

Each year, HNE collaborates with the Massachusetts Health Quality Partners (MHQP) to publish preventive care guidelines for both adults and children. HNE then provides these guidelines to you.

This year, the guidelines have not changed. The 2005 Adult and Pediatric Preventive Care Recommendations are available in their entirety on our Web site:

→ For adults: www.hne.com/HNE_members/preventive/medguides/MHQP_2005_Adult.pdf

→ For children: www.hne.com/HNE_members/preventive/medguides/MHQP_2005_Pedi.pdf

If you prefer, you may get a paper copy of the recommendations by calling HNE Member Services at 413.787.4004 or 800.310.2835.

As always, your physician is the best person to speak to about your specific health care needs. ●

MEMBERMATTERS

PROVIDING HEALTH RELATED NEWS FOR HNE MEMBERS

HNEDirect: *Information at Your Fingertips*

HNE would like to invite you to join HNEDirect—our new secure Web site! At HNEDirect, you can view important information about your benefits, conduct membership transactions with HNE, and contact us directly. You can save time and effort by using HNEDirect whenever and wherever you want—rather than spending time on the phone. What’s more, you can be assured of our commitment to protect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information. Here are some of the things you can do through HNEDirect:

- View**
 - ▶ Eligibility information
 - ▶ A log of your transactions
- Change**
 - ▶ Your PCP
 - ▶ Your address
- Request**
 - ▶ New ID cards and print a Temporary ID Card
- Find**
 - ▶ Contracted providers
 - ▶ Contracted pharmacies
- Go to**
 - ▶ ESI’s Web site (our pharmacy benefit manager)
- Access***
 - ▶ Your claims information
 - ▶ Your referral information
- Share***
 - ▶ Information with other members on your policy



You also can contact our Member Services Department confidentially, with secure messaging.

**Additional security, described below, is required for these features.*

Whether you want to find out your copayment for a service, change your membership information, or just ask a question of Member Services, all you have to do is log in to HNEDirect! What’s more, these services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To join HNEDirect, just go to www.hne.com and click on the “Members” section. From there, click on HNEDirect.

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HomeCare™ may help you feel better

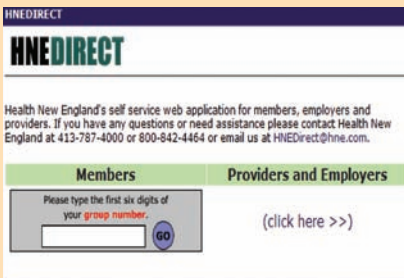
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JUNE 2006



To sign up for HNEDirect:



Make sure you have your HNE ID card handy—you will need to enter your group number from your card. Once you have done that, you will see the HNEDirect login screen. From here, just click on “Need to register?” and follow a few simple steps to activate your account.



You also can sign up for Level 2 security, which allows you to view Claims and Referral information and to share information with other members on your policy. To get this security, log in to HNEDirect and click on the link for Claims or Referrals under the “My HNE Plan” section. You will be presented with the option to request second level security. Once HNE receives this request, we’ll send you a letter with your second level security key. Enter that key the next time you use HNEDirect and you’ll have access to the additional features.

HNEDirect is one of the ways we help you get the most out of your health plan. If you have any questions, call Member Services at 413.787.4004 or 800.310.2835. How can we help? *

Questions for Your Doctor: *Medication*

Medical errors involving medications harm thousands of people each year. That’s why it’s important to understand basic information about your medications and how they may affect you.

Many medications have “contraindication” warnings. This means you should not use them under certain circumstances. For example, pregnant women should not take certain antibiotics. Some warnings are absolute—meaning they apply to everyone who takes the drug. Other warnings are relative contraindications—the stated risks depend on your own individual characteristics. Find out from your doctor or pharmacist which warnings, if any, apply to you.

Some side effects are common, and some are rare. Make sure you ask your doctor or pharmacist which side effects you likely can expect, and which rare reactions you should watch out for.

In some cases, taking different medications at the same time can be dangerous and even life threatening. Harmful “interactions” can occur when combining prescription medications with over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, home remedies, and herbal supplements. Always let your doctor know which other medications you are using, including herbs and OTC remedies such as cough or cold remedies. Pharmacists also can help you figure out whether the OTC medications you are planning to use will interfere with the medications your doctor is prescribing.

Below are some questions for your doctor and pharmacist. Ask your pharmacist to give you the package insert information about the medication (these are written by the manufacturer). You also may want to go online to look up information about the medication from a reputable source, such as the National Institutes of Health. Make sure you understand all of the information about your medication—its benefits and its side effects. *

Questions for Your Doctor and Pharmacist

- ❖ What is the name of the drug, and how do you spell it?
- ❖ What if I miss a dose?
- ❖ What if I take too much?
- ❖ What is the medication expected to do?
- ❖ Should I avoid alcohol, any herbs, foods, medications, or activities while taking the drug?
- ❖ How many times a day should I take the medication?
- ❖ What kind of follow-up is required to make sure the medication is working?
- ❖ How much should I take in one dose?
- ❖ Will there be routine testing; for example, to make sure my liver isn’t being harmed by a statin drug? If so, will there be routine visits to the lab—for example, for urine or blood tests?
- ❖ Are there any foods or liquids I should take with the medication, or that I should avoid?
- ❖ When taking the drug, will I be expected to do self-monitoring at home—for example, a blood sugar test, checking my pulse, or a blood pressure check?
- ❖ Which side effects are normal and require no action on my part?
- ❖ When it’s time to stop the medication, does the dosage need to be tapered (reduced gradually, as in the case of drugs like prednisone or antidepressants)? What will happen if I just stop taking it?
- ❖ Which symptoms indicate that I should give you a call?
- ❖ What risks are associated with the medication?
- ❖ How do I store the medication—for example, does it need to be kept in the refrigerator? *
- ❖ What are the symptoms of an allergic reaction?
- ❖ What will happen if I don’t take it?
- ❖ What symptoms (if any) indicate that I should seek emergency medical help?

Health Education Classes and Provider Update

HNE wants to keep you healthy! Find what interests you and take advantage of our educational and self-help programs. Preregistration is required for most classes. For more information visit www.hne.com and click on "Healthy Directions."

HNE is excited to announce— NEW IN 2006:

Disease Management Grocery Store Tours

In small groups, you will have the unique experience of walking through each food section at Big Y Supermarkets with a licensed registered dietitian who will review food labels. You will learn carbohydrate counting, and how to identify sodium, fat, and cholesterol content of food. The focus is on making better food choices that are affordable, following the diet plan for your health condition, and enjoying your meals. So whether you need to follow a diabetic meal plan, limit sodium and salt intake to lower blood pressure, or decrease dietary cholesterol and fat intake to lower blood cholesterol, the Disease Management Grocery Store Tour will help you! Those who have attended describe it as an "interactive and eye-opening" experience. To register call HNE at 800.842.4464, ext. 3553.

Adult Asthma Education

A certified asthma education nurse teaches this workshop. To register, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3553.

NEW!! HNE's Virtual Asthma Class on DVD

For more information or to order a copy, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030.

Diabetes Education and Meal Planning Workshop

A certified diabetes educator/nurse and a dietitian/nutritionist teach this workshop. To register, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030.

NEW!! HNE's Virtual Diabetes Class on DVD

For more information or to order a copy, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3030.

Living Well Grocery Store Tours

HNE offers this exciting program to all HNE members. As a participant, you will have the opportunity to walk through the grocery store with a registered dietitian. You will learn how to read food labels; count carbohydrates; determine portion sizes, fat, sodium, and cholesterol content; and much more! Space is limited. For more information, dates, or to register, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3031.

HNE's Virtual Grocery Store Tour

An informative guide to help you read food labels; determine portion sizes, fat, sodium, and cholesterol content; and much more. Use at your own pace in the comfort of your home. Available on VHS-video or CD-ROM format and free of charge to HNE members. For more information or to order a copy, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3031.

Smoking Cessation

HNE provides reimbursement of up to \$50 to attend a smoking cessation program for HNE members who have asthma, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and/or who are pregnant. For more information, call 413.787.4000 or 800.842.4464, ext. 3553.

Area hospitals also offer instruction, education, and support groups on a wide range of topics. For more information, please contact the individual hospitals directly.

Baystate Medical Center baystatehealth.com 800.377.HEALTH (4325)	Holyoke Medical Center holyokehealth.com 413.534.2500
Berkshire Medical Center berkshirehealthsystems.com 413.447.2000	Baystate Mary Lane Hospital baystatehealth.com/mlh 800.377.HEALTH (4325)
Cooley Dickinson Hospital cooley-dickinson.org 413.582.2400	Mercy Medical Center mercycares.com 413.748.9000
Fairview Hospital berkshirehealthsystems.com 413.528.0790	Noble Hospital noblehospital.org 413.568.2811
Franklin Medical Center baystatehealth.com/fmc 800.377.HEALTH (4325)	North Adams Regional Hospital nbhealth.org 413.663.3701

Primary Care Providers (PCPs) joining HNE:

FAMILY PRACTICE

Stephen A. Alsdorf, MD
Family Practice Associates
20 Elm Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
413.442.1019

Nusrat Kallou, MD
Neighborhood Health Center
510 North Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201
413.447.2351

Sara A. Rourke, MD
Valley Medical Group
Greenfield Health Center
329 Conway Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
413.774.6301

INTERNAL MEDICINE

Linda J. Canty, MD
High Street Health Center
140 High Street
Springfield, MA 01199
413.794.2511

PEDIATRICS

Lisa M. Sylvia, MD
Community Health Center of the Berkshires
29 Lewis Avenue
Great Barrington, MA 01230
413.528.8580

PCPs leaving HNE:

Kyneret Albert, MD
Kevin J. Beck, MD
Ana Maria Castrillon, MD
Pablo C. Colorado, MD
Joshua E. Garriga, MD
Wesley E. Green, MD
Bruce H. Renfrew, MD

Address changes:

Patricia A. Iverson, MD
Valley Medical Group
Greenfield Health Center
329 Conway Street
Greenfield, MA 01301
413.774.6301

David E. Katz, MD
Pioneer Valley Family Practice
118 Conz Street
Northampton, MA 01060
413.387.4100

William R. Smith, MD
Amherst Medical Associates
170 University Drive
Amherst, MA 01002
413.253.1214

No longer practicing as a PCP:

Shirley A. Whitaker, MD

Facility name change:

FROM: Mary Lane Hospital
TO: Baystate Mary Lane Hospital

For additional changes to provider addresses, phone numbers, and other changes, please see the Provider Directory on our Web site, www.hne.com.

Understanding Your Risk

In this column, we explore risk factors for certain health problems and feature people who have identified their health risks and taken steps to lower them.

Heart Disease

The American Heart Association (AHA) estimates that 1.2 million Americans will have heart attacks each year, and of those, about 480,000 will die. This disease is the nation's leading cause of death. To understand your risk of heart disease, think about your risk factors as they relate to these three categories:

1. Risk Factors You Can Control on Your Own

Quit using tobacco. This also will lower your risk for stroke, lung cancer, and emphysema.

Increase your physical activity. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate activity, most days of the week. Being active also helps manage weight, control blood pressure and cholesterol, and reduce the risk of diabetes.

Eat nutritiously. Limit saturated fat and sodium. Eat 9-13 servings of fruit and vegetables daily. Include whole-grain products; low-fat dairy, healthy mono- or polyunsaturated fats (e.g., olive oil, canola oil); lean meat, poultry, fish, and plant-based proteins (e.g., nuts, soy).

Watch your weight. Excess abdominal fat greatly increases the risk of heart attack.

Limit alcohol. Up to two drinks per day may help increase "good" HDL cholesterol, but excessive drinking may contribute to weight gain, heart disease, and stroke.

2. Risk Factors You Can Change with Your Doctor's Help

Have regular preventive care (checkups). Head off potential problems and keep track of your clinical numbers, such as blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, and blood glucose (sugar).

Control cholesterol. Your doctor can recommend dietary changes, exercise, weight loss, and medications to keep cholesterol in a healthy range.

Control blood pressure. Have your blood pressure checked at least once a year. Your doctor will recommend diet, exercise, and/or medication if it's too high.

Manage diabetes. At least 65 percent of people with diabetes die of some form of heart or blood vessel disease. Follow your doctor's recommendations for controlling blood glucose levels. Check your blood sugar regularly and have A1C blood tests done regularly.

3. Risk Factors You Cannot Control

Age. Advanced age significantly raises your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Gender. Women's risk for heart attack rises sharply after menopause, but is still lower than the risk for men in the same age group.

Heredity. Some families have a higher incidence of heart disease than others. African-Americans are more likely than Caucasians to have high blood pressure.

(If you have these risk factors, you should be even more conscientious about trying to lower those risks you can control, as in #1 and #2 above.)

For more information: American Heart Association, www.americanheart.org

In My Own Words



Patrick Plunkett

Age: 59

Health risk:
HEART DISEASE

What happened:

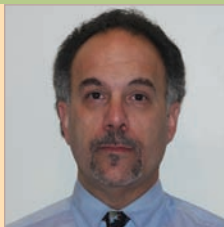
Both of my brothers had heart bypass surgery when they were in their early 50s. They had severely clogged arteries, and one brother had high homocysteine levels, which may be a risk for heart disease. That was kind of a wake-up call for me. I talked to my doctor about my risk for heart disease. Recently, my cholesterol has been higher than it should be, so I am even more aware of my personal risk for heart disease.

To lower my risks:

- ☛ I have changed my diet dramatically. I used to eat a lot of pizza and other high-fat foods. I've switched to eating salads with lots of greens for lunch, and I like nuts and raisins for snacks. I eat oatmeal every day for breakfast, which is high in fiber. I actually have lost a little extra weight on this eating plan, too.
- ☛ I jog about 30 minutes, two to three times a week. I purposely find ways to walk during the day, such as around town or to the bank, and I take the stairs when I can. I also play tennis twice a week, year round.
- ☛ I see my doctor every year for preventive physical examinations and routine lab work.
- ☛ According to my doctor's recommendation, I take a folic acid supplement to lower homocysteine, and a niacin supplement to help lower cholesterol. ✨

Wellness Coach

Joseph Aloï, MD



Where's MY Pyramid?

Joseph Aloï, MD is associate professor of medicine, Division of General Medicine, at the University of Virginia Health System in Charlottesville, Virginia. In his clinical practice, he specializes in diabetes and diabetes prevention.

We'd all be healthier if we practiced healthy eating habits and enjoyed regular physical activity. But the fact is, many of us have trouble understanding what constitutes a healthful diet. Recently, the U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) updated its food pyramid. This new food guidance system can help you make better dietary and fitness choices.

How is the new pyramid different from the old one?

The new recommendations focus more on making balanced choices among food groups. The USDA recommends selecting calories from a variety of foods, choosing lean meat, nuts, and seeds as a source of protein; minimizing processed grains; and increasing choices of whole grains, fruits, and colorful vegetables. The new food pyramid differentiates between healthful fats found in fish, nuts, and vegetable oils, and artery-clogging saturated fats such as those in butter and animal fat. It also encourages moderate portion sizes. In addition, with the help of your health care provider, you can personalize the new food pyramid based on your age, weight, and activity level. Another important feature of the new food pyramid is the emphasis placed on physical activity as it relates to your caloric intake. Physical activity may be as simple as walking a total of 30 minutes in a day and may be divided into as little as 10-minute pieces. The more energy you use in daily activities, the more calories you can consume without gaining weight.

Why should I consider changing my diet?

The food pyramid, first promoted in 1992, is an attempt to give us dietary guidelines for healthy eating and to help slow our society's rapid progression toward becoming the most overweight nation in the world. Well over half of U.S. residents are overweight—an alarming 50 percent increase from just a decade ago. Health problems related to obesity include cardiovascular disease, osteoarthritis, colorectal cancer,

and breast and endometrial cancer. Cardiovascular disease remains a major cause of preventable death in the U.S. In particular, cardiovascular disease among diabetic patients is increasing, fuelled in part by the rising rates of obesity in our country. Moreover, type 2 diabetes is now an epidemic.

The good news

Clinical studies repeatedly have shown the positive effects of proper dietary choices and regular exercise on the prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension—two critical factors in the development and progression of heart disease and stroke. The new food pyramid is one way to illustrate how to incorporate those important lifestyle behaviors into your daily life.

How can I use the Pyramid?

Visit with your health care provider to develop a nutrition plan that is right for you. Remember, when you commit to a healthier lifestyle, small changes are important over time. To find general recommendations for food pyramid choices based on your age, weight, and level of activity, visit the USDA Web site, www.health.gov. Also, the Web site www.mypyramid.gov is an extensive interactive site with a variety of tools and resources to help you achieve your health and wellness goals. *



The INFORMED Process™

When you have a health problem, just think “INFORMED.” It’s a handy way to remember how you can work with your doctor to make the health decisions that affect you. It’s easy to remember the INFORMED process—simply use the decision-making sequence below:



I is for **input**: What is the diagnosis? What medicines, therapies, or tests does your doctor recommend?

N is for **need**: Talk to your doctor about the need for a test or procedure and how it will help you. Remember that “more” is not always “better.”

F is for **fact-finding**: Learn as much as you can about your health problem on your own (e.g., books, library, Internet, other organizations) and share what you learn with your doctor.

O is for **options**: Once you have learned about your problem and ways for treating it, talk with your doctor about your treatment options, based on your symptoms and need. Compare the risk and benefits of each option. Discuss your options with family members and other loved ones who may be helping with your decision making.

R is for **recommended treatment**: Choose a treatment plan based on the information you have found and your doctor’s recommendation. Be sure you understand why your doctor recommends this course of action and what is involved (e.g., tests, medications, surgery, how long you’ll be “out of commission”).

M is for **management**: Find out what you will have to do to help make your treatment work. When can you expect to notice a result or feel any difference? Will you have to limit any activities? Take medicine? Go for testing?

E is for **expense**: In addition to the financial expenses, think about the emotional costs. Will your treatment affect your relationships, overall health, career/job, and quality of life?

D

Using this INFORMED process will help guide your discussions with your doctor about the most important decisions you face when you have a health problem. By participating actively in the decision-making process, you will have more confidence and trust in your treatment plan, and you’ll be more satisfied with your care. ✨

What can I do for muscle pulls?

Your weekend softball game ends suddenly when, rounding first base, you feel sudden pain in the back of your thigh. Muscle strains such as this, often called muscle pulls, are tears or stretches in the muscle fibers or the tendons that connect muscles to bones. Strains can range from relatively mild injuries with some muscle fibers being torn, to large muscle tears with swelling and bleeding present. Causes of muscle strain include:

- ◆ Muscle imbalance: one side of the joint is stronger than the other, or while one muscle contracts, the opposite muscle doesn't relax. This can be caused either by a lack of conditioning or overtraining one muscle group more than the opposing muscle group.

- ◆ Muscle fatigue places additional stress on the muscle and tendons.

If you're not usually active, you are at greater risk when you suddenly engage in an activity. It's important, therefore, for weekend warriors as well as serious runners to take the time to get into condition for their activities. ✨

Symptoms/Signs

- ✦ Pain, swelling, and tenderness in a muscle or joint that worsens with movement or pressure.

Talk to Your Doctor If:

- ✦ Excessive swelling, bruising, and/or tenderness in the injured area lasts more than 48 hours.
- ✦ Pain that prevents you from moving comfortably lasts more than 48 hours.

** If you have been physically inactive or have a health problem, talk with your doctor before beginning any physical activity program.*

If physician referral is not recommended at this time,
Try HomeCare™:

REST

- ✦ Reduce your activity. Avoid movements that place stress on the injured area.

HOT AND COLD

- ✦ Apply cold pack or ice massage: 20 minutes on, 20 minutes off for 2 hours. Continue for 24 to 48 hours after the injury.
- ✦ Try heating pads, whirlpools, or analgesic balms on the third day if swelling is gone.

COVER

- ✦ Wrap the injured area with an elastic bandage—snugly, but not too tightly.

NOTE WELL

- ✦ Elevate the injured area for 24 to 48 hours, depending on the severity of the injury.

MEDICATION

- ✦ Aspirin, naproxen, or ibuprofen may help to reduce pain and inflammation.

ACTIVITY

- ✦ Try slow, gentle stretches if the strain is mild, but hold off for a few days if the injury is moderate or severe; try general movements (e.g., slow walking, gentle arm circles) to promote circulation.
- ✦ Condition properly for your activity.
- ✦ Use weight training to achieve adequate levels of strength in major muscle groups and their opposing muscles.

This article is intended to increase awareness of health and medical care issues. None of the information in this text is intended to be a substitute for appropriate physician diagnosis and medical care.

Good Questions!



It's important to be involved in decisions affecting your care. When you and your doctor work together to manage your health problems, you'll feel more satisfied and confident with your care. Asking the right questions will help you understand your condition.

Q. I just found out I have migraine headaches. What do I need to know?

A. These questions will help you talk with your doctor about your headaches.

- ✓ What kind of migraine do I have? Classic migraine? Cluster headache? Simple or common migraine? Ocular migraine?

- ✓ Are there any over-the-counter medications that are safe to use for a mild to moderate attack?

- ✓ Do any of my current medications contribute to my migraines?

- ✓ Are there warning signs that may indicate that my headache is more serious than a migraine? What should I do if this happens?

- ✓ What medications will help manage my migraine headaches? When should I take them: When I already have a migraine? If I feel one coming on? What are the risks and benefits of these medications? What side effects are possible? ✨

Staying Fit During Vacation

by Mike Gauvin, HNE's Health Program Coordinator

We all worked hard this spring to burn off our winter layers and get ourselves into great shape. As you prepare for your summer vacations, it is important to think about how you are going to fit exercise into your schedule. I know, the point of vacation is to take a break from "real life," but a few easy sessions can help you stay motivated and maintain your fitness.

Cardio

Most vacation destinations offer a variety of options and activities that are fun and aerobic such as:

- ◆ Walking or jogging on the beach
- ◆ Beach volleyball
- ◆ Surfing, swimming, snorkeling, water skiing, or diving
- ◆ Leisurely bike rides
- ◆ Hiking
- ◆ Golf

- ◆ Tennis
- ◆ Sight seeing or shopping

Remember, you do not have to perform your typical workout; just try to keep your body moving. Even a couple of days of cardio will help to keep you feeling great and prepared to get back to your routine when you get back home.

Weight Training

Many of us spend time weight training throughout the year. Lifting weights is difficult on vacation because you usually don't have any equipment. To maintain strength and endurance, bring a resistance band and plan on doing a quick workout a few times during your vacation to maintain your muscle. Simple body weight exercises such as pushups, crunches, chair dips, and squats also are great exercises that can help you maintain your muscular fitness throughout your trip.

How Fast Do You Lose Fitness?

What if you decide to take a break from exercise? How fast you lose cardiovascular fitness and muscle strength depends mostly on your genes, but here are some general guidelines:

- ◆ Aerobic power can decline 5 percent in 1 week, 15 percent in 2 weeks, and up to 25 percent in 3 weeks.
- ◆ All your gains could be lost after about 2 months of inactivity.
- ◆ The fitter you are, the faster you lose your fitness.
- ◆ You tend to lose aerobic capacity faster than muscle strength.

So try to fit in a few quick and easy sessions throughout your vacation. In addition to being more relaxed, you'll probably be much happier when you get back home. ✨

MEMBERMATTERS

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Published by HNE Communications.

Health New England
One Monarch Place
Springfield, MA 01144-1500

How can we help you?

For information on your plan:

- Call Member Services at 413.787.4004 or 800.310.2835
- Visit us in person at: One Monarch Place, Springfield, MA.

For questions or comments on [MemberMatters](#):

- Contact Joe Kane, jkane@hne.com, 413.787.4000 Ext. 3229

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