



Benefiting You

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR OUR EMPLOYEES

May 1, 2011

A new monthly communication from Risk Management

Welcome to the first edition of *Benefiting You*, a monthly newsletter from your Risk Management Department. In these communications you will find important information on:

- benefits available to you as a PCSB employee
- tools you can access to improve your health
- tips to help you save money
- resources you can use to learn more about your plans

Our goal is to provide everyone with access to the information they need to get the most out of their health care dollars. This communication is one way we can assist you in becoming an empowered health care consumer. Knowledge is Power!



Preventive Care Corner

May is National High Blood Pressure Education month

High blood pressure, which affects about 1 in 3 American adults, increases your risk of heart disease and stroke. It's important to check your blood pressure regularly and discuss preventive measures with your doctor, especially if your numbers are above 120/80.

Exercise and a healthy diet are two easy ways to prevent high blood pressure and increase the effectiveness of medication, if you already have hypertension.

A free self-guided Blood Pressure program is available to all covered employees. Simply log on to MyBlueService, click Living Healthy and go to the Health Management Center for Blood Pressure.



It Pays to Shop

Compare your options *before* you go!

You shop for groceries, clothes and household items. Why not shop for doctor visits, X-ray images tests, knee surgery and other health care procedures? BCBSF is making it easier to understand your treatment options and costs before you get care, so you can maximize your health benefits and get the most value for your money.



In a matter of minutes, get the answers you need to make an informed decision, including...

- "How much does my office visit or procedure typically cost?"
- "Where can I go to have my procedure done?"
- "How many patients have been seen for my procedure?"

It's easy to shop!

From any computer, simply log on to the BCBSF member website, www.bcbsfl.com/MyBlueService. See "Living Healthy" tab and select Care Comparison.

You'll find over 55 of the most common medical procedures and easy to use features — so you get the answers you need, in a matter of minutes!

Like many medical tests or procedures, MRIs, CT's and other scans can vary significantly in cost. The facility you choose can make a big difference. An MRI of the brain, for example, can cost as little as \$598 at one facility and as much as \$1,452 at another facility. That's more money in your wallet!

You can also compare hospitals. Let's say you need a knee replacement. Find out more about your procedure and the places you can go to have it done. Review information about each hospital's performance, including the number of patients seen for a knee replacement, the percent of patients with complications and their average costs. Then compare each hospital to help you choose the one that best meets your need.

Prefer to talk with a health expert? Get expert advice from Care Consultants, including nurses, benefit specialists and community resource professionals. Call toll-free at 1-888-476-2227, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 9 PM. We're here to help you shop for quality care, compare prices and save money!



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Upcoming Opportunities

Each PCSB employee is entitled to one free screening each year

The next opportunity for employees to receive their free screening will be at the following times and locations:

May 10, 2011 (Tuesday) 1:30 PM through 5:45 PM Lake Gibson Middle – Cafeteria 6901 N Socrum Loop Road Lakeland, FL 33809	May 19, 2011 (Thursday) 2:00 PM through 5:45 PM Mulberry Senior – Cafeteria Northeast Fourth Circle Mulberry, FL 33860
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For those employees enrolled in the 3160 plan, this screening will count toward your 2012 HRA contribution.

Appointments are required. Please visit www.polk-fl.net keyword “wellness” and follow the instructions for making an appointment or call the Wellness Department at 863-648-3057.

Do You have an Asthma Action Plan?

Reduce the risk of asthma complications and your cost of care.

Here are tips for taking control of your asthma and an Action Plan you can use everyday.



1. Complete your personal Asthma Action Plan with your doctor. Discuss the appropriate action for each zone with your doctor and add them to this plan.

GREEN ZONE - ALL CLEAR

This zone is your goal

Symptoms

- No shortness of breath, cough, wheezing, nor tightness of chest.
- You can do all of your usual activities.

Peak Flow

- _____ or more (80% or more of your personal best)

Actions

- Take controller medicine(s) every day.
- avoid asthma triggers.

YELLOW ZONE - CAUTION

Symptoms

- Coughing, wheezing, tightness of chest and/or shortness of breath.
- You can do some, but not all of your usual activities.

Peak Flow

- _____ to _____ (50% to 79% of your personal best)

Actions

- Take ___ puff(s) of quick-relief medicine called _____.
- Repeat ___ times.
- If your symptoms don't get better or your peak flow has not returned to the Green Zone in 1 hour, then:
 - Take ___ puff(s) of medicine called _____ . Use it ___ times a day.
 - Call your doctor.

RED ZONE - DANGER

Symptoms

- Very short of breath.
- You can't perform your usual activities.
- Quick-relief medicine doesn't help, or symptoms don't go away within 24 hours in the yellow zone.

Peak Flow

- _____ to _____ (less than 50% of your personal best)

Actions

- Take ___ puff(s) of quick-relief medicine called _____.
- Repeat ___ times.
- Call your doctor, go to the Emergency Room or call 911.

2. Know your asthma triggers to help you have fewer, less severe episodes. Try to avoid triggers that could cause attacks, such as cigarette smoke, pollen, pet dander or air pollution.

3. Maintain a diary. Record your peak flow and symptoms daily. The peak flow measures how fast air comes out of the lungs when you exhale. Keeping track of your Peak Expiratory Flow (PEF) is one way to know if your asthma is under control.

4. Take your medication as prescribed by your doctor, even if you feel fine. Learn the names of your quick relief and controller medications.