to check if your child safety seat has been recalled.
8. Always read both the vehicle owner's manual and the instructions that come with the child safety seat.
9. It is important to remember that the "best" child safety seat is the one that correctly fits the child, the vehicle, and is used correctly every time.
10. Get your child's safety seat checked!



Important Phone Numbers

'711' number for the English speaking hearing impaired

800-662-4955 for the Spanish speaking hearing impaired.

SoonerCare Helpline

800-987-7767

711 (TDD)

Patient Advice Line

800-530-3002

711 (TDD)

SoonerRide

877-404-4500

711 (TDD)

Linea de Ayuda de SoonerCare

800-987-7767

800-662-4955 (TDD)

Linea de Asesoramiento al Paciente

800-530-3002

800-662-4955 (TDD)

SoonerRide

877-404-4500

800-662-4955 (TDD)

Keeping Your Kids Healthy This Winter

As winter approaches, the days become shorter and colder, and we are more exposed to the cold and flu, strep throat, etc. With all these elements and the prevalent colder weather, families tend to stay inside and be less active and healthy. It is even more important during this time to take precautions to avoid common fall and winter sicknesses and to be physically active and to eat healthy snacks and meals.

By using the following tips and being proactive, parents can ensure that their children will have a healthy and productive winter and that they form healthy habits as they grow older.

Eat more wholesome snacks.

Instead of feeding your kids processed prepackaged foods high in additives, preservatives, sugar, salt, fat and dairy, all of which are hard for your child to process fully and create excess mucus, try giving them more whole foods such as fruit, veggies, and grains.

While the change in diet will be tough at first, you will find more success and less whining from your child if you integrate whole foods slowly into your child's breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks, and make it fun.

Shape Your Future, a partner of the Oklahoma Health Care Authority (OHCA), offers valuable tips on eating healthier and preparing nutritious meals. Visit www.shapeyourfutureok.com/eatbetter.aspx to find tips on how to prepare and eat healthy meals.

Get out and play!

Encouraging your child to go outside and play for at least 20 minutes after school is a great way to get them fresh air and get their bodies moving. The more kids sit around playing video games all afternoon, the less they activate their lymphatic system which is responsible for moving toxins out of the body. Also, the more they run out excess energy, the better they will sleep at night!

Visit Shape Your Future (www.shapeyourfutureok.com/movemore.aspx) to discover ways to be more physically active.



Wash your child's hair before dinner.

Many of us are guilty of giving our children baths and washing their hair right before putting them to bed. Having your child go to bed with wet hair, especially in the winter, weakens their immunity and often leaves them stuffy and clogged in the morning. Try to rearrange your bath time to before dinner, that way there is plenty of time for hair to dry.

Make sure they get more sleep.

Getting your child to bed at a reasonable time is very important. Most kids don't get the nine to 10 hours of sleep that they need to rejuvenate and restore their systems. Sleep is when we detoxify and recharge ourselves so our systems can properly perform the jobs they are supposed to do.

Stop it before it starts.

The cold and flu can spread easily among children, especially those in school or childcare. It is important to teach your child to use proper hygiene in the home and at school. Teach your child to wash his hands with soap and water for 15-20 seconds (or long enough to sing "Happy Birthday") after playing outside, before eating, and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing his nose. Children should only use alcohol-based hand rubs under supervision; make sure your child rubs his hands until the product has dried. Infants and toddlers should never use these products. Tell your child to cover his nose and mouth with a tissue if he has to sneeze, and to throw dirty tissues in the trash. Make sure you clean toys or other items your child brings to and from school.

Encourage and model healthy eating.

Encouraging children to consume healthy foods and sustain an active lifestyle does not have to become a household power-struggle. The key for parents in setting the proper nutritional example is to follow the three "P's". Planning, preparing and providing healthy meals and snacks for the family will ensure the right foods are being consumed.

Sources: *SheKnows.com*, *OneToughJob.org*,
Children's Healthcare of Atlanta

SoonerCare Companion

Oklahoma Health Care Authority
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www.okhca.org



Ready to Quit? We Can Help!

SoonerCare covers nicotine replacement therapy products such as patches, gum, lozenges, inhalers, Zyban and Chantix to help members quit. These medications are covered through a 90 day prescription from your doctor. Research has shown that if you're ready to quit, these medications can help you reach your goal and stay quit. Ask your doctor about these medications and find the one that's right for you. You can also contact the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline for free tobacco cessation counseling and two week starter kit of patches, gum or lozenges.

		Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline	
Free help		1 800	QUIT NOW
		784-8669	OKhelpline.com

Kendra Flanagan, 27 | Smoked 8 years | Smokefree 3 years

**“Don't give up on
quitting smoking.”**



Talk to your doctor about quitting.

Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline
1-800-QUIT NOW
1-800-784-8669