

JOHNS HOPKINS US FAMILY HEALTH PLAN



JOHNS HOPKINS
MEDICINE
US FAMILY HEALTH PLAN

PatriotLife

Summer 2011

inside

DO YOU KNOW
YOUR HEALTH AGE?

WHEN THINGS
GO BUMP ON
THE HEAD

ASK CUSTOMER
SERVICE

ON THE ROAD TO
TAMING
DIABETES

Getting a Grip on Your Health

If you've never completed the Health Risk Assessment that's available on hopkinsmedicine.org/USFHP, there's no better time than now.

By setting aside 15 minutes or so to answer about four dozen questions, you can get a personalized, immediate and completely confidential report that highlights where you're doing well, where the biggest risks to your health are, and what you can begin doing right away to bring your risks down.

Although the questionnaire is of course no substitute for regular checkups and consultations with your physician, it does calculate wellness scores for you that help you zero in on problem areas.

Questions focus on your family health history, eating habits, exercise and stress levels, general safety habits and more. After you've supplied all your answers, the computer tabulates your overall wellness score as well as your scores in such areas as coronary risk, cancer risk, nutrition status, fitness status and mental wellness. Within each area, your report highlights factors that put you at increased risk, names preventive actions you can take, and links you to information you can use to take control.

You can bring your report to your next regular doctor visit to discuss any concerns you may have, and there's a section that lets you know if you should be evaluated promptly.



In many ways, the most interesting part of the report is your "health age." Researchers who conducted a 15-year study involving nearly 7,000 people found seven health practices to be good predictors of longevity. Your profile compares your health practices to those of the people in that study. You'll also see your potential health age if you were following all seven good health practices, which can be several years less than your calendar age.

Now, *that's* a motivator!

Power Up Your Health Knowledge

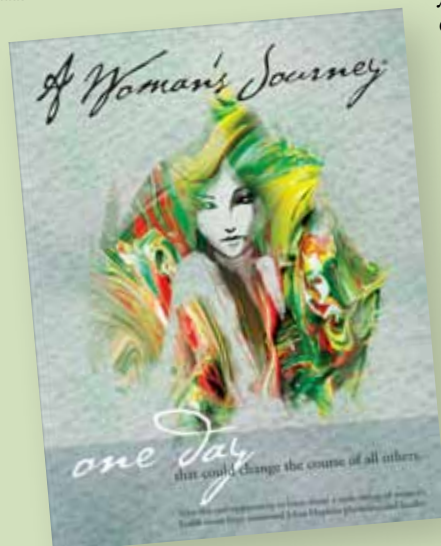
More than 15 years ago, two remarkable Baltimoreans approached Johns Hopkins Medicine with an idea that would affect the lives of thousands of women. Both survivors of cancers, Mollye Block and Harriet Legum wanted to empower women to make effective health care decisions for themselves and those they love. Johns Hopkins Medicine accepted their challenge.

The result has been a powerful annual health conference called A Woman's Journey. Each year, attendees choose four from a slate of 32 seminars—all led by Johns Hopkins physicians and scientists—to hear first-hand about advances in medicine from the experts who are making them. From preserving memory to surviving cancer, the topics

discussed in this one of a kind program attract nearly 1,000 registrants. Mothers, daughters, sisters and friends come to learn from Hopkins physicians and from each other.

Join this diverse group of women for a day of information and inspiration. Share this unique experience with your friends and family or come by yourself; either way, you will be in good company. This educational and empowering day will make a world of difference in your life and the lives of those you love.

This year's conference will be held on Saturday, Nov. 12, at the Hilton Baltimore Hotel. To learn more and register (\$110), visit hopkinsmedicine.org/awomansjourney.



Free Online Health Seminars

Tap into the latest information on a variety of health topics, all presented by Johns Hopkins medical experts in a convenient, free, online format. To learn more and register: hopkinsmedicine.org/healthseminars.

To Keep Your Head in the Game

As fall sports get under way, one concern among parents and physicians is head injuries such as concussions.



A concussion is a direct hit to the head that can occur through playing sports, or by falls or car accidents. In sports, concussions occur most commonly in males playing football and females playing soccer. While football helmets do help prevent traumatic brain injuries, they don't prevent concussions.

To diagnose a concussion versus a run-of-the-mill head bump, physicians rely on symptoms and medical history, explains Alicia Tucker, M.D., a family medicine physician at Johns Hopkins Community Physicians' Odenton office who has sports medicine training. A concussion has mainly cognitive or neurological symptoms—like headache, dizziness, blurred vision or nausea. Some

patients have trouble sleeping or may experience a change in behavior, becoming more aggressive. In severe cases, patients may not remember what happened before or after the hit.

"A concussion is like a bruise to the brain," Dr. Tucker says. Traditional brain imaging technologies won't detect anything abnormal. Still, if you get back in the game or continue to tax your brain, the condition can worsen.

Dr. Tucker strongly urges her patients and their parents to observe strict "brain rest" to recover. That means not only no physical activity, but no home-

work and no tests. Children who go back to school should be given frequent breaks to prevent the brain from working hard more than 50 minutes at a time. Some patients are disappointed to hear that brain rest also means no video games and no text messaging.

"I tell them they actually have to pick up the phone and call their friends if they want to talk," Dr. Tucker says.

Make sure to watch your child. If the symptoms worsen, or your child starts vomiting uncontrollably, go directly to the nearest emergency room.

People suffering concussions generally will be back to normal within seven days, Dr. Tucker says, but those who have attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), migraine headaches or depression may take longer to heal. Even after symptoms subside, you should wait an additional week before resuming competitive sport activities.

Alicia Tucker
Family medicine specialist



Did you know...

25,800,000

Diabetes affects 25.8 million people of all ages. That's more than 8 percent of the U.S. population.

Greek

The term diabetes mellitus comes from the Greek words for "to flow through" and "sweet." Greek physicians used to diagnose the condition by tasting their patients' urine!

90%

Almost 90 percent of diabetes cases are Type 2, the maturity-onset type that affects people in middle age. The major cause is a sedentary lifestyle.

5-7

Type 1 diabetes most often strikes children ages 5 to 7, or during puberty.

Nick Jonas

Famous people with diabetes include singers Nick Jonas and Patti LaBelle; music producer and "American Idol" judge Randy Jackson; actresses Halle Berry, Mary Tyler Moore and Della Reese; retired talk show host Larry King; Seattle Mariners relief pitcher Mark Lowe; and Dallas Mavericks basketball player Jerry Stackhouse.

"Even though I knew about diabetes, there's so much information that's changing" says Edgewood, Md., resident Linda Gallentine. "Whether you're a new diabetic or someone diagnosed again, you really need good information to manage your health."



On the Road to Taming Diabetes

Like many people, Linda Gallentine believed that she was managing her diabetes well enough through diet and that she didn't really need to see the doctor. Besides, her internist at Johns Hopkins Community Physicians at Water's Edge had moved to another practice, and she was nervous about starting over with a new physician. With no immediate health concerns, Gallentine kept putting off going to the office.

When office medical director Scott Feeser and others reviewed the patient files and saw it had been a year and a half since Gallentine had seen a physician, they called and asked her to come in. At Gallentine's October 2009 appointment, Feeser performed a physical exam and ran some blood tests, which revealed that Gallentine's blood sugar had gotten more out of control, and she had high cholesterol. She agreed to take medication and also to enroll in a diabetes education class with physician assistant Scott Monks.

"He was hilarious; he made it fun," says Gallentine, 45, a mother of four who works as a childcare provider. Through discussions, role playing and educational games, Gallentine and her four classmates learned about managing their diabetes and took home materials that made it easy to track how many fruits, vegetables and starches they could eat each day. Trying to learn to eat better just before the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays was tough, she says, but as good a time to start as any.

Gallentine twice had gestational diabetes, while pregnant with her third and fourth children, now ages 17

and 15. She thought she knew about managing diabetes from those experiences, but says everything changes: "You think you can't have dessert, but you forget it's not the sweets, it's other things that can raise your insulin levels."

Determined to avoid supplemental insulin, Gallentine has embraced the lessons taught in class two years ago. She changed her family's diet from white to whole wheat breads, buys lower-fat milk and gets her children to join her for exercise. As a result, her blood sugar levels have decreased significantly, and she has lost about 50 pounds.

Gallentine also has added muscle to her frame through an introduction to hiking class she selected for a gym credit toward her associate's degree. She thought it would be easy, but soon found herself required to hike between three and five miles each class. A walking stick she found by a creek during one class has "been my buddy ever since," she laughs.

"Dr. Feeser keeps me accountable," Gallentine says. "I used to see him every three months, then I graduated to every four months, now I'm graduating to every six months. Without him keeping such good track of my care, I would not have been as successful."

Feeser says he applauds Gallentine for being "fully committed" to her health and for maintaining her weight loss. "If she hadn't made the changes she's made," he says, "she would have needed to be on a lot more medication. Her efforts have been critical to her success."

Class Notes

Physician assistant Scott Monks, who leads diabetes education classes at Johns Hopkins Community Physicians at Water's Edge, says his goal "is to try to reduce the amount of information the patient has to go out and hunt for."

There's a lot of information about diabetes available on the Internet, Monks says, but some of it isn't accurate. Other information may be too overwhelming to digest without the help of someone easily explaining it.

During small-group classes, conducted in four two-hour blocks over a two-month period, Monks uses a variety of interactive activities to teach diabetics how to manage their condition, including how to identify the signs and symptoms of high or low blood sugar; how to problem-solve; how to read nutrition labels, and balance counting carbohydrates with salt, fat and calories; how to make a diet plan; and how to incorporate regular exercise. Handouts and other materials make it easy for patients to create grocery lists and adjust to new eating plans.

Monks says he encourages newly diagnosed diabetics or those struggling to manage their diabetes to attend classes, which can be especially useful with regard to diet: "They help patients understand what they're up against, and how they can easily handle situations."

In addition to offering classes on diabetes management, the Johns Hopkins US Family Health Plan also offers health education classes and case management services to help patients quit smoking or manage chronic diseases. For more information, call 1-800-957-9760 or visit hopkinsmedicine.org/usfhp/members_visitors/health_education/health_education.

Johns Hopkins Supports Military Spouse Employment

Finding employment today can be a challenge, and the mobile lifestyle of military spouses often adds to the complexity. That's why Johns Hopkins Medicine is proud to support the Military Spouse Employment Partnership (MSEP) in helping to identify and promote career opportunities for those seeking to offer their abilities, experience and dedication to some of the nation's top employers.

As a corporate partner with MSEP, Johns Hopkins

Medicine recognizes that military spouses have the education, diversity and skills that our nation needs to be the most competitive, productive workforce in the world. And like other employers throughout the country who are partners with MSEP, Hopkins Medicine believes in the goals of maintaining employ-

ment status for military spouses as they relocate to new places across the nation and around the world, providing career promotion opportunities for military spouses who are helping their employers meet key business goals and objectives, and ensuring pay equity for military spouses that is commensurate with their level of training, work experience, accomplishments and credentials.

To learn more, visit www.ourmilitary.mil.



What Our NCQA Accreditation Means

The Johns Hopkins US Family Health Plan (USFHP) is accredited by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), a not-for-profit organization dedicated to improving health care quality. USFHP has earned NCQA's highest rating—Excellent—reserved for health care plans that meet or exceed rigorous requirements for consumer protection and quality.



Accreditation evaluates not only the core systems and process that make up a health plan, but also the actual results that the plan achieves on key dimensions of care, service and efficiency. The accreditation survey is conducted by a team of physicians and managed care experts who evaluate plans using demanding standards developed with the input and support of health plans, purchasers, unions and consumer groups.

The NCQA seal is a reliable indicator that an organization is well-managed and delivers high-quality care and service.

On a Roll

For the 21st year in a row, The Johns Hopkins Hospital has taken the top spot in *U.S. News & World Report's* annual rankings of American hospitals. In addition to heading the magazine's

"honor roll" of the nation's best hospitals, Hopkins also placed first in five medical specialties and in the top five in 10 others. *U.S. News* analyzed data on 4,825 medical centers this year, but only 17 hospitals made the honor roll, and only 140 hospitals ranked in even one specialty.



Novita Harvey

answers
your questions



Johns Hopkins US Family Health Plan Customer Service representative **Novita Harvey** enjoys talking to members when they call. She hears about new grandchildren and upcoming trips, and celebrates with members when they add new babies to the plan.

“The thing I like about my job is being able to solve problems for the members,” she says. “It gives me a sense of achievement.”

Here are a few questions that our members have been asking Harvey and other USFHP Customer Service representatives lately:

Q: What should I do if I have a true emergency?

A: If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, call 911 or proceed to the nearest emergency room. You must notify your primary care provider within 24 hours of an emergency room visit and any follow-up care must be pre-approved.

Q: What if my primary care provider isn't available. Who can I call if I have a health question after hours?

A: On the back of your USFHP member ID card is the phone number for our NurseLine. Members can call NurseLine 24 hours a day and speak directly to a registered nurse. The number for NurseLine is 866-444-3008. When asked for the PIN number, enter 382. You can also call your primary care provider's office. All offices have after-hours service.

Patriot Life, the official newsletter of the Johns Hopkins Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP), is published quarterly by Johns Hopkins Medicine Marketing and Communications. For more information, call 410-614-4991.

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www.hopkinsmedicine.org/usfhp

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Johns Hopkins US Family Health Plan We're In Your Neighborhood

The Johns Hopkins US Family Health Plan has more than 70 primary care offices to serve our members, including seven new locations (yellow bullets) in Washington, D.C., and Cecil, Wicomico, Somerset and Worcester counties.

Need the most up-to-date listing?
Visit hopkinsmedicine.org/usfhp and click Locations.

