

Benefiting You



IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OUR EMPLOYEES

January 2012

Preventive Care Corner

National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Approximately one in every 33 babies is born with a birth defect each year in the United States.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines a birth defect as a problem that happens while the baby is developing in the mother's body. Babies born with birth defects have a greater chance of illness and long-term disability. Diabetes is the theme of this year's National Birth Defects Prevention Month (January).



Both genetic and environmental factors can cause birth defects. While 60 to 70 percent of birth defects are unknown, there are some simple steps a woman can take to lower her risk of having a baby with a birth defect. These include:

- Getting enough folic acid every day before and during pregnancy.
- Not smoking, using recreational drugs, or drinking alcohol while pregnant.
- Preventing infection.
- Avoiding certain medications (and other chemicals).
- Getting regular prenatal care.
- Eating properly.
- Making sure all vaccinations are up to date.

This information as well as information on other topics can be found at the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services at: <http://www.healthfinder.gov/default.aspx>

For help in navigating your benefits when setting up your appointment with your healthcare provider contact the BCBS

Care Consultants at 1-888-476-2227 Mon-Fri 8am to 9pm
Care Consultants can also help you understand your condition, plus help you explore your treatment options so you are able to make the choices that are best for you.

Don't forget our on-site BCBS Clinical Nurse is also here to help you with your questions. She is located in the main building of the District Office for face to face visits or she can be contacted at:
Katherine Davis, RN 863-519-8044 56665
katherine.davis@polk-fl.net

Delta Dental Dental Care During Pregnancy?

It is a myth that calcium is lost from the mother's teeth during pregnancy. The calcium your baby needs is provided by your diet, not by your teeth. If dietary calcium is inadequate, however, your body will access this mineral from stores in your bones. An adequate intake of dairy products, green leafy vegetables (broccoli, kale, mustard greens) or the supplements your obstetrician may recommend will help ensure that you get all the calcium you need during your pregnancy.

You may experience some changes in your oral health during pregnancy. The primary changes are due to a surge in hormones -- particularly an increase in estrogen and progesterone -- that can cause your gum tissues to exaggerate a normal reaction to plaque. Plaque is a sticky, colorless film of bacteria that covers your teeth. If plaque isn't removed daily, it can eventually harden into tartar and may increase your risk of gingivitis, a condition with symptoms of red, swollen and tender gums that are more likely to bleed. So-called "pregnancy gingivitis" affects most pregnant women to some degree, and it generally begins to surface as early as the second month. If you already have gingivitis, the condition is likely to worsen during pregnancy. If untreated, gingivitis can lead to periodontitis, a more serious form of gum disease.



Pregnant women are also at risk for developing pregnancy tumors, inflammatory, non-cancerous growths that develop when swollen gums become irritated. Normally, the tumors are left alone and will usually shrink on their own after the baby's birth. But if a tumor is uncomfortable and interferes with chewing, brushing or other oral hygiene procedures, the dentist may decide to remove it.

For this and further information, please visit: http://demo.deltadentalinsco.com/oral_health/

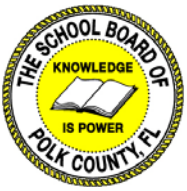
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If you have any questions about your prescriptions, don't hesitate to talk to your doctor or call the number on the back of your prescription drug ID card.



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Horizon Health EAP

The Polk County School Board offers you an Employee Assistance Program through Horizon Health.

Baby Makes Three

For the pregnant woman, the anticipated birth of a child is one of life's most profound experiences. While pregnancy is both a physical and emotional experience for the mother, parenthood is a turning point that affects both mother and father. The birth of your child will add a new dimension to your relationship with your spouse. You will be parents, as well as partners.

Before your baby's arrival

- Take time to communicate your hopes, fears, and joys with your spouse.
- Discuss the changes which are sure to take place and how, as a couple, you will handle them.
- Speak openly about the sharing of responsibilities and your expectations.
- Make an effort to keep the lines of communication open with family and friends. They will be an important part of your baby's life.
- Consider the feelings of your partner. Be sensitive to the fact that, on any given day, you may be on opposite ends of the emotional spectrum regarding the challenges and joys that await you.
- Set aside time for just the two of you to be together. Once the baby arrives, you will wonder what happened to that time alone! Enjoy this special time of your life.

After your baby's home

- You will be a three-member household.
- Know you can't do this job alone. Make sure you have friends and family to support you. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it.
- Seek out other new parents. It is often reassuring to be able to talk with others in a similar situation. You may be helpful to each other as you negotiate this new world of parenting.
- If both you and your spouse will continue to work after the birth of your child, the added responsibility of parenthood will affect the manner in which you must manage your job responsibilities. For working mothers and fathers, careful time management is critical.

The EAP is a free, confidential service that helps you and your family deal with personal problems that may affect your quality of life. Experienced professionals are available to provide confidential counseling for a variety of life's challenges. Your EAP is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. You can, at any time of the day, talk to a qualified counselor by calling toll-free 1-800-272-7252.

Learn more about Horizon EAP on their website at:

www.horizoncarelink.com

Username: PCS
Password: PCS

The Standard Disability and pregnancy

FAQ's about Short Term Disability

Can I elect Short Term Disability during Open Enrollment when I am already pregnant?

For a disability to be covered the employee has to be enrolled in the Short Term Disability coverage prior to the disability. When it comes to pregnancy – the employee has to have the coverage prior to being impregnated.

When should I file a Short Term Disability claim as a result of pregnancy or childbirth?

Please file your claim for short term disability benefits as soon as you cease working due to your pregnancy or childbirth. You may also report a claim up to four weeks in advance of a planned disability absence, such as childbirth.



How long am I considered disabled following childbirth?

If you have a sedentary occupation, you are considered disabled for six weeks after delivery, both vaginal and caesarian section. If your occupation is light to heavy, you are considered disabled for six weeks

after a vaginal delivery or eight weeks after a caesarian section delivery. The disability periods noted are assuming there were no complications following childbirth. The period may be extended if complications arise.

For more information on The Standard's maternity guidelines, visit the Risk Management webpage at:

Or contact The Standard directly by phone at:
800-325-5757 ext. 0286

or online at: <http://www3.standard.com/net/public/Individuals>