



NOVEMBER 2015

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## **Book-of-The-Month** **ALLERGIES & ASTHMA**

What Every Parent  
Needs To Know

Childhood asthma and allergies can be a daunting condition for parents, grandparents and caregivers. This month's book recommendation is filled with expert guidance from the American Academy of Pediatrics and is an invaluable resource for parents and caregivers trying to cope with the challenges of childhood asthma and allergies. This well-organized guide covers such topics as identifying allergies and asthma; preventing attacks; minimizing triggers and avoiding allergens; choosing medications wisely; explaining allergies to young children; helping children of all ages manage symptoms; and what to do if a potentially life-threatening allergic reaction or asthma attack occurs.

Available on Amazon for \$14.19 in paperback and \$9.99 in the Kindle version. A sample copy can be viewed at Amazon or our office.

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## HEALTH TIP

### KEEPING IT HEALTHY OVER THE HOLIDAYS

Like most people, we love all the winter holiday traditional foods and festivities. Enjoying our traditions brings us together with family and friends. While enjoying these traditions, here are a few tips from WebMD to keep you from losing ground in your weight and wellness goals.

1. Shift your focus from weight-loss to weight-maintenance.
2. Trim calories wherever you can without compromising tradition or flavor.
3. Choose light and satisfying appetizers over rich, calorie-loaded fare.
4. Choose simple vegetable & fruit dishes over heavy dishes with sauces.
5. Keep tasty fruits & veggies in your diet in the off-season with frozen produce (usually frozen at the peak of ripeness).
6. Swap high-fat condiments with low-fat alternatives to reduce calories.
7. Roast or grill veggies & meats to bring out flavors with fewer additives.
8. Wait 20 minutes before getting seconds after drinking a glass of water.

This winter, may you have a Happy! Merry! Happy! For more healthy holiday food tips, visit [www.webmd.com/diet/healthy-holiday-eating-10](http://www.webmd.com/diet/healthy-holiday-eating-10).

## DOCTOR'S NOTE

### MEMBERSHIP VALUE - THE EMERGENCY ROOM

One of the benefits of a direct primary care relationship is the ability to access your physician to decide if a trip to the emergency department is necessary. For people with a direct primary care relationship, the data from Qliance Direct Primary Care in Seattle shows a significant decrease in unnecessary visits to the emergency department.

These visits are often for conditions such as uncomplicated ear infections, urinary tract infections and sinus infections that can be addressed in the doctor's office. Visiting a primary care doctor instead of the emergency department can result in significant cost savings for persons without insurance, and for those with insurance who have either a high deductible policy or a significant co-pay for emergency department visits.

The emergency department is a wonderful resource. We encourage its appropriate use - including calling 911 for severe or life-threatening emergencies.

**BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.**

**PRACTICE NEWS**



**TRANSPARENCY IS IMPORTANT**

Transparency is “the quality of being easy to see through” according to the Cambridge dictionary. At 307Health, transparency is embraced as a value we offer to our members in all aspects of our relationship.

Financially, you will find us to be transparent in our monthly member fees and incidental charges for products we offer to members, whether those products be generic medications, medical supplies, or extra services. All charges are placed on account during the month accrued and detailed on the monthly invoice statement which generates on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month.

Clinically, you will find us to be transparent with members in our digital record keeping and charting as we have implemented secure technology in a way that engages the patient alongside his/her doctor during the in-person exam as their record is accessed and modified. We look forward to sharing our efforts in this area with you during your next in-office visit.



**MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS**

**THE ANNUAL PHYSICAL (WELLNESS) EXAMINATION**

The value of the annual physical examination is more controversial than you might think. A 2012 study by the Cochrane Collaborative reviewed 13 studies involving over 182,000 patients. There were no significant differences in a few important outcomes – including disease-related deaths, hospitalizations, or cost of care – whether or not a patient had an annual physical exam.

A Canadian study in 1979 came to similar conclusions, and some Canadian provinces no longer reimburse providers for the cost of an annual physical exam. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires that insurance companies cover the cost of an annual physical exam, also called an annual “wellness” exam. One of the key authors of the ACA, Dr. Ezekiel Emmanuel, has since publicly questioned the value of the annual physical exam.

We at 307Health view the annual exam as an opportunity to sit down with our patients to talk about their health concerns and to further develop our relationship with each patient. This is a great opportunity to tailor discussions about individual health risks and goals. If you have any questions about the annual physical exam, please contact us.

**LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

**HSA & Medicare Funding**

The Primary Care Enhancement Act of 2015 (S. 1989) was introduced in the U.S. Senate in early August. This legislation defines DPC services as a qualified health expense under the tax code. This would allow individuals with health savings accounts (HSAs) to pay for DPC services with HSA funds.

This bill also creates a new pathway for DPC as an alternate payment model in Medicare, which would allow CMS to pay DPC practices an affordable flat fee up to 20% of the average overall cost of care. This program starts as a demonstration program in the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation (CMMI) and would become permanent for any practice showing improved outcomes over Fee-For-Service (FFS) in a three year period.

This important bi-partisan legislation is currently in the Committee on Finance. We urge you to contact your Senators and ask them to support this bill. You can go to the Direct Primary Care Coalition website at [www.dpcare.org](http://www.dpcare.org) for further information and for a link to email your senators. We will keep you apprised of additional information as available.