The Health Plan has registered nurses that are available to help you better manage your chronic health problems. If you have heart disease, diabetes, or COPD, one of our nurses can assist you in understanding your disease. They will discuss lifestyle modifications that can help improve your quality of life, prevent disease progression and complications. They can also assist you in finding care or services that you need to improve your health. If you believe you would benefit from the Disease Management Program, you can contact the nurse managers by calling the Medical Department toll-free at 1.800.624.6961, ext. 7644 or 7643.

You can also make a request for a nurse to call you on The Health Plan website healthplan.org. Choose ‘Solutions’ and then Disease Management from the drop-down menu. An enrollment form is available for you to make your request online.

If you have diabetes, COPD, heart failure or heart disease, it is important that you see your doctor on a regular basis for routine monitoring of your blood pressure, cholesterol, medications, and other blood work. A yearly breathing test for people with COPD can help the doctor to monitor the effectiveness of the current treatment plan. If you have diabetes, you also need to have the A1c test every three months and tests for eye and kidney disease once every year. These tests and routine checkups can catch problems early before they become a bigger problem. If you have questions about any of these tests, the nurses can be reached at the number above.

The Health Plan makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of “Find A Doctor” on our website. Updates to the directory are made daily online. If you should have difficulty with locating a provider from the information on our website please contact a customer service representative.
Opioids and Overdoses

What Are Opioids?

Opioids are drugs such as heroin and prescription medications like morphine, codeine, methadone, oxycodone (Oxycontin, Percodan, Percocet), hydrocodone (Vicodin, Lortab, Norco), fentanyl (Duragesic, Fentora), hydromorphone (Dilaudid, Exalgo), and buprenorphine (Suboxone) used to treat pain.

Opioids work by binding to specific receptors in the brain, spinal cord and gastrointestinal tract. In doing so, they minimize the body’s perception of pain. Stimulating the opioid receptors or “reward centers” in the brain also can trigger other systems of the body, such as those responsible for regulating mood, breathing, and blood pressure.

A variety of effects can occur after a person takes opioids, ranging from pleasure to nausea, vomiting, severe allergic reactions (anaphylaxis,) to overdose, in which breathing and heartbeat slow or even stop.

Opioid overdose can occur when a patient misunderstands the directions for use, accidentally takes an extra dose, or deliberately misuses a prescription opioid or an illicit drug such as heroin. Also at risk is the person who takes opioid medications prescribed for someone else, as is the individual who combines opioids - prescribed or illicit - with alcohol, certain other medications. and even some over-the-counter products that depress breathing, heart rate, and other functions of the central nervous system.

Preventing Overdose

If you are concerned about your own use of opioids, don’t wait - talk with the health care professional/s who prescribed the medications for you. If you are concerned about a family member or friend, urge him or her to do so as well.

Effective treatment of opioid use disorders can reduce the risk of overdose and help a person who is misusing or addicted to opioid medications attain a healthier life. An evidence-based practice for treating opioid addiction is the use of FDA-approved medications, along with counseling and other supportive services. These services are available at SAMHSA-certified and DEA-registered opioid treatment programs (OTPs). In addition, physicians who are trained to provide treatment for opioid addiction in office-based and other settings with medications such as buprenorphine/naloxone and naltrexone may be available in your community.

If You Suspect An Overdose

An opioid overdose requires immediate medical attention. An essential first step is to get help from someone with medical expertise as soon as possible.

Call 911 immediately if you or someone you know exhibits any of the symptoms listed below. All you have to say is “Someone is unresponsive and not breathing.” Give a clear address and/or description of your location.

Used by permission from SAMHSA
The best medicine is preventative

The Importance of Well Visits

A well visit is not the same as a trip to the doctor when you're sick. Well visits are a time to “check in” with your doctor, without a clear-cut concern. Your doctor will probably:

- take your health and family history
- measure your height, weight, body mass index (BMI), and blood pressure
- assess for depression or anxiety
- discuss any vaccines or tests that you need
- refer you to other services if needed, such as seeing a dietitian or a program to help you stop smoking

Annual doctor visits will help you to avoid future problems. Your doctor will talk to you about things that you can do to keep healthy. A well visit gives you the chance to ask questions about your health and to talk about any concerns that you might have.

Adult members between the ages of 19 and 64 should have a well visit every one to three years and adults over the age of 65 should have one yearly.

End your year with a checkup visit and stay well this fall.

Quality Improvement Program Evaluation

The 2015 QI Program Evaluation is a year-end review that determines if the quality of care and service goals set forth at the beginning of the year were met. If a goal has not been met, new programs are put in place to help us reach these goals.

The 2016 Quality Improvement Program describes The Health Plan organization and each department’s responsibilities in meeting our goals for quality care and service.

Both of these documents are available to you when you call the Quality Improvement Department at 1.800.624.6961, ext. 7659.

Our health risk assessment, available online in the secure member area under CoreWellness, can help you to pinpoint the areas where changing your habits would have the greatest impact on your health.
2016 Flu Clinics
Just the shot in the arm you need!

The Health Plan is pleased to announce our flu clinics for 2016. The flu shot is free to THP members, requires no prescription and you don’t need an appointment! You can get the flu shot at any pharmacy that has it available this year and accepts The Health Plan insurance.

All family members who have The Health Plan coverage and are at least 19 years of age can come! Those under the age of 19 must get the flu vaccine at a doctor’s office and can’t go to a pharmacy or a flu clinic of The Health Plan to get it.

Please bring your ID card with you.

If you need directions, please call 1.800.624.6961.

Saturday, September 17, 2016
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Bridgeport High School
55707 Industrial Drive
Bridgeport, OH 43912

Saturday, October 1, 2016
9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Massillon Rec Center
505 Erie Street North
Massillon, OH 44646