

## FAMILY HEALTH



### NEED TO RENEW?

You must renew your coverage every year. Look for your renewal notice in the mail. Visit [aetna.com/su25txk-1](https://aetna.com/su25txk-1) or scan the QR code to learn more.



## Don't skip this key vaccine

This often-overlooked vaccine can help stop certain cancers. Learn when to get it, along with other life-saving shots.

Kids need vaccines throughout their childhood. The shots help prevent diseases that can cause serious illness, long-term

health problems or even death.

But there's one important vaccine you may be overlooking: the HPV vaccine.

HPV stands for human papillomavirus. It's a common virus that spreads through sexual contact. Nearly everyone will be infected with HPV at some point. It usually has no symptoms. But it shouldn't be ignored.

Some strains of HPV can lead to cancer later in life. In fact, HPV is the most common cause of cervical cancer. That's why the

HPV vaccine is so important. It helps protect your child against the HPV strains that are most likely to cause cancer.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends two doses of HPV vaccine for all kids at 11 to 12 years old. But they can get it as early as 9 years old. Talk to your child's doctor or go to [cdc.gov/hpv](https://cdc.gov/hpv) to learn more.

Continue reading for a complete guide to childhood vaccines on page 2.



Aetna Better Health® of Texas



TEXAS Health and Human Services

TEXAS STAR Kids Your Health Plan ★ Your Choice

# Your guide to childhood vaccines

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a schedule for vaccines from birth to teen years (see table). Your child’s doctor can give them shots during well-child visits. Ask for a copy of your child’s vaccine records.



## Protect your child before birth

Getting certain vaccines while you are pregnant can protect you *and* your child. If you’re pregnant, ask your doctor about getting these vaccines:

- Whooping cough
- Flu
- COVID-19
- RSV (respiratory syncytial virus)

VACCINE	PROTECTS AGAINST	WHEN TO GET IT
✔ <b>DTap/Tdap</b>	Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough)	2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15–18 months, 4–6 years, 11–12 years
✔ <b>HepB</b>	Hepatitis B, a type of liver infection	Birth, 1–2 months, 6–18 months
✔ <b>HepA</b>	Hepatitis A, a type of liver infection	12–13 months
✔ <b>Hib</b>	<i>Haemophilus Influenza</i> type B, which can cause meningitis or pneumonia	2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12–15 months
✔ <b>HPV</b>	Human papillomavirus, which can cause cervical and other cancers	11–12 years
✔ <b>Flu</b>	Yearly flu viruses	Once a year after 6 months
✔ <b>IPV</b>	Polio, which can cause paralysis	2 months, 4 months, 6–18 months, 4–6 years
✔ <b>MenACWY</b>	Meningococcal disease, which can cause meningitis or blood infections	11–12 years, 15–16 years
✔ <b>MMR</b>	Measles, mumps and rubella viruses	12–15 months, 4–6 years
✔ <b>PCV13</b>	Pneumococcus, which can cause pneumonia	1 months, 4 months, 6 months, 12–15 months
✔ <b>RV</b>	Rotavirus, which can cause fever, vomiting and diarrhea	2 months, 4 months, 6 months
✔ <b>Varicella</b>	Chickenpox	12–15 months, 4–6 years

**Tell us what you think.** Every year, we send a survey to some members. Your feedback helps us improve the care we provide to members like you. If you get a survey, please take a few moments to complete it. Your answers are private.



## Stay on top of your children's health

Keeping up with checkups, vaccines and other preventive care is key for growing children. The Texas Health Steps program helps your child get the care they need.

Members who qualify for Texas Health Steps get free well-child visits starting when they're born. Dental checkups are also covered once they turn 6 months old. Qualified members can use these benefits until they turn 20.

At these checkups, your child's provider will:

- Check to see if your child is meeting key milestones
- Keep your child up to date on vaccines
- Answer questions about your child's health

A well-child visit is the perfect time to ask questions about

your child's health or any parenting concerns you have. Write down your concerns ahead of time. You might ask:

- Is my child at a healthy weight?
- How can I convince my picky child to eat healthy foods?
- Should my child be tested for lead poisoning?
- What can I do to prevent lead poisoning?

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/texas/texas-health-steps.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/texas/texas-health-steps.html) for more info.

### When to get well-child visits

Babies and toddlers should get a well-child visit at these times:

- 3 to 5 days after birth
- 1 month
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 24 months
- 30 months
- 3 years

After age 3, your child should get a checkup once a year.

### Clinical Practice Guidelines

Our providers follow evidence-based guidelines for your care. You or your provider can call Member Services for a copy of these Clinical Practice Guidelines. Or go to

[AetnaBetterHealth.com/texas/providers/clinical-guidelines-policy-bulletins.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/texas/providers/clinical-guidelines-policy-bulletins.html) for more info.



Learn more about your plan with your member handbook.

Visit [aetna.com/su25txk-2](https://aetna.com/su25txk-2) or scan the QR code to view it online.

Or call Member Services to have one mailed to you.

# Make meals easy with the diabetes plate method

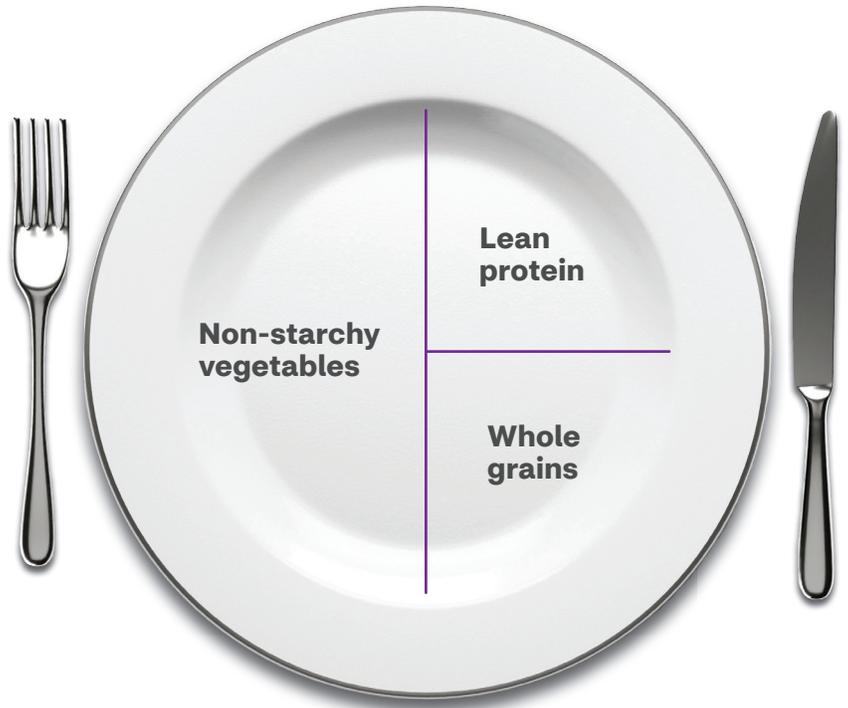
Living with diabetes doesn't have to stop you from enjoying tasty meals. This simple approach to filling your plate can help keep your blood sugar steady:

✓ Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables like leafy greens, peppers, broccoli, summer squash, carrots, cabbage and more.

✓ Fill a quarter of your plate with lean protein like chicken, fish, tofu or eggs.

✓ Fill the last quarter of your plate with carb-rich foods, like:

- Whole grains
- Starchy vegetables (like potatoes, corn or peas)
- Fruit
- Beans



The plate method is an easy way to keep carbs in check while getting plenty of protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals. Try it out with these simple recipes.

## VEGETABLE STIR-FRY

(serves 2)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>1 tablespoon oil</b>  | <b>2 tablespoons teriyaki sauce (look for low-sodium options)</b> |
| <b>3 cups fresh or frozen mixed vegetables (such as carrots, bell peppers, broccoli)</b> | <b>1 cup cooked brown rice</b>                                    |
| <b>2 eggs</b>  | <b>Optional: Chicken, tofu or other lean protein</b>              |

Heat the oil in a large skillet over high heat. Add the mixed vegetables and cook for 5-7 minutes. Move the vegetables to one side of the pan and crack the eggs into the other side. Stir quickly to scramble, mixing into the vegetables. Stir in the teriyaki sauce and protein, if desired. Serve over cooked brown rice.

## GRILLED CHICKEN AND VEGETABLE SKEWERS

(serves 2)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into cubes</b> | <b>1 red onion, cut into chunks</b>                      |
| <b>1 bell pepper, cut into chunks</b>                       | <b>2 tablespoons olive oil</b>                           |
| <b>1 zucchini, cut into rounds</b>                          | <b>1 teaspoon of your favorite spice or herb blend</b>   |
|   | <b>Optional: whole grain pita and yogurt for serving</b> |

Heat your grill or pan over medium-high heat. Thread the chicken and vegetables onto skewers. In a small bowl, mix the olive oil and spice or herb blend. Brush the skewers with the oil mixture. Grill the skewers for 10-12 minutes, turning occasionally. Serve with whole grain pita and a dollop of yogurt.

# How to keep your heart strong

Your heart is one of the most important parts of your body. It pumps blood to all your organs and keeps you alive and active. Here's a guide to some common heart problems. Plus, how to take care of your heart and what to do if something feels off.

## Common heart issues

**High blood pressure:** This happens when the force of blood pushing through blood vessels is too strong. Over time, it can lead to problems like heart disease, kidney disease, stroke and more.

**High cholesterol:** Cholesterol is a fat that can build up in your arteries and block blood flow.

**Heart disease:** This includes problems like:

- Blocked arteries (when cholesterol builds up and blocks blood flow)
- Irregular heartbeat
- Heart attack

## Heart health screenings

Your provider can check your heart health with tests like:

- **Blood pressure check:** Measures how hard your blood is pushing in your arteries
- **Cholesterol test:** Checks how much cholesterol is in your blood
- **Electrocardiogram (EKG or ECG):** A diagnostic test that monitors your heart's electrical activity

## Signs of an emergency

Sometimes, your heart might give you signs that something isn't right. If you have any of these symptoms, call **911** or go



to the emergency room:

- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Fainting or sudden dizziness

## Heart health tips

- Eat nutritious foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean meats. And watch out for salty foods, which can raise blood pressure.
- Stay active with any kind of movement you enjoy.
- Don't smoke and avoid secondhand smoke.
- Find ways to manage stress. Try breathing exercises or meditation.
- See your primary care provider for regular checkups and screenings.

## We care about your privacy

We protect your personal health information (PHI). That includes your race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation and social needs info. We only share your info when needed and as allowed by law.

You have rights over your health data. That includes how it's used and who can access it. Go to [Aetna BetterHealth.com/health-optimization-disclaimer.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/health-optimization-disclaimer.html) to learn more about your privacy rights and how we safeguard your data.



## Why therapy is good for everyone



In both good times and bad, seeing a therapist can lead to a happier, healthier life. Here's how.

### ✔ It can improve your relationships

We have all sorts of relationships — with our partner, children, parents and coworkers. Misunderstandings and rough patches are a normal part of all of them. A therapist can help you find ways to understand other's emotions and communicate better.

### ✔ It can help you manage health issues

Depression and anxiety are common in people with chronic conditions. And, poor mental health can make it harder to manage your illness. Talking to a therapist can help you:

- Stay on track with treatment
- Ask for help
- Focus on self-care
- Stay away from unhealthy coping habits like smoking, alcohol or emotional eating

### ✔ It can help you reach your goals

We all have dreams and goals. If you're feeling stuck, a therapist can help you break old patterns and habits that are holding you back. They can help you create a plan for going after your goals. And they can share tips for staying motivated. That's something we all need at different times in life.

---

Your plan may cover therapy or other behavioral health services. Learn more at [AetnaBetterHealth.com/texas/behavioral-mental-health.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/texas/behavioral-mental-health.html) or call us for more info.

## Know the signs of substance use disorder

Addiction can happen to anyone — teens, young adults, even seniors. And because symptoms can be mistaken for other problems, they're not always easy to spot. Here are some common signs to watch for.

- Changes in hygiene habits or not caring about how they look
- Sleeping more or less than normal
- Withdrawing from friends and family or hanging out with a different group of friends
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Missing classes, getting lower grades or losing interest in activities
- Unexplained money issues, or you notice money or items missing from your home
- Changes in physical health, like sudden weight loss or gain

If you notice some of these signs in a loved one, try talking to them about the problem. Remember to talk to them with compassion and curiosity, not judgment.



### Get more tips for healthy living.

Scan the QR code or go to [aetna.com/su25txk-0](https://aetna.com/su25txk-0) to browse our health and wellness library. You'll find articles packed with info to help you feel your best.

# Family planning starts early

Family planning means having a plan about when, or if, you want to start a family. And it's never too early to start.

If you don't plan to become pregnant, ask your primary care provider (PCP) about birth control. Some need a prescription (like birth control pills). Others are available over the counter (like condoms).

## Ready to start a family?

Take these steps before getting pregnant:

- ✓ Get better control of your diabetes, asthma, depression, etc. Ask your PCP if you'll need to change your medicines.
- ✓ Begin taking prenatal vitamins.
- ✓ Ask your PCP if your vaccinations are up to date.
- ✓ Talk with your PCP about diseases that run in your family.
- ✓ Stop vaping or smoking, drinking alcohol or using drugs. Get help if you can't stop on your own.

## Found out you're pregnant?

Visit your PCP as soon as possible, ideally within the first three months. Be sure to enroll in our PROMISE program. You can earn gift cards, diapers or other baby items.

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/texas/pregnancy-care.html](https://www.aetna.com/texas/pregnancy-care.html) for more info.

## How we can help

Your plan offers these services:

- Family planning services with any provider or clinic that accepts Medicaid. You may see an ob-gyn or specialist. Your PCP can refer you, or you can self-refer.
- Yearly well-woman exam and cervical cancer screening
- Education, prevention and testing of sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Birth control medications
- Pregnancy testing and counseling.



## TEST YOUR HEALTH LITERACY

Health literacy means being able to find, understand and use health information to make good health choices. Test your skills with this quick quiz. Answers are on the next page.

### 1 What is the best way to prevent the flu?

- (A) Taking antibiotics
- (B) Eating more fruits and vegetables
- (C) Getting a flu shot
- (D) Staying inside all the time

### 2 How often should adults get a checkup with their primary care provider (PCP)?

- (A) At least once a year
- (B) Only if they have a specific health concern
- (C) Only when they feel sick
- (D) Only if they are over 65

### 3 Which of these can an urgent care center treat?

- (A) Urinary tract infection
- (B) A cut that may need stitches
- (C) Nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea
- (D) All of the above

### 4 What should you do if you miss a dose of medicine?

- (A) Don't worry about it — it's not a big deal if you miss a dose
- (B) Take the dose as soon as you remember
- (C) Take 2 doses the next time you're scheduled to take it
- (D) Ask your provider



# How high is your health literacy?

How did you do on the quiz? Find out with the answer key below.

## 1 What is the best way to prevent the flu?

**Answer:** © Getting a flu shot

Flu vaccines help your body build immunity to flu viruses. And, yes, you need to get a shot every year. The flu shot is custom-made to fight the most common strain of the virus each year. It's best to get your flu shot in the early fall, before flu season starts.

## 2 How often should adults get a checkup with their primary care provider (PCP)?

**Answer:** Ⓐ At least once a year

Regular checkups can help you catch health issues early and stay up to date with needed tests and shots. And don't forget to let your PCP know if you go to an urgent care, the emergency room or other providers. That way they have a complete picture of your health.

## 3 Which of these can an urgent care center treat?

**Answer:** Ⓓ All of the above

Urgent care centers are a great place to go for problems that are too urgent to wait for a PCP visit, but not life-threatening. They can treat minor injuries, mild illnesses and more. If you're not sure where to go for care, call your plan's 24-hour nurse line. They can help you make the best choice.

## 4 What should you do if you miss a dose of medicine?

**Answer:** Ⓓ Ask your provider

Every medicine is different. It's best to check with your PCP if you ever miss a dose. You can also check the medicine's package for instructions. Can't get a hold of your PCP? Call your pharmacist or our 24-hour nurse line for help.

---

Aetna complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

**ENGLISH: ATTENTION:** If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card or **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**.

**SPANISH: ATENCIÓN:** Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número que aparece en el reverso de su tarjeta de identificación o al **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**.

**CHINESE:** 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電您的 ID 卡背面的電話號碼或 **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**。

## Have questions about your plan?

Member Services is here for you. Call us at **1-844-787-5437 (TTY:711)**, Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 5 PM. Or go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/texas](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/texas).