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NAME
COMPANY
STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP



We Are Here

At CHRISTUS, we know that emergencies haven't stopped. That's why our hospitals and ERs are open and stand ready to care for you when you need it most.

Taking care of you and your loved ones is what we do. Which is why CHRISTUS hospitals, emergency rooms and clinics work so hard to remain safe places to receive care.

Keeping Health Plan members safe is what matters most to us. Clean hands and clean facilities are more than just top of mind; it's how safe medicine is practiced every day. And many extra precautions have been taken to keep everyone who enters CHRISTUS facilities safe during COVID-19:

- Limiting visitors;
- Screening everyone who comes through the doors;
- Isolating COVID patients to one area of each facility;
- Temperature checks for Associates;
- Requiring everyone on our campuses to wear masks;
- Using telemedicine to treat active COVID-19 patients, so their caregivers and support staff limit the number of times they enter their rooms.

A lot has changed, but our commitment to caring for you is stronger than ever. And when you need care – we are here. We are ready. We're in this together.

This may be an unprecedented time, but CHRISTUS has experienced many of these since our founding 154 years ago. In fact, the first three Sisters who started our ministry in Galveston faced an epidemic of yellow fever within the first six months of opening the very first hospital.

Epidemics and tragedies have been part of our history, and so too has the resolve, after each challenge, to move on in love and service to those in need. We stand today in a rich history that gives us confidence that, with God's help, we can do the same.

Summer 2020 Health Matters



June is Men's Health Month

Anti-Fraud

Report potential fraud, waste, or abuse in the CHRISTUS Health Plan Network by submitting details to the Special Investigations Unit via email, secure fax, or phone.

FWA Hotline: **855.771.8072**

Email:

ChristusHealthSIU@ChristusHealth.org

Secure Fax: **210.766.8849**

If you prefer anonymity, call the Integrity Line at **888.728.8383** or visit ChristusIntegrityLink.org.

For compliance questions or concerns, you can email us at CHPCompliance@ChristusHealth.org

On March 23, 2020, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations issued a **health care fraud alert**, regarding the agency's receipt of COVID-19 complaints.

This alert noted that fraudsters are offering COVID-19 tests to Medicare beneficiaries in exchange for personal details and are targeting the beneficiaries in a number of ways, to include telemarketing calls, social media platforms, and door-to-door visits.

The personal information collected may be used to fraudulently bill Federal health care programs and the unapproved test kits may cause harm to the beneficiaries.

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The goal of Men's Health Month, celebrated every June, is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

According to the CDC, the top 5 causes of death for men across all ages and races include: Heart disease (24%), Cancer (21%), Unintentional injuries (7%), Chronic lower respiratory diseases (5%), and stroke (4%). The causes and percentages vary by age and race.

On average, men die five years younger than women, and die at higher rates from nine of the top 10 causes of death. Men are also less likely than women to be insured. All of this impacts their ability to be involved fathers, supportive partners, and engaged community members.

- **Get a physical.** Most of the factors that contribute to men's shorter, less healthy lives are preventable. And that prevention starts with seeing a health care provider on a regular basis. Establishing baselines for factors such as blood pressure, cholesterol, weight, and PSA (a screening test for prostate cancer risk)—and monitoring how they change over time—will enable the provider to catch potentially dangerous conditions early.
- **Get physical.** The benefits of physical activity are extensive, but many people find it difficult to get motivated for physical activity on their own. Join a recreation league at your local community center, sign up for group personal training sessions, or simply make a routine out of regular walks. Simple, yes, but not always easy.
- **Wear blue.** In 1994, Congress passed a bill declaring the week before Father's Day as Men's Health Week. Encourage everyone you know to wear something blue that week. Wear BLUE Day is celebrated every year on the Friday of Men's Health Week! This year's Wear BLUE Day is Friday, June 19.
- **Learn more.** Men's Health Network (the DC-based nonprofit that helped pass Men's Health Week) has collected more than 300 proclamations from governors, mayors, and Native American communities recognizing Men's Health Month (and Week), the important part that men play as role models for their communities.

sources: health.gov/news-archive/blog-bayw/2018/06/june-is-mens-health-month/index.html
cdc.gov/healthequity/lcod/men/2017/all-races-origins/index.htm



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the newest issue of Health Matters. All of us here at CHRISTUS Health Plan hope you and your loved ones are staying safe and well as we navigate to find our new normal.

In this issue, we discuss Men's Health Month, offer social distancing tips, and how vaccines work in honor of Immunization awareness Month in August.

Be sure to check out all of the Awareness Months and Dates on the opposite page.

As always, if you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact us at **844.282.3026**.

Nothing means more to us than knowing we've helped make our members' lives better.

In good health,
Nancy Horstmann
Chief Executive Officer
CHRISTUS Health Plan

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How do Vaccines Work?

To help you understand how immunizations work, here's a little background on the body's immune system and the way it functions.

When you become infected, your body relies on the immune system to fight the invading organism. White blood cells activate and begin making proteins called antibodies that locate the infectious agent and create a counter offensive. By this time, the germs may have already had time to cause a few symptoms. In some cases, the antibody response will be too late to be helpful and the invading organism can cause a severe or life-threatening infection. Even so, by going on the attack, the immune system and its antibodies can eventually help stop many infections and help you get well.



Even after they've done their work, these antibodies don't disappear. They remain in the bloodstream, always on the lookout for the return of the same invaders. If these germs reappear, whether it's a few weeks or many years later, the antibodies are ready to protect. They can often prevent the infection altogether or stop the infection even before the first symptoms appear. That's why if you had the mumps or measles as a child, you never got it again, no matter how often you were exposed to the same infectious agent.

Immunizations rely on antibodies to fight off infections. But after a vaccination, antibodies go to work before a first infection develops.

- Live vaccines are made up of a weakened version of the bacteria or virus responsible for the disease. Some vaccines are made from dead forms of the organism. In other cases, an inactivated toxin that is made by the bacteria or a piece of the bacteria or virus is used. When the vaccine is given, the body's immune system detects this weakened or dead germ or germ part and reacts just as it would when a new full-blown infection occurs. It begins making antibodies against the vaccine material. These antibodies remain in the body and are ready to react if an actual infectious organism attack.
- In a sense, the vaccine tricks the body into thinking it is under assault, and the immune system makes weapons that will provide a defense when a real infection becomes a threat.
- Sometimes one dose of a vaccine is enough to protect a person, but often more than one dose is needed. Some antibodies protect for a lifetime, but others need boosting. For example, measles antibody lasts a lifetime, but antibody to tetanus can fall below a level that protects you, so booster doses are needed.
- Newborns are immune to some infections because they've received antibodies from their mothers. But that immunity begins to fade in the first months of life. For that reason, it's very important to follow the immunization schedule that your pediatrician will recommend.
- Keep in mind that children do not gain any immunity from their mothers against some of the infectious diseases covered by childhood vaccines. This is another important reason to follow immunization schedules offered by your pediatrician.

Ask your doctor about the vaccines you need to be protected against serious diseases. source: [healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/How-do-Vaccines-Work.aspx](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/immunizations/Pages/How-do-Vaccines-Work.aspx)

Stay Up to Date

CHRISTUS Health Plan values the importance of collaboration and coordinated action for the identification and care of members exhibiting signs of COVID-19, which is why we continue to follow CDC guidelines and work in partnership with local, state and federal government authorities. We are committed to responding to the needs of members in the safest manner necessary.

For more information regarding COVID-19 testing coverage and your Plan, visit ChristusHealthPlan.org/covid19.

For the most up to date information about COVID-19, visit [CDC.org/covid19](https://www.cdc.org/covid19).

To stay up to date with state guidelines, visit your state's health department website:

New Mexico Department of Health: cv.nmhealth.org

Texas Department of State Health Services: dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus

Social Distancing Tips

Limiting face-to-face contact with others is the best way to reduce the spread of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

What is social distancing?

Social distancing means keeping space between yourself and other people. To practice social or physical distancing:

- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people
- Avoid large groups of people
- Stay out of crowded places

In addition to everyday steps to prevent COVID-19, keeping space between you and others is one of the best tools we have to avoid being exposed to this virus and slowing its spread. Social distancing is especially important for people who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Why practice social distancing?

COVID-19 spreads among people who are in close contact. Spread happens when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks, and droplets from their mouth or nose are launched into the air. Studies indicate that people who are infected but do not have symptoms likely also spread COVID-19.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. COVID-19 can live for hours or days on a surface, depending on factors such as sunlight, humidity, and the type of surface. Social distancing helps limit opportunities to come in contact with contaminated surfaces and infected people outside the home.

Although the risk of severe illness may be different for everyone, anyone can get and spread COVID-19. Everyone has a role to play in slowing the spread and protecting themselves, their family, and their community.

Stay connected

It is very important to stay in touch with friends and family that don't live in your home. Call, video chat, or stay connected using social media. Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations and having to socially distance yourself from someone you love can be difficult.

source: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html)



Honor These Awareness Dates and Stay Healthy

June

Alzheimer's and Brain Health Awareness Month

Men's Health Month

PTSD Awareness Month

Cancer Survivors' Day (7)

Family Health & Fitness Day (13)

Army Birthday (14)

Flag Day (14)

Juneteenth (19)

Father's Day (21)

July

Fireworks Safety Month

Heat Safety Month

Swimming Safety Month

Stress Awareness Month

Independence Day (4)

August

Child Eye Health & Safety Month

Immunization Awareness Month

National Night Out (4)

Purple Heart Day (7)