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Great American Smokeout

Quitting smoking isn't easy. You don't have to stop smoking in one day. Start with day one. Let the Great American Smokeout event on Nov. 19 be your day to start your journey toward a smoke-free life.

More than 34 million Americans still smoke cigarettes, and smoking remains the single largest preventable cause of death and illness in the world. While the cigarette smoking rate has dropped significantly, the gains have been inconsistent. Some groups suffer disproportionately from smoking-related cancer and other diseases, including those who have less education or live below the poverty level, as well as certain racial and ethnic groups.

Within minutes of quitting smoking, your body begins to recover:

- After 20 minutes, your heart rate and blood pressure drop.
- After 12 hours, the carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.
- After 2 week to 3 months, your circulation improves and your lung function increases.
- After 1 to 9 months, coughing and shortness of breath decrease.
- After 1 year, the excess risk of coronary heart disease is half that of someone who still smokes. Your heart attack risk drops dramatically.
- After 5 years, your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, and bladder is cut in half. Risk of stroke can fall to that of a non-smoker.
- After 10 years, your risk of dying from lung cancer is about half that of a smoker.

These are just a few of the benefits of quitting for good. Quitting smoking lowers your risk of diabetes, lets blood vessels work better, and helps your heart and lungs.

Life expectancy for smokers is at least 10 years shorter than that of non-smokers. Quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

source: cancer.org/healthy/stay-away-from-tobacco/great-american-smokeout

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CHRISTUS Health



Fall 2020 Be Well Informed



TRICARE Open Season

As a TRICARE Prime option, CHRISTUS Health US Family Health Plan participates in TRICARE® Open Season.

TRICARE Open Season is the annual period when you can enroll in or change your health plan for the next year. **The 2020 TRICARE Open Season begins Monday, Nov. 9 and ends Monday, Dec. 14.**

During Open Season, you can:

- **Do nothing.** If you want to stay in your current TRICARE health plan, you don't have to take any action. You'll continue in your current health plan through 2021 or as long as you're eligible.
- **Enroll in a plan.** If you're eligible for a TRICARE Prime option or TRICARE Select but not enrolled, you can enroll in a plan at this time.
- **Change plans.** If you're already enrolled in a TRICARE Prime option, or TRICARE Select, you can switch plans and switch between individual and family enrollment.

Being able to use TRICARE (and USFHP) depends on keeping DEERS up to date. TRICARE eligibility shows up in DEERS based on the sponsor's status. *Keeping your DEERS record up to date is key to receiving timely and effective benefits.*

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to call your Community Outreach Coordinator or Member Services. Member Services can be reached Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. at **800.67.USFHP (800.678.7347)**.

MC1865



How to Make a Mask

CDC recommends that you wear cloth face coverings in public settings when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.

Cloth face coverings are most likely to reduce the spread of COVID-19 when they are widely used by people in public settings. Cloth face coverings are NOT surgical masks or N95 respirators. Currently, surgical masks and N95 respirators are critical supplies that should be reserved for health care workers and other first responders.

Who should NOT use cloth face coverings: children under age 2, or anyone who is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Simple cloth face coverings can be made at home and may help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

No-Sew Face Covering

Materials

- Bandana, old t-shirt, or square cotton cloth (approximately 20"x20")
- Rubber bands (or hair ties)
- Scissors (if you are cutting your own cloth)

Tutorial

1. Fold bandana in half.
2. Fold top down. Fold bottom up.
3. Place rubber bands or hair ties about six inches apart around the bandana.
4. Fold sides of the bandana to the middle and tuck sides into each other.

Make sure your cloth face covering:

- fits snugly against the sides of your face
- completely covers the nose AND mouth
- is secured with ties or ear loops
- includes multiple layers of fabric
- allows for breathing without restriction
- can be laundered and machine dired without damage or change to shape

For more information about No-Sew Face Masks and Sewn Face Coverings, as well as diagrams for each, visit [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html). sources: [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/how-to-make-cloth-face-covering.html)



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the newest issue of Be Well Informed. All of us here at CHRISTUS US Family Health Plan hope you and your loved ones are staying safe and well as we continue finding our new normal.

In this issue, we describe how to make a No-Sew Cloth Mask and the Great American Smokeout in honor of Lung Cancer Awareness Month in November.

Two important reminders: Flu season is coming, so please be sure to get your flu vaccine. Open Season also begins Nov. 9 through Dec. 14.

As always, if you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact Member Services at **800.67.USFHP**.

In good health,

Nancy Horstmann
Chief Executive Officer
CHRISTUS Health
US Family Health Plan

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 CHPCCompliance@ChristusHealth.org

Seasonal Flu Key Facts

Why should people get vaccinated against flu?

Influenza is a potentially serious disease that can lead to hospitalization and sometimes even death. Every flu season is different, and influenza infection can affect people differently, but millions of people get flu every year, hundreds of thousands of people are hospitalized and thousands to tens of thousands of people die from flu-related causes every year. An annual seasonal flu vaccine is the best way to help protect against flu.

Who should get vaccinated?

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every season. CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices has made this recommendation since the 2010-11 influenza season.

Vaccination to prevent flu is particularly important for people who are at high risk of developing serious flu complications. For example, flu vaccination has been shown in separate studies to be associated with reduced hospitalizations among people with diabetes and chronic lung disease.

When should I get vaccinated?

You should get a flu vaccine before flu begins spreading in your community, since it takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop in the body and provide protection against flu.

CDC recommends that people get a flu vaccine by the end of October. Getting vaccinated later, however, can still be beneficial and vaccination should continue to be offered throughout the flu season.

Does the flu shot increase your risk of getting COVID-19?

There is no evidence that getting a flu vaccine increases the risk of getting COVID-19. There are many benefits from flu vaccination and preventing flu is always important, but in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it's even more important to do everything possible to reduce illnesses and preserve scarce health care resources.

source: cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm

What is Telemedicine?

TRICARE and USFHP cover certain telemedicine services. You may be able to see a TRICARE-authorized provider without leaving your home. Using a computer or smartphone, you connect with your provider by secure video conferencing. TRICARE and USFHP also cover audio-only telemedicine services.

"In light of COVID-19, we want to cut down on patient and staff contact," said Dr. John Kugler, director of the Clinical Support Division at the Defense Health Agency (DHA). "Telemedicine may be an option to meet with your provider."

As part of CHRISTUS Health Plan's commitment to continue delivering high quality care, our partners at CHRISTUS Physician Group clinics have expanded their telehealth services to include telemedicine visits for primary and specialty care. Telehealth services are available for new and existing patients, and use safe, secure and HIPAA-compliant technology.

All of us at CHRISTUS are here to answer any questions and help you get started with Telemedicine. Call today **844.CPG.DOCS (844.274.3627)**. You can also visit us online at ChristusVirtualMedicine.org.

Members in the greater Houston area who do not visit CHRISTUS clinics should contact their provider's office about their telemedicine offerings.

Stay Up to Date

CHRISTUS Health US Family 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.

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

Louisiana Department of Health: ldh.la.gov/coronavirus

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

Quality Program

We want you to know about our Quality Program. A summary is available on the website that explains the CHRISTUS Health Plan Quality Program, our goals, successes and opportunities for improvement. ChristusHealthPlan.org also contains important information on how to use your benefits. You'll find information on:

- Member rights and responsibilities
- How to use your health care coverage
- Covered and non-covered benefits
- Pharmacy procedures
- How to access medical and behavioral health services
- How to appeal payment decisions and the right to external review
- Guidelines for decision making
- How to file a complaint
- Continuity of care
- Population Health Management programs, including wellness programs, case management and other member safety initiatives
- Member satisfaction surveys and other quality measures
- Utilization Management (UM) procedures
- Clinical criteria for decision making

Utilization Management Affirmative Statement

1. CHRISTUS Health Plan UM decision making is based on only the appropriateness of care and service, and existence of coverage.
2. CHRISTUS Health Plan does not specifically reward providers or other individuals for issuing denials of coverage.
3. Financial incentives for UM decision makers do not encourage decisions that result in underutilization.

Member Rights and Responsibilities

Do you know what your rights and responsibilities are as a member of CHRISTUS Health Plan? Visit ChristusHealthPlan.org/Member-Resources/Rights-And-Responsibilities to review this information. It can also be found in your Member Handbook. If you have any questions, call Member Services at **800.67.USFHP (800.678.7347)**.



Honor These Awareness Dates and Stay Healthy

September

Labor Day (7)

Patriot Day (11)

Air Force Birthday (18)

POW | MIA Recognition Day (18)

First Day of Fall (22)

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

World Alzheimer's Month

October

World Mental Health Day (10)

Medicare Enrollment Begins (15)

Halloween (31)

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

November

Election Day (3)

TRICARE Open Season Starts (9)

Marine Corps Birthday (10)

Veterans Day (11)

Great American Smokeout (19)

Thanksgiving (26)

American Diabetes Month

Epilepsy Awareness Month

Lung Cancer Awareness Month