

My Health Matters

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BECOME AN HNE FACEBOOK FAN!

Join your fellow members and
be part of the action at HNE

- **Post Your Comments** on the latest issues of the day.
- **Share the latest** news, photos, and video with your friends.
- **Be a part** of the HNE community on Facebook - we want to hear what you think.

FAN US TODAY!

Use Antibiotics Wisely

When you feel sick, you want to feel better fast. But antibiotics aren't the answer for every illness. What's the harm in taking antibiotics anytime? Using antibiotics when they are not needed causes some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic.

To avoid the threat of antibiotic-resistant infections, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that you avoid taking unnecessary antibiotics.



Get Smart...

- Antibiotics are strong medicines, but they don't cure everything.
- When not used correctly, antibiotics can actually be harmful to your health.
- Antibiotics can cure most bacterial infections. Antibiotics cannot cure viral illnesses.
- Antibiotics kill bacteria – not viruses.
- When you are sick, antibiotics are not always the answer.

For more information about antibiotics, go to hne.com.

Stop. Learn. Go

Tips for Talking with Your Pharmacist to Learn How to Use Medicines Safely

Do you want to:

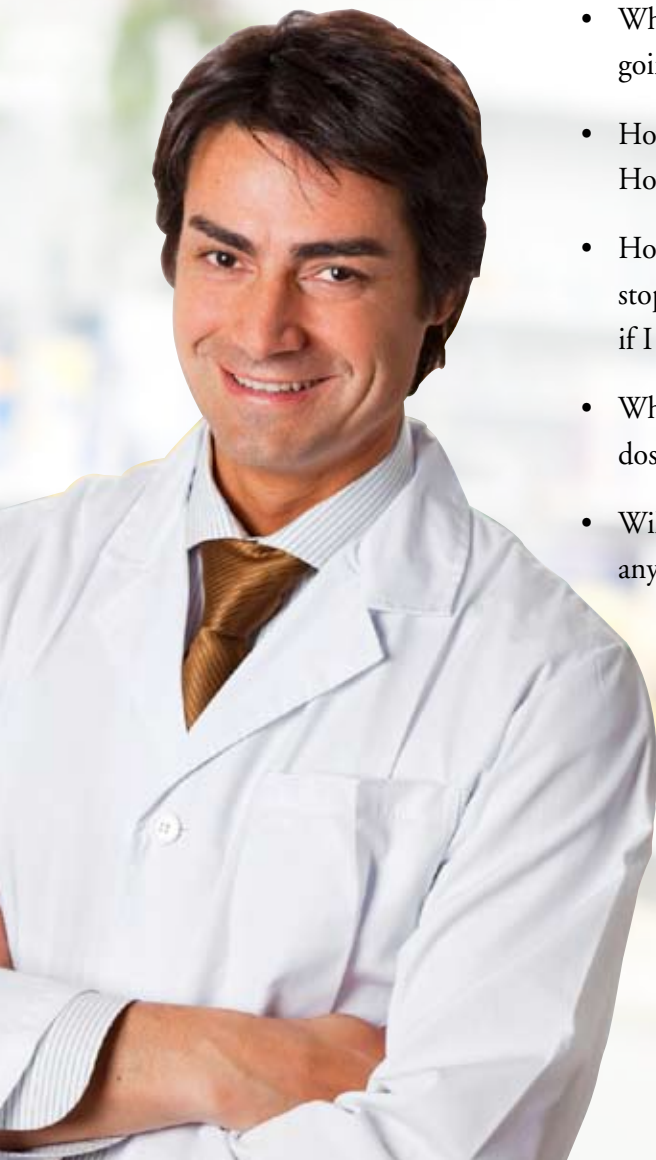
- Learn how to use prescription and over-the-counter medicines safely?
- Improve the benefits you get from your medication?
- Reduce side effects and lower your risks?

Your pharmacist can help.

Here are some questions to ask when you fill a prescription. They are also good questions to ask when talking with your other healthcare professionals.

Ask your pharmacist

- What are the brand and generic (non-brand) names?
- What is the active ingredient? Can I use a generic?
- What is this for, and how is it going to help me?
- How and when should I use it? How much do I use?
- How long should I use it? Can I stop using the medicine or use less if I feel better?
- What should I do if I miss a dose or use too much?
- Will this take the place of anything else I am using?
- When will the medicine start working? How should I expect to feel?
- Are there any special directions for using this?
- Should I avoid any other medicines, dietary supplements, drinks, foods, activities, or other things?
- Is there anything I should watch for, such as allergic reactions or side effects? What do I do if I get any?
- Will I need any tests to check the medicine's effects (blood tests, x-rays, other)? When will I need those?
- How and where should I keep this medicine?
- Is there a medication guide or other patient information for this medicine?
- Where and how can I get more written information?



Massachusetts Introduces New Website

The MyHealthCareOptions™ website (<http://hcqcc.hcf.state.ma.us/>) is designed to promote transparency in healthcare. The site was developed to help control costs and improve the quality of care available to patients.

At MyHealthCareOptions™ you'll find information that can help you decide where to seek the right care with answers to questions such as:

- Which physician group is closest to my house?
- I am new to the area, so where can I find quality health care?
- What are the benefits and risks of a complicated, high-cost procedure?
- What is a specific hospital's track record for the procedure I need?



- I'd like a second opinion, so where do I find another specialist?
- I have to pay for some of my health care expenses, so how can I get the best care at the best price?

The information on the website is not meant to replace a consultation with your physician. But it's the first step in making better healthcare decisions.

You can find more details about MyHealthCareOptions™ and a link at our website, hne.com.

Five Steps to Make The Most of Your Healthcare

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5
Ask questions	Keep a list of ALL the medicines you take	Get the results of all tests and procedures	Talk to your doctor	Need surgery?
Make sure you understand the answers. Choose a doctor who makes you feel comfortable talking to him or her.	Bring it with you when you visit your doctor or pharmacy. Include non-prescription medicines on the list, too.	Ask what the results mean and write them down.	Find out which hospital is best for your health needs.	Make sure you understand what will happen, before, during and after.

Talking to your doctor and other health care providers is the best way to make sure you get the care you need.

For a more detailed list of Five Steps to Safer Healthcare, go to hne.com.



Be Healthy and Safe in the Garden

Whether you are a beginner or expert gardener heading out to your garden, vegetable plot, or grassy lawn, health and safety are important. Gardening can be a great way to get physical activity, beautify the community, and go green. However, it also can expose you to potentially harmful elements, such as the sun, insects, lawn and garden equipment, and chemicals. Below are some health and safety tips for gardeners to follow while enjoying the beauty and bounty gardening can bring.

- **Dress to protect.** Prevent exposure to chemicals, insects, and the sun.
- **Put safety first.** Limit distractions, use chemicals and equipment properly, and be aware of possible hazards to lower your risk for injury.
- **Watch out for heat-related illness.** Even being out for short periods of time in high temperatures can cause serious health problems. Monitor your activities and time in the sun to lower your risk for heat-related illness.
- **Know your limits.** Talk to your healthcare provider if you have concerns that may impair your ability to work in the garden safely.

- **Enjoy the benefits of physical activity.** Gardening is an excellent way to get physical activity. Active people are less likely than inactive people to be obese or have high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, coronary artery disease, stroke, depression, and colon cancer.
- **Get vaccinated.** Vaccinations can prevent many diseases and save lives. All adults should get a tetanus vaccination every 10 years.
- **Go green.** Conserve water, reuse containers, recycle, and share your bounty.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Rd., Atlanta, GA 30333. 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) TTY: (888) 232-6348, 24 Hours/Every Day - cdcinfo@cdc.gov



Free Health Classes

HNE members can take advantage of the following free health classes. Some classes also are available as DVDs.

For more information call 413-787-4000 or 800-842-4464 and the extension below the class that interests you.

Asthma Education Class
ext. 3033

Diabetes Education & Meal Planning Workshop
ext. 3033

Disease Management Grocery Store Tour
ext. 3033

Grocery Store Tour on DVD
ext. 3032

Living Well Grocery Store Tour ext. 3031

Smoking Cessation
ext. 3033



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Some of the most important things you can do to stay healthy are to get recommended screening tests, be tobacco free, be physically active, eat a healthy diet, stay at a healthy weight.
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BE TOBACCO FREE

If you smoke, talk with your doctor about quitting. There are also a number of resources in our community that can help you to stop smoking. For tips on how to quit, go to:

- **You Can Quit Smoking Now at smokefree.gov.**

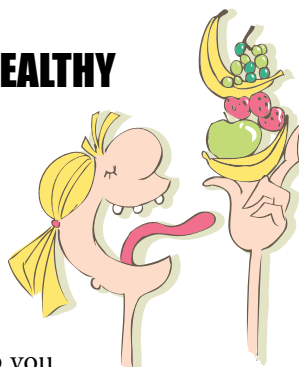


Talk to someone about how to quit by calling the Tobacco Resource Center in Massachusetts at **1-800-trytostop (800-879-8678)**.

Additional resources also can be found at healthfinder.gov, when searching for “smoking.”

EATING HEALTHY TO STAY HEALTHY

Eating healthy isn't hard to do and can help you prevent many chronic health conditions.



When choosing a snack or a meal, make sure you get enough of the following:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Grains (keep in mind that half of your servings of grains should be whole grains, such as whole wheat bread and brown rice)
- Milk products that are either low fat or fat free
- Fish, skinless poultry, lean red meats, dry beans and nuts
- Polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats (such as, salmon, trout, herring, avocados, olives, and walnuts).

For more information on the different types of foods you should eat to stay healthy log onto mypyramid.gov

STAY AT A HEALTHY WEIGHT

This is easier said than done! Balancing your calories is the key. Track all of your calories (food and beverages) and balance these with the calories you burn off with daily activity. To prevent gradual weight gain, make small decreases in your food and beverage intake and increase your physical activity.

If you are interested in participating in a weight loss program, keep in mind HNE's Weight Watchers™ and Fitness Club Reimbursement Program.



HOW MUCH PHYSICAL ACTIVITY SHOULD YOU GET?

You can achieve health benefits by doing the following each week:

- 2 hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity, and
- Muscle-strengthening activities on 2 or more days

Moderate activities include:

- Walking at a brisk pace
- Ballroom dancing
- Leisurely bicycling
- Canoeing
- Golfing
- Softball
- Gardening
- Moderate housework
- Pushing a lawn mower



Do at least 10 minutes of aerobic activity at a time and remember, if you have not been physically active check

with your doctor before starting an exercise routine. Start slowly and build up over time. For example, try walking 10 minutes each day. When you feel that this is easy, add 5 minutes. Work up to 30 minutes of moderate pace walking.

Strength Training

You don't need to join a gym to include strength training in your exercise routine. Hand weights or homemade weights work, too. You also can use your own body weight by including push-ups and sit-ups in your routine. The goal is to do strength training activities 2 times per week. Do six to eight strength-training activities, each with 8-12 repetitions.



For more information log onto:

- health.gov/paguidelines/Default.aspx, or
- familydoctor.org/online/famdocen/home/healthy/physical/basics/059.html

Try This Healthy Recipe!



Scallops Kabobs

- 3 medium green peppers, cut into 1-1/2-inch squares
- 1-1/2 lb fresh bay scallops
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 tablespoons of lemon juice
- dash of garlic powder
- black pepper to taste

1. Pre-boil green peppers for 2 minutes.
2. Alternately thread peppers, scallops and tomatoes on skewers.
3. Combine wine, oil, lemon juice, garlic powder and black pepper.
4. Brush kabobs with wine/oil/lemon mixture, place on grill.
5. Grill 15 minutes, turning and basting frequently.

Yield: 4 servings
Serving Size: 6 oz kabob

Calories: 224 • Total fat: 6 g
Saturated fat: less than 1 g
Cholesterol: 43 mg • Sodium: 355 mg

This recipe courtesy of "Keep the Beat Heart Healthy Recipes," National Institute of Health. NIM Pub.No. 03-2921



NCQA Awards Health New England Its Highest Accreditation Status Of Excellent

HNE has been awarded an Accreditation status of “Excellent” -- the highest possible level -- from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), an independent, non-profit organization that assesses and reports on the quality of the nation’s managed care plans.

The NCQA Accreditation process evaluates how well a health plan manages quality throughout every part of its delivery system -- physicians, hospitals, affiliated providers, and administrative

services -- to continuously improve health care quality and service for its members.



What does this mean for our members?

“This Accreditation tells our members that the care they receive

and the physicians who provide that care meet or exceed the industry’s highest standards,” said Peter Straley, president and CEO of Health New England. “Health New England has a long and proud tradition of providing high-quality service. In fact, we achieved the highest rating in customer service in the country, according to the 2008 NCQA Quality Compass®* Report when compared to local and national HMO/POS health plans. Receiving recognition of our performance is rewarding for all of us.”

*Quality Compass® is a registered trademark of NCQA.



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