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Healthy Endeavors<sup>SM</sup>  
Fall 2020



**BlueCross  
BlueShield**  
Federal Employee Program.

## Get the facts on coronavirus

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by a new virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says COVID-19 can cause mild to severe respiratory symptoms. It is likely to spread through droplets that a person coughs or sneezes into the air. You also might catch it when you touch a surface or object with the virus on it and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes.

### The symptoms

Symptoms start from between two and 14 days after contact with the virus. They include:

- None to mild symptoms
- Fever
- Cough
- Trouble breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat

- New loss of taste or smell
- Severe respiratory illness and in some cases death

### Prevention tips

Follow these steps to protect yourself as much as possible:

- Wash your hands or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer as often as you can.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Keep a safe distance between yourself and others if COVID-19 is spreading in your area.
- Clean surfaces often with disinfectant.
- Wear cloth face coverings in public places where social distancing is difficult.

The latest information about coronavirus from the CDC can be found at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov).

### Your plan benefits

To ensure you have access to the right care at the right time, FEP<sup>®</sup> is waiving cost shares and prior authorization to support members' care for COVID-19:

- No prior authorization for diagnostic tests and covered services
- No cost share for diagnostic tests or treatment
- No early refill limits on 30-day prescription maintenance medications
- No copayments for telehealth services provided by Teladoc<sup>®</sup> during this time

Visit [FEPBlue.org](http://FEPBlue.org) to learn more about COVID-19 benefits and resources.

**Questions about your health? Call** our 24/7 Nurse Line at **1-888-258-3432** to speak with a registered nurse.

# Is it a **cold**, the **flu** or **seasonal allergies**?

Sorting through sneezing, coughing or achy body symptoms can be very confusing. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offers tips on how to tell the difference between the flu, the common cold and seasonal allergies.

## THE FLU

**Onset:** Symptoms develop suddenly

**Duration:** Less than two weeks

**Symptoms:** Cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headaches, body aches, fever or chills, vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children)

**Care tips:** Stay home, get bed rest, drink fluids, avoid contact with others. Call your healthcare provider if you are very sick.

## COMMON COLD

**Onset:** Symptoms tend to develop slowly

**Duration:** About seven to 10 days

**Symptoms:** Runny nose, sneezing, sore throat, cough, slight body aches, headaches, but no fever

**Care tips:** Drink fluids and get plenty of rest. Taking over-the-counter (OTC) medicine can help manage your symptoms, too.

## SEASONAL ALLERGIES

**Onset:** Symptoms are seasonal (usually in spring, late summer and fall)

**Duration:** Several weeks

**Symptoms:** Runny or stuffy nose; sneezing; cough; itchy eyes, nose, mouth, and/or throat; headaches; watery eyes; pressure in the nose and cheeks. No body aches, muscle pain or fever.

**Care tips:** Avoid the allergens that trigger your symptoms. If needed, you can purchase OTC nasal sprays and other allergy medicines.



Have questions about your symptoms? Call Teladoc® at 1-855-636-1579 to speak to a healthcare provider.

## Asthma, COPD and the dangers of COVID-19

What is the difference between asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)? Here is what you need to know.

**Asthma** — People with a family history of asthma are more likely to get it. It usually begins in childhood. Symptoms include shortness of breath, wheezing, coughing and chest tightness. Symptoms get worse during an asthma attack. At other times, symptoms may go away, or you may barely notice them.

**COPD** — COPD is different. It usually strikes later in life. Most people with COPD either used to smoke or still do.

Some symptoms, such as chest tightness and coughing, are similar to asthma. Other symptoms, such as mucus production, are only part of COPD. Symptoms rarely ever go away completely.

**Risk of catching COVID-19** — You are not more likely to catch COVID-19 if you have asthma or COPD. However, if you have moderate to severe asthma or COPD, you may be at higher risk of getting very sick if you get COVID-19. Talk with your healthcare provider to make sure you are taking the right steps to stay healthy and avoid catching COVID-19.



## Ask the doctor: How can I stay healthy with diabetes?

Kelly Hill, M.D.



### Q. Do I need to watch my blood glucose every day?

**A.** Checking your blood glucose often is one of the most important steps to staying healthy with diabetes. When you measure your blood glucose, record your results. Ask your healthcare provider for your target range if you don't know it.

The best way to keep your levels in check is by taking your medications as directed. Eat according to your diabetes meal plan and exercise regularly.

Call **1-855-636-1579** to speak with a Nutritionist who can help you develop the best healthy meal plan for you.

### Q. Are there any tests I need regularly?

**A.** Yes, your healthcare provider will check your blood glucose levels over time with a simple blood test. The test

is called the hemoglobin A1c test. The results show your average blood sugar level for the past three months. This tells your healthcare provider how well your treatment plan is working to control your disease. You should have an A1c test every three to six months, depending on whether or not the result is higher than your target.

### Q. Am I at risk for nerve damage? What symptoms would I notice?

**A.** In some cases, you can have severe nerve damage with no warning signs. Over time, high blood glucose levels can damage your nerves. This condition is called diabetic neuropathy. When it occurs, your hands and feet may burn, tingle or go numb. Urination, bowel movements and sex may become difficult. You might feel

weak, dizzy or faint, especially when you stand up.

If you notice any of these signs or symptoms, talk with your provider.

### Q. Who should I turn to for help or questions?

**A.** You may be in charge, but you are not alone. Your healthcare provider, dietitian, nurse and other members of your healthcare team serve as your support crew. They'll help you control your blood glucose and prevent neuropathy and other complications.

Have questions about managing diabetes? Call **1-888-392-3506** to speak with a Nurse Health Coach.

**You can earn up to \$100 on your MyBlue® Wellness Card for managing your diabetes. To learn more, visit [www.fepblue.org/diabetes](http://www.fepblue.org/diabetes). You must be 18 or older on a Standard or Basic Option plan to earn this reward.**

# Pregnancy care is changing, **but critical**

Are you welcoming a new baby? You may be worried about safety at doctor's visits when an illness like COVID-19 is spreading. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says you should not skip any visits. They are very important to make sure you and your baby are healthy.

During visits that need to be in person, your obstetrician-gynecologist (OB-GYN) is doing everything possible to keep you and your baby safe. Talk with your doctor about visiting options and what will work best.

## Visiting your OB-GYN

Let your OB-GYN know as soon as you think you're pregnant. You should have your first visit around your eighth week of pregnancy. Your provider will do a physical and a few easy tests. You will also talk about what else you need to do to have a healthy pregnancy.

You will likely need to visit your provider monthly until week 28. Then you will visit every two weeks up to week 36. Visits start weekly from 36 weeks to when your baby is born. Ask your provider about what type of visit options he or she is suggesting.

## Getting special care

Your provider may tell you that you have a high-risk pregnancy. If you do, you may need to see another doctor.

This special doctor is a maternal-fetal medicine (MFM) specialist. An MFM's extra care can:

- Help you plan a healthy pregnancy, especially for women with chronic conditions
- Explore reasons for miscarriages or early labor and delivery
- Screen for growth and genetic issues, as well as birth defects
- Look for other problems and risks, such as blood-clotting disorders

## Following up after birth

You need to take time to rest and heal after you give birth for your body and mind.

Do not try to do everything yourself. Remember, if you have a cesarean delivery (C-section), it can take longer for your body to recover.

If you were seeing an MFM, the doctor will continue to care for you and watch for issues, such as heavy bleeding or infections, after birth.

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says you should have your first visit within the first three weeks after birth. Then have another complete well-woman visit no later than 12 weeks after birth. Timing can be different if you had a C-section. Ask your doctor for the best schedule for your follow-up visits after birth.

For a **FREE** Your Child's Healthcare Record booklet, call **1-984-364-3935**.

## Earn healthy rewards for prenatal care

A healthy pregnancy is just the beginning; get off to a great start. If you are pregnant, you may earn up to \$125 in rewards on your MyBlue® Wellness Card.

- Earn \$50 by visiting [www.fepblue.org/bha](http://www.fepblue.org/bha) and completing the online Blue Health Assessment (BHA).
- Receive a free Pregnancy Care Box upon request on MyBlue®.
- Earn \$75 by sending us a copy of your provider-signed medical record from your first trimester visit (go to [www.fepblue.org/maternity](http://www.fepblue.org/maternity) to see what types of medical records are required).

*You must be 18 or older on a Standard or Basic Option plan to earn this reward.*

To find a doctor, go to [www.fepblue.org/find-a-doctor](http://www.fepblue.org/find-a-doctor).

# TIPS FROM THE PHARMACIST

## Using antibiotics the right way

Antibiotics can be powerful medicine. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration says you must use them safely and correctly. And sometimes that means not using them at all. How do you know when to call your healthcare provider for antibiotics when you are feeling ill?

### Know your germs

Antibiotics cannot cure every illness you have. They do not even help infections from viruses. They are made to fight infections from bacteria. Antibiotics cannot help these viruses:

- Flu
- Colds and most coughs
- Most sore throats, except those caused by strep
- Almost all cases of bronchitis
- Some ear and sinus infections

If you have a bacterial infection — like pneumonia — they can be a big help.

Antibiotics work by fighting bacteria that make you sick, either by killing them or stopping them from growing. But, sometimes, bacteria learn how to resist an antibiotic. The more often antibiotics are used, the bigger the risk that this can happen. And you can end up with stronger bacteria that are very hard to treat. These resistant bacteria can cause serious illness or even death.

That's why you should take antibiotics only when your provider says they are necessary. Not sure if you have a virus or bacterial infection? Ask your doctor for advice.

### The do's and don'ts of using antibiotics

Follow these guidelines for using antibiotics the right way.

#### DO:

- Take them for bacterial infections.
- Take all of the medication prescribed. (If you use only part of the medicine, it can mean you treated only part of the infection.)



#### DON'T:

- Take them for common cold symptoms, like runny noses and coughs. Your body will fight off the illness on its own.
- Take them unless your provider says you need them. They won't help and won't prevent other people from catching your cold. And they can create stronger bacteria that are harder to treat.



**Need assistance?**  
Call 1-984-364-3798  
for a Clinical  
Pharmacist to help  
you manage your  
medications and  
possibly save money.

# Know where to go for care

Your options for where to get care continue to grow. Consider the following examples when deciding where the best place is for the care you need. Your care options can include:

- 24/7 Nurse Line
- Telehealth Services
- Primary Care Doctor
- Retail Clinic
- Urgent Care Center
- Emergency Room/Call 911

## SCENARIO 1

I'm not feeling well. I have developed a cough, am feeling short of breath and having chills. I have lost the ability to taste and smell. I am a nurse who works at the local hospital. Is it possible I have COVID-19?

### APPROPRIATE OPTION:

#### Primary Care Provider

Use your provider when you need care **today**. Uses include:

- Symptoms that need assessment
- Annual checkup/well-child care
- Immunizations and screenings
- Potential same-day appointments
- Coordination of care

## SCENARIO 2

I have a rash on my side that looks like blisters; it's very painful.

### APPROPRIATE OPTION:

#### Nurse Line or Telehealth Services (Provided by Teladoc®)

Use telehealth services when you need care **quickly** by providers for minor illnesses and injuries. Also, behavioral health therapists are available through Teladoc® from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

## SCENARIO 3

I feel like I have the flu. My chest feels heavily congested, my joints ache and my arms feel heavy.

### APPROPRIATE OPTION:

#### Emergency Room/Call 911

Use the Emergency Room or call **911** when you need care **immediately**. Uses include:

- A life-threatening situation
- Profuse bleeding
- Chest pain

## ACT-FAST CARE GUIDE

SEEKING ADVICE 24/7 Nurse Line	WANT CARE QUICKLY Telehealth Services	NEED CARE TODAY Primary Care Doctor	NEED CARE SOON Retail Clinic	NEED CARE NOW Urgent Care Center	EMERGENCY 911 or Nearest ER
General questions about health issues or where to go for care	Treatment for minor illnesses and injuries	Diagnosis & treatment of illness, chronic conditions, routine checkups	Health screenings, vaccinations, minor illness or injury	Non-life-threatening illness or injury that requires immediate care	Life-threatening illness or injury (chest pain, signs of stroke, difficulty breathing/moving)
Available by phone at 1-888-258-3432 or online at feblue.org/myblue	Visit feblue.org/telehealth or call 1-855-636-1579	Call your doctor's office for an appointment	Walk-in appointments at a clinic in your nearby pharmacy	Walk-in appointments with shorter wait times than the ER	Immediately call 911 or go to your nearest ER
Our registered nurses are available 24/7 by phone, online chat and email	Board-certified doctors available 24/7 via phone, video or the Teladoc® app	Many offer night & weekend hours & 24-hour phone lines	Often open nights & weekends	Open 7 days a week, often with evening hours	Open 24/7
Included with your membership at no cost	All members receive their first two visits free. After your first two visits, you pay: Standard Option/FEP Blue Focus: \$10 Basic Option: \$15 <small>Telehealth behavioral health therapists are available 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. local time.</small>	Standard Option: \$25 Basic Option: \$30 FEP Blue Focus: \$10 each for first 10 combined professional service visits	Standard Option: \$25 Basic Option: \$30 FEP Blue Focus: \$10 each for first 10 combined professional service visits	Standard Option: \$30 Basic Option: \$35 FEP Blue Focus: \$25	Standard Option: 15% of our allowance* Basic Option: \$125 per day FEP Blue Focus: 30% of our allowance* Ground Ambulance Transportation: \$100 per day for Standard & Basic Option; 30% of our allowance for FEP Blue Focus

\*The calendar year deductible applies in this situation. Standard Option: \$350 per person or \$700 per family. FEP Blue Focus: \$500 per person or \$1,000 per family. Basic Option does not have a calendar year deductible. The information in this document does not replace the advice of a healthcare provider. You should speak to your provider about any specific health concerns. This is a summary of the features of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan. Before making a final decision, please read the Plan's Federal brochures (Standard Option and Basic Option: RI 71-005; FEP Blue Focus: RI 71-073). All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations and exclusions set forth in the Federal brochure. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Para obtener asistencia en español, llame al servicio de atención al cliente al número que aparece en su tarjeta de identificación. 詳情請於您手上的專屬號碼以尋求中文協助。

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- Difficulty breathing
- Loss of consciousness
- Facial droop (possible stroke)
- Unable to swallow
- Poisoning

## SCENARIO 4

I was recently diagnosed with high blood pressure. I would like more written information about this condition. Should I call the Nurse Line?

### APPROPRIATE OPTION:

Yes, call the **Nurse Line** when you are **seeking advice**. **Do not call it for a life-threatening situation**. Reasons to call include:

- Asking questions about symptoms
- Figuring out where to get care
- Determining if you need to be seen by a provider
- Secure email/chat for nonclinical questions
- Requesting educational materials

## SCENARIO 5

I cut my hand a little yesterday while slicing carrots. I couldn't sleep last night because of the pain. Where should I go for care?

### APPROPRIATE OPTION:

#### Urgent Care Center

Use urgent care when you need care **now**. **Do not use it for a life-threatening situation**. Use when/for:

- Provider's office is closed
- Acute symptoms that need to be treated quickly (for example, sprain, urinary tract infection, upper respiratory infection)
- Bug bites/stings

## SCENARIO 6

I burned my forearm when I was removing a casserole from the oven. It's beginning to hurt.

### APPROPRIATE OPTION:

#### Retail Clinic, Primary Care Provider or Urgent Care Center

Use a retail clinic when you need care **soon**. Uses include:

- Getting a flu shot and other immunizations
- Minor treatments (cuts, bug bites, minor burns)
- Screenings (glucose, blood pressure)

# Healthy body, healthy you

With the uncertainty of our current times, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reminds you to make your health your top priority. Now, it's more important than ever to care for your whole body.

## Choose a healthy diet

Fill your pantry and refrigerator with healthy options. Here are some ideas:

- Select a variety of produce. If you can't buy fresh, choose canned, frozen, or dried fruits and vegetables.
- Look for proteins that store well, such as beans, split peas, lentils, nuts and nut butters. Choose low-fat or fat-free yogurt, milk and cheese.
- Find bread items that list a whole grain as the first ingredient. Grab other whole grains, such as brown rice or quinoa, and whole-grain breakfast cereals, like oatmeal, also.

## Keep moving

Exercise in and around your home. Vary your routine by mixing stretching, cardio and strength training:

- Take a break to stretch for a few minutes at least once a day.
- Lift weights while watching TV or talking on the phone. If you don't have weights, use bricks or water bottles. For lower-body strength, do squats or calf raises.

- For cardio, take a brisk walk or run around your neighborhood, dance to your favorite music, or join an online exercise class.

## Relax and refocus

Stress and anxiety can be harmful and affect your blood pressure. Managing stress and anxiety can lead to healthier habits that help you manage your blood pressure. In addition to a healthy diet, exercise and a good sleep schedule, try these ideas:

- Get updates just once or twice a day from trusted news sources.
- Focus on activities you enjoy, such as cooking or watching a movie.
- Limit how much alcohol you drink.

## Connect with others

Stay connected with friends and family to help with depression and reduce feelings of isolation. You can try:

- Video chatting using FaceTime or another mobile app
- Delivering groceries to neighbors in need
- Watching favorite movies virtually with friends and family

## 5 tips when your back hurts

In most cases, you can manage back pain without medical treatment. Try:

1. Keeping your spine aligned when you sit, stand, sleep and drive
2. Getting a massage
3. Using hot or cold therapy to help reduce inflammation and help you move easier
4. Moving to prevent muscles from weakening or slowing your recovery
5. Asking for a hand if there is something heavy to be lifted

Call Teladoc® at **1-855-636-1579** to speak with a health professional about low back pain and treatment.

## In touch

Leena Mehta  
Manager

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Healthy Endeavors<sup>SM1</sup> members who received health coaching will receive this magazine.

Do you need a Behavioral Health provider to help you address mental health or alcohol/substance use issues? Call **1-888-234-2415** to speak with a nurse or call Teladoc® at **1-855-636-1579** and ask to speak with a Behavioral Health provider.

Healthy Endeavors<sup>SM1</sup>  
In touch  
P.O. Box 2291  
Durham, NC 27702-2291

Your plan for better health.<sup>SM1</sup>

5003M Developed by StayWell



## Download fepblue today

With the fepblue mobile app, you can keep up with your benefits, call the 24/7 Nurse Line, find a provider and more on the go. Download the app today on the App Store<sup>®</sup> or Google Play<sup>™</sup>. Learn more at [www.fepblue.org/app](http://www.fepblue.org/app).

## Make mealtime quality family time

The extra time you may be spending at home right now is the perfect time to have your children help prepare a delicious and healthy meal. This can also teach them some new skills. Get started by trying this simple and quick meal you can create together.

### Pita pizzas

#### Ingredients

- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup grilled skinless chicken breast, cut into cubes
- 1 cup broccoli, rinsed, chopped and cooked
- 2 tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp. fresh basil, rinsed, dried and chopped (or 1 tsp. dried)
- 4 (6 ½-inch) whole wheat pitas

#### Directions

Preheat oven or toaster oven to 450 degrees. For each pizza, spread ¼ cup tomato sauce on a pita and top with ¼ cup chicken,

¼ cup broccoli, ½ table-  
spoon Parmesan cheese  
and ¼ tablespoon chopped  
basil. On a nonstick baking  
sheet, bake pizzas for about  
five to eight minutes until  
golden brown and chicken is  
heated through.

#### Per serving

Makes four servings. Each serving contains about: 275 calories, 5 g total fat (1 g saturated fat), 32 mg cholesterol, 486 mg sodium, 41 g carbohydrates, 7 g fiber, 20 g protein.

