

# Healthmate

*A Publication of Health Tradition Health Plan*

VOLUME 10, NO. 3

A MAYO HEALTH SYSTEM CHOICE IN WISCONSIN

SUMMER 2004

## FOR YOUR HEALTH!

### All presentations:

Marycrest Auditorium,  
2nd floor, Franciscan Skemp  
La Crosse Campus

9 AM Continental  
Breakfast  
9:30 AM Presentation  
10:30 AM Question & Answer

*Please join us at one or all  
of these special offerings:*

### Cooking for 1 or 2

Discussion & demonstration –  
how to cook for 1 or 2 people.

**Tuesday, September 28**

### Spirituality in Aging

by Father Nick Mezacappa,  
Rochester, MN

**Tuesday, October 26**

### Stress Management

by Jeffery Cavaness, MD, family  
medicine, Franciscan Skemp  
Lake Tomah Clinic

**Tuesday, November 23**

### Changes in Healthcare

by Robert Nesse, MD,  
Franciscan Skemp CEO &  
President

**Tuesday, December 28**

Sessions are free of charge,  
but registration is encouraged.  
For more information or to  
register, call Franciscan Skemp  
Elder Services at (608) 791-9505.



**MayoClinic.com**

**HEALTH INFORMATION AT  
YOUR FINGERTIPS**

## FALL SPORTS

# Tips for Coaches & Parents

**F**ootballs are flying, kids are running and soccer goalies are diving. Fall sports have started! Remember that strenuous exercise mixed with hot temperatures can be a risky combination. This is especially true for young athletes who lack the experience to know when they need to take a break. If you don't watch out, young athletes could come down with heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

### Here are some tips for preventing heat-related illnesses:

- ◆ **Don't use thirst** as an indicator of a child's hydration – once a young athlete is thirsty – it's too late. He is already dehydrated. Young athletes need to start drinking water before they become thirsty – even before practice begins.
- ◆ **Always ensure** each child has a water bottle or sports drink during practice. Coaches: have extra water available. If the activity is strenuous and the weather is hot, aim for two to four glasses – 16 to 32 ounces – of water per hour of activity.



- ◆ **Coaches** – always provide water breaks. Tell athletes that drinking water is required and not just optional.
- ◆ **Parents** – after practice, ask your child if he or she drank the full bottle. If not, encourage him or her to drink the rest after practice.
- ◆ **Stay away from sodas** which often contain caffeine or lots of sugar – these actually cause you to lose more fluid.
- ◆ **Encourage young athletes** to wear loose-fitting clothing that's both lightweight and light in color. Stay away from dark-colored practice jerseys which draw more heat to the body.
- ◆ **Take breaks** in shady areas to cool down.

- ◆ **Don't overdo practices.** Start slowly and increase the pace gradually. In weather that's extremely hot and humid, don't push at too high a level. Remember, these young athletes may not be in top shape after a summer off. What's normal exercise on a cool day might be dangerous on a hot day.

- ◆ **Encourage young athletes** to wear sunscreen. It's harder for a body to keep sunburned skin cool. Require hats to keep the sun off faces and heads.

### Most importantly:

- ◆ **Let young athletes** know that if they feel very hot and become dizzy or confused, they must stop playing and tell a team coach or trainer right then, rather than trying to tough it out.

See: *When to Seek Emergency Care for Heatstroke* on page 3

source: MayoClinic.com

Healthtradition.com or Customer Service 1-877-832-1823



# College Students & “Snowbirds” Moving Away?

## DO YOU KNOW YOUR COVERAGE:

- ◆ Students moving away for college?
- ◆ Retired adults relocating to warmer climates during the winter season?
- ◆ Members receiving COBRA coverage through a former employer and relocating outside the service area for new employment?

In order to control healthcare costs for our members, Health Tradition requires members to receive healthcare services from providers within our Health Tradition network. If you are moving or residing outside of Health Tradition’s service area — even temporarily (for college or winter vacations) — only urgent or emergency care services are covered by Health Tradition when the healthcare services are received outside the Health Tradition



Beverly Larson, RN, MPH  
Health Tradition  
Director of Operations  
& Clinical Services

network of providers. Members must contact Health Tradition for authorization soon after receiving urgent care services, even if they were received in a clinic setting. In cases of urgent care or emergency services, Health Tradition must be notified within 48 hours or the next business day. If Health Tradition is not notified of urgent or emergency services received outside of Health Tradition’s service area, these services may not be covered.

**VERY IMPORTANT:** Routine and follow-up care received from non-Health Tradition network providers is not covered unless you receive prior authorization. Limited coverage also applies to those members who require follow-up to urgent or emergency care outside the Health Tradition network of providers. For example, you may injure your back while “wintering” in Florida or your college student daughter may injure her ankle while away at school. The initial emergency room or urgent care visit would be covered under your Health Tradition plan. Health Tradition must be notified of the situation. If a follow-up visit is recommended, this care would need to be received from a healthcare provider within the Health Tradition network, unless prior authorization is received.

For those relocating to warmer climates for the winter and for college students who are away for months at a time, this may pose a hardship. You may want to consider purchasing a form of supplemental health insurance while residing out of the area.

*For more information on out-of-area coverage, please contact a Member Advocate at 1-888-459-3020.*

## Our “Report Card” Scores High in Quality

When compared to other health plans from all over the country, Health Tradition again performed above national standards! HEDIS® measures are the most widely used set of industry performance measures. Organizations and consumers use this information to evaluate the quality of healthcare delivered by different health plans. These results prove our commitment to not only managing your health problems, but also preventing health problems from arising. The statistics demonstrate the excellent disease prevention and disease management strategies used by practitioners in the Health Tradition network.

Selected Measures	2003 National HEDIS® Average	2004 Health Tradition
<b>Healthy Children</b>		
Childhood Immunizations	69%	80%
<b>Women’s Health</b>		
Breast Cancer Screening	75%	82%
Cervical Cancer Screening	81%	82%
Prenatal Care in 1st trimester	86%	95%
<b>Heart Health</b>		
Controlling High Blood Pressure	58%	63%
<b>Diabetic Care</b>		
Blood Sugar Testing (Hgb-A <sub>1c</sub> )	83%	91%
Blood Sugar Controlled	66%	90%
Eye Exam	52%	87%
LDL controlled	55%	70%
<b>Asthma Treatment</b>		
Use of Appropriate Medications	68%	75%

For more information on the selected quality measures presented, please contact Jackie Kuhlman, Quality Manager, at (608) 781-0053.



## MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S CORNER

# Flu shots for kids? Pregnant women?

By Greg Whiteman, MD  
Associate Medical Director

**L**ast winter's headlines were full of children across America dying from influenza. Should children receive the flu shot?

Although not all children need the flu shot, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends annual flu shots for:

- ◆ Children ages 6 months to 2 years
- ◆ Children at increased risk of complications from influenza, including those with asthma, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, sickle cell anemia and chronic kidney disease
- ◆ All household members of children who fit this criteria – to reduce a child's potential exposure to the influenza virus

The best time to get a flu shot is before the flu season which starts in October.



## I'm five months pregnant. Is it safe for my baby if I get a flu shot?

Flu shots are recommended for women who will be more than three months pregnant during the flu season – from October to May. Pregnancy affects the immune system of the mother, as well as puts extra strain on her cardiovascular system. These factors increase the risk of complications from influenza. Pregnant women are also more likely to need hospitalization for treatment of complications from the flu than are nonpregnant women of the same age. Pregnant women who have a medical condition that also puts them at higher risk of complications from influenza, such as asthma or diabetes, should get a flu shot before the flu season – regardless of their stage of pregnancy.

## Who else should get a flu shot?

Flu shots are recommended for:

- ◆ older adults, people with diabetes or with chronic illnesses. However, flu shots can also be beneficial for healthy adults and children.

## Do they really work?

- ◆ Flu shots aren't 100 percent effective, but if you get the flu after having had a flu shot, your symptoms will likely be less severe than they would have been without the shot.
- ◆ Flu shots don't give you the flu. The influenza viruses used in the vaccine are dead, so they can't cause the flu.
- ◆ Flu shots RARELY have significant side effects.
- ◆ Flu shots protect against influenza, but they don't protect against other viruses that may cause flu-like symptoms, such as the stomach flu.

*For more information, talk to your healthcare provider.*

Continued from Page 1

◆ **HEAT EXHAUSTION** occurs after over-exposure to high heat, humidity, exercise and excessive perspiration.

Warning signs include:

Dehydration	Fatigue
Weakness	Paleness
Headache	Nausea
Damp/perspiring skin	
Dizziness/fainting	

**TREATMENT:** get the athlete to lie down in a cool environment with the legs elevated. Apply ice to the groin areas, armpits or head, and make the athlete drink cool water or sports drinks with electrolytes.

◆ **HEATSTROKE** is a life-threatening condition which demands immediate treatment. The body is unable to regulate its own temperature which may lead to irreversible brain damage or death.

Warning signs include:

A body temperature above 103°F	
Hot and dry skin	Redness
Rapid, strong pulse	Dizziness
Throbbing headache	Nausea
Disorientation/confusion	
Loss of consciousness	

**TREATMENT:** seek medical assistance immediately. In the meantime, rest in a cool environment. Elevate the legs, apply ice or immerse the body in a cool bath – but don't delay evaluation and treatment in a medical facility.

## NEED A REFERRAL?

Please wait to hear if your referral request has been approved or denied by the plan before you see another healthcare provider. Don't just assume the referral request has been approved or the charges may not be covered. Call 1-608-781-9692 to check the status of your referral.

## YOUR FIRST CHOICE!

When you have questions about your coverage, check with **Healthtradition.com** or contact a customer service representative at 1-877-832-1823. You may reach a customer service representative from 7 AM - 7 PM. After 7 PM, you may use the automated system for your inquiries.

**New Providers to your Healthcare Network**

**LA CROSSE**

- Franciscan Skemp - La Crosse
- ◆ Neil Brown, MD, ENT
- ◆ Jennifer Chapman, MD, Surgery
- ◆ Sean Halligan, MD, Cardiology
- ◆ John Merfeld, MD, Family Health Clinic
- ◆ Kiernan Minehan, MD, Radiation Oncology
- ◆ Jeanine Scherbring, LICSW, Social Work
- ◆ Steven Ung, MD, Cardiology
- ◆ Jose Mari Yuvienco, MD, Neonatology

Family and Children's Center

- ◆ Anne Fors, PhD, LP, Psychology

**BLOOMER**

Luther Midelfort - Bloomer

- ◆ Ron Reimer, PA-C, Family Practice

**LA CRESCENT**

Franciscan Skemp - La Crescent Clinic

- ◆ Rebecca Kearns, Certified Nurse Midwife

**VIROQUA**

Vernon Clinic of Chiropractic

- ◆ Jerry Johnson, DC, Chiropractor

**RUSHFORD**

Rushford Clinic

- ◆ Marc Dummit, MD, Family Practice
- ◆ Brett Whyte, MD, Family Practice

**Providers Leaving our Healthcare Network**

**LA CROSSE**

Franciscan Skemp - La Crosse

- ◆ Mark Mount, MD, ENT

**EAU CLAIRE**

Luther Midelfort - Luther Campus

- ◆ Kimberly O'Brien-Sillman, Behavioral Health

Luther Midelfort - Clairemont Campus

- ◆ Bruce Gerlinger, MD, Urgent Care

**TREMPEALEAU/INDEPENDENCE**

Trempealeau & Independence Family Chiropractic

- ◆ Rosann Froehle, DC

**Ophthalmology Outreach now offered in Caledonia**

**J**erald Cundiff, MD, an ophthalmologist from Franciscan Skemp Healthcare La Crosse Campus, is providing ophthalmology services at the Caledonia Clinic monthly. Services include evaluations and consultations on a variety of ophthalmic conditions including cataracts, glaucoma and diabetes. For referral information contact the Franciscan Skemp Caledonia Clinic 507-725-3353.

**Providers on the Move**

**LA CROSSE**

Franciscan Skemp - La Crosse

- ◆ Judith Harpenau, MD, Family Practice to Urgent Care

**Correction**

- ◆ Sarah Thompson, LPC is still practicing at Family and Children's Center in La Crosse. We had incorrectly stated that she was leaving.

Please refer to our website [www.healthtradition.com](http://www.healthtradition.com) for a current list of provider updates.

**Health Tradition**

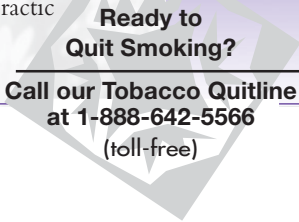
*A Mayo Health System Choice in Wisconsin*

- |                               |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Executive Director            | Steven M. Kunes    |
| Medical Director              | Alan Krumholz, MD  |
| Director of Operations        | Beverly Larson, RN |
| Director of Health Services   | Mary Wanzek, RN    |
| Director of Sales & Marketing | Michael Eckstein   |

The purpose of Healthmate is to inform and communicate with health plan members. Please submit suggestions or ideas to:

**Health Tradition Health Plan**  
 1808 East Main Street  
 Onalaska, WI 54650

© 2004, Health Tradition, Inc.



Pre-sorted Standard  
 U.S. Standard  
 PAID  
 La Crosse, WI  
 Permit No. 65

**Health Tradition**  
*A Mayo Health System Choice in Wisconsin*  
 P.O. Box 188  
 La Crosse, WI 54602-0188