



Spring/Summer 2018

## 7 smart questions to ask your doctor

Did you know that it's OK to quiz your doctor? In fact, asking questions is a great way to learn about your own health. Asking questions can help you make better decisions too.

Before you see your doctor, put your goals and thoughts in writing. Ask yourself what health issues you need to talk about with your doctor. Make a list of the questions you should ask.

You can use these sample questions as a guide. Tailor them to fit your own needs — then, ask your doctor!

1. What is my diagnosis?
2. Will I need a test or a prescription? What is it for?
3. What are the pros and cons of treatment?
4. How can I keep my health care on track?
5. What should I do between now and our next appointment?
6. If I have follow-up questions, how can I get them answered?

7. Do you plan to go online to read about your condition? Ask your doctor to suggest websites. You want to trust what you read.

Mercy Care appreciates the cultural and language diversity of its membership. You have the right to receive culturally appropriate care. When talking to your doctor, we encourage you to let them know your cultural preferences and needs for receiving services. If you

would like another person present, just ask.

If you need to arrange for interpretation services, call Member Services three (3) days before your appointment. You can reach Member Services Monday through Friday, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., at **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY/TDD **711**).

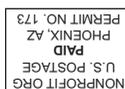
*Source: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality*

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## Member Handbook

You can get this year's Member Handbook from Mercy Care Member Services at no cost to you. They can also send you a copy of the Provider Directory at no cost to you. Member Services is available Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., at **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY/TDD **711**).

WH



## Have you been screened for colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer screenings typically start at age 50. Colorectal cancer is unique. You can prevent it. Your risk increases with age. With screening, colorectal cancer can be found when it is small and treatable.

One of the screening types for colorectal cancer is a fecal immunochemical test (FIT). The FIT test is done yearly and is one of the least invasive screening methods.

The FIT test requires:

- Little preparation
- Only two specimen samples
- No dietary changes or limitations

- No medication changes or limitations

There are different types of screenings. Talk with your doctor to find the right screening for you.

Beginning in June 2018, Mercy Care is partnering with primary care doctors to help members get screened for colorectal cancer. You may receive a call from your PCP or from Mercy Care during this time to help you get screened for colorectal cancer. It might just save your life!



## PCMH Corner

### What is a PCMH?

Mercy Care's provider network includes primary care doctors who are part of a new model of care called patient-centered medical homes (PCMH). When you choose to be a part of a PCMH, you will have a dedicated health care team. Their goal is to work with you to keep you healthy. They will make referrals; help arrange your care from labs, radiologists and specialists; and make sure you understand your health care information. If you need help, your team can help you with creating a plan to get back on track.

#### Good news

Your primary care doctor is a part of our PCMH care model. That means you already have a team of doctors, nurses and care specialists ready to help you. Ask your doctor for more information today.

### How to reduce STDs and unwanted pregnancies

Young people ages 15 to 24 account for nearly half of the 20 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) each year. Today, 2 in 5 sexually active teen girls have had an STD that can cause infertility and possibly death. Also, though rates of HIV are low among 13- to 19-year-olds, males make up more than 80 percent of HIV diagnoses. Regular STD screenings are

critical because STDs often have no symptoms. The most effective way to prevent STDs is not to have sex.

If teens are having sex, they should use a condom correctly and with every sexual act. The only certain way to avoid unwanted pregnancies is not to have sex. Using contraceptives such as condoms, birth control pills, the patch, the vaginal ring, the intrauterine

device (IUD), and/or injectable birth control methods, can reduce the risk of unwanted pregnancy. In addition to using a contraceptive to protect against pregnancy, using condoms correctly with every sex act can reduce the risk of HIV and other STDs for males and females.

Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services website

## Thinking about e-cigs? Think again

Vaping, or using e-cigarettes, may seem harmless. But it's not. A few things you should know before you try it out:

- E-cigs contain nicotine. That's the addictive chemical that hooks people onto smoking.
- The high amount of nicotine in e-cig cartridges poses a poisoning hazard. That's something to think about if you spend time around kids.
- Teens who try e-cigs may be more likely to use tobacco later.
- It's not clear that e-cigs help people stop smoking. Talk to your doctor if you want to quit smoking. He or she can steer you to products that can help.

E-cigs are still largely untested. Until the research comes in, they remain a risky habit — and not the best way to stop smoking, if that's your goal.

Want to quit tobacco? Medication plus coaching can double your chances of successfully quitting. Talk to your doctor or call the ASHLine at **1-800-556-6222**.

*Sources: American Lung Association; National Institute on Drug Abuse; U.S. Food and Drug Administration*

## Language and interpretation services

Mercy Care can help you get a telephone or sign language interpreter for your health care visits at no cost to you. If you need help in your language or if you are deaf or have difficulty hearing, call Member Services for an interpreter at **602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879** (TTY/TDD **711**).

## Injury and suicide prevention

Suicide is the second leading cause of death for young people ages 10 to 24. But help is available.

Don't be afraid to let your friends, family, or teachers know what you need, they want to help. If you think you might hurt yourself or someone else, please call **911**.



The Crisis Response Network is available for a behavioral health crisis. For example, call the Crisis Response Network if you or someone else is talking about or thinking about suicide.

The Crisis Response Network has trained crisis specialists you can talk to 24/7. They can help you in many ways, including:

- Talking and helping you calm down
- Talking about your worries about a loved one
- Helping you deal with difficult relationships, or violent or threatening situations
- Presenting options for dealing with other urgent situations

You can call the Crisis Response Network, at the numbers listed below, at any time.

- Maricopa County: **602-222-9444**
- Cochise/Graham/Greenlee/Santa Cruz counties: **1-866-495-6735**
- Pima County: **520-622-6000** or **1-800-796-6762**
- Gila/Pinal/Yuma counties: **1-866-495-6735**

You can also call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at any time — calls are confidential:

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: **1-800-273-8255**

*Source: National Suicide Prevention Lifeline*  
([suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-yourself/youth](https://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/help-yourself/youth))

## Autism spectrum disorder: How and when kids are screened

Do you worry sometimes about the way your toddler acts? Does your child do things differently from other kids his or her own age?

Your child may be perfectly fine — all children develop in different ways. But you should tell your child's doctor about your concerns. Some issues may suggest a developmental problem, such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD). And if that's the case, being diagnosed with ASD as early as possible can help your youngster a lot.

### What is ASD?

ASD is a neurologic disability that affects how kids communicate, behave and learn. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

(CDC), ASD affects about 1 in 64 children in Arizona. Recently experts began calling it a spectrum disorder (instead of just autism) because the symptoms can range from mild to severe.

ASD is a lifelong condition. But research shows that early intervention programs can help kids live their best lives. Such interventions typically address ASD's symptoms.

For this reason, many doctors screen all babies at 16 and 30 months old for ASD at their well-child checkups. They also check for developmental delays from the very first visit. During an exam, the doctor might watch how your child behaves and moves, among other things. The doctor might

ask you some questions about your child.

There is no single medical test for ASD. Doctors diagnose it, in part, by watching a child's behaviors.

### What are some warning signs?

Parents play a big part in identifying ASD. If you have any concerns about how your child talks or acts, bring them up with your doctor. For example, many children with ASD:

- Don't make eye contact, respond to their names or smile back.
- Have trouble following another person's gaze.
- Have difficulty with nonverbal communication, such as smiling or waving goodbye.
- Babble like you'd expect as infants but suddenly stop before they turn 2 years old.
- Seem to tune out others.
- Have unusual behaviors. For instance, some kids rock back and forth or spend a lot of time lining things up or putting things in a certain order.

If ASD is suspected, your child may see a specialist for an evaluation.

*Additional sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health*

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This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs.

Mercy Care Plan is administered by Aetna Medicaid Administrators, LLC, an Aetna company.

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