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PrimeLines

A complimentary publication from PrimeWest Health

Member Services: 1-866-431-0801

In-Network, Open Access, Direct Access: WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

Have you seen or heard any of these terms? Not sure what they mean or what the difference is between them? Read on to find out!

In-network

In-network providers are health care professionals and clinics, hospitals, pharmacies, and other facilities that have a contract with PrimeWest Health to provide covered services. In most cases, you need to use an in-network provider to get your covered services. There are some exceptions to this. Read about **open access services** below to learn more. Our ***Provider and Pharmacy Directory*** lists in-network providers.

"In-network providers" are sometimes called "plan providers."

Open access

For some services, called **open access services**, you can use any qualified health care provider, clinic, hospital, pharmacy, or family planning agency, even if they are not an in-network provider. **Open access services** are noted in your ***Member Handbook***.

Direct access

Direct access services are services you can get from an in-network provider without a Service Authorization from us or a referral from another provider.

How do you know if a provider or facility is in-network? What about if a service is open access or direct access?

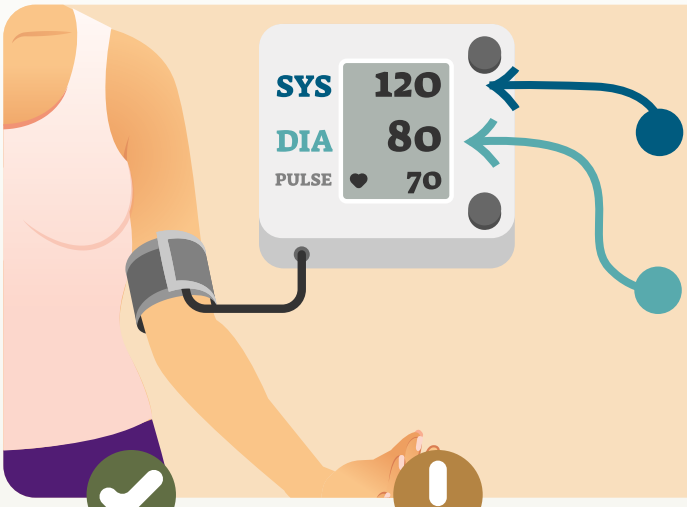
Call PrimeWest Health Member Services at **1-866-431-0801**! We can answer your questions and help you figure out the best way to use health care services. TTY users call **1-800-627-3529** or **711**. These calls are free.

You can also find information in the ***Provider and Pharmacy Directory*** and ***Member Handbook*** for your program. You can find these documents on our website. Go to **www.primewest.org/programs** and click your program name. In the orange box on the left side of the screen, click the name of the document you want.



Understanding High Blood Pressure

High blood pressure (hypertension) happens when the force of blood being pumped through your blood vessels is too strong. It can be normal to have high blood pressure for short periods of time. However, when it stays high for a long time, it can cause health problems. It harms your blood vessels and heart and increases your risk of heart attack or stroke. It can also cause kidney damage and kidney failure, nerve damage, and vision loss. Most people with high blood pressure don't have symptoms and may have it for years without knowing. That's why getting your blood pressure checked is important.



What the numbers mean

There are 2 parts of a blood pressure measurement: systolic and diastolic pressure. The **top** or first number is ***systolic*** pressure. This is the pressure of blood pushed through your blood vessels when your heart beats.

The **bottom** or second number is ***diastolic*** pressure. This measures blood pressure between heartbeats. Below are the general categories for blood pressure measurements. If you fall into Stage 1 or above, you have high blood pressure.

	NORMAL	ELEVATED	STAGE 1	STAGE 2	CRISIS – GET HELP IMMEDIATELY
Top #	Below 120	120 – 129	130 – 139	140+	180+
	and	and	or	or	and/or
Bottom #	Below 80	Below 80	80 – 89	90+	120+

Your provider should check your blood pressure regularly. They might also recommend you monitor your blood pressure at home. Write down the readings and talk about them with your provider. If your home readings show measurements at Stage 1 or higher, tell your provider.

Treatment

Lifestyle changes can help control and manage high blood pressure. Your provider may recommend the following:

- Eating a diet rich in unprocessed foods, healthy fats, and lean proteins while limiting salt
- Exercising and maintaining a healthy weight
- Limiting alcohol and not smoking

Your provider may also prescribe medication. Be sure to take it exactly as directed and don't stop or change the way you take it without talking to your provider. Your provider can check for medication interactions and let you know if there are foods that might interfere with your medication.



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Sources: American Heart Association, Mayo Clinic



Talk to A NURSE

Hurt or sick and not sure what to do? Try calling our 24-hour nurse line at **1-866-201-4601** (TTY **711**). You'll get advice about whether you can take care of yourself at home, if you need to make an appointment with your health care provider, or even if you need to go to the emergency room.* Calls to the nurse line are free.

In an emergency that needs treatment right away, call **911 or go to the nearest emergency room.*

Colorectal Cancer: What You Need to Know

Colorectal cancer in people under age 65 has been on the rise for many years. It is now the leading cause of cancer death for people under age 50. Getting screened for colorectal cancer is the best way to protect yourself. **Most people at average risk should start screening at age 45.**

Reasons to get screened

1. Colorectal cancer may not cause symptoms, so screening is the best way to find it early.
2. Early detection gives you the best chance for effective treatment.
3. Screening can help prevent colorectal cancer by finding polyps—small growths that may turn into cancer—before they become a problem.

If you *do* notice symptoms, be sure to tell your provider. Symptoms can include rectal bleeding, blood in the stool, change in bowel habits, and unexplained weight loss.

Types of screenings

There are 3 basic types of screenings for colorectal cancer. The type you should get—and how often—depends on factors like risk level and family history. Talk with your health care provider about what is best for you.

- 2 types of screenings are done in a health care provider's office, outpatient surgery center, or hospital. The one most people are familiar with is called a **colonoscopy**. The other is called **flexible sigmoidoscopy**.
- A 3rd type is a **stool-based test** that looks for blood or cancer cells in a sample you mail in or return to your provider's office.

Risk factors

Some risk factors for colorectal cancer can't be controlled. These include family and medical history, age, and race. American Indian and Alaska Native people are at highest risk, followed by African Americans. There are other risk factors you can work to control. These include the following:

- Diet – eating processed meat and red meat; not eating fruits, vegetables, and fiber
- Low physical activity
- Smoking and heavy use of alcohol

Early detection matters!

Talk to your health care provider about colorectal cancer screening. Following their recommendations can help catch cancer early or even catch polyps *before* they become cancerous.



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What can you do to lower your cancer risk? The **American Cancer Society** has a tool that gives personalized tips. Find it at **https://acscancerrisk360.cancer.org**.

Source: American Cancer Society


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Notice Something Unfamiliar? Speak Up.

Health care records that do not match what actually happened can be a sign of fraud, waste, or abuse. If you get a notice, statement, or call about health care services that seem unfamiliar to you, please let us know right away. Asking us questions about things that seem wrong is a simple but important way you can help reduce fraud.

Please report concerns to the PrimeWest Health Compliance Hotline by calling **1-866-763-2952**. TTY users call **1-800-627-3529** or **711**. These calls are free and can be anonymous if you choose. You can also email our Compliance team at **compliance@primewest.org**.



Cold and Flu Season:
Staying Healthy with Asthma

Cold and flu season is right around the corner. If you have asthma, getting a cold or the flu can trigger an asthma attack. People with asthma are also at higher risk of developing complications from the flu. Learn how to reduce your risk of getting sick and what to do if you do get sick.

Preventing colds and the flu

- **Get a flu vaccine.** Most people age 6 months and over should get vaccinated against the flu each year.
- **Ask your provider about the pneumonia vaccine.** People with asthma are at an increased risk of getting pneumonia after the flu.
- **Wash your hands often.** Washing with soap and warm water kills germs that cause sickness. Carry hand sanitizer for when you can't wash your hands.
- **Don't touch your face.** Germs enter your body through your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Try to avoid people who are sick.** Ask family and friends not to visit until they are well.

What to do if you are sick

Be sure to contact your health care provider if your asthma gets worse while you are sick. They may be able to prescribe medication that can help. If you have severe symptoms, get help right away.

- **Follow your asthma action plan.** If you're having symptoms like coughing, wheezing, or chest tightness, check your action plan for next steps. If you don't have one, talk to your health care provider about making one!
- **Use your peak flow meter.** Monitor your airflow and adjust your medication or talk to your health care provider if you notice a drop in your rate.
- **Take care of yourself.** Get plenty of rest and make sure you stay hydrated. Get treatment if you have severe symptoms or signs of pneumonia like high fever, chills, a cough with phlegm, or pain with deep breaths.

By taking steps to protect yourself and knowing what to do when symptoms start, you can reduce your risk of complications!

Source: Mayo Clinic


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A program for members with asthma

PrimeWest Health offers a Focused Wellness program for members ages 3 – 21 who have asthma. When you enroll, you'll get personalized phone calls from a nurse to help you learn more about your condition and medications. If you want to participate, please call Member Services at **1-866-431-0801** and ask for the LPN Community Health Specialist. TTY users call **1-800-627-3529** or **711**. These calls are free.

Pregnant?

Here Are 5 Things to Do and Know!

1 **Tell your county or MinnesotaCare worker.** They will update your eligibility to show you are pregnant. This means you won't have copays or premiums while you're pregnant, and for up to 12 months after pregnancy.

2 **Make a prenatal appointment.** Do this as soon as you know you are pregnant to lower the risk of complications. Your first appointment should be within the first 8 – 12 weeks of pregnancy.

3 **Get a car seat from your local Public Health agency.** Tell them you are a PrimeWest Health member and they will set you up with a car seat at no cost to you and make sure it is installed correctly.

4 **Ask questions about your health and your child's health.** Call Member Services at the number below and ask for the Women & Children Care Coordinator or Specialist.

5 **Learn about your benefits.** The links on the web page at **www.primewest.org/pregnancy** describe many of these benefits. For more information, call Member Services at **1-866-431-0801** and ask for the Women & Children Care Coordinator or Specialist. TTY users call **1-800-627-3529** or **711**. These calls are free.



Don't Skip Your Postpartum Visit

The first weeks after birth are a busy time. But, it is still important to take care of yourself. A postpartum visit helps make sure you are healing well and have the support you need. Many providers recommend a checkup within the first 3 weeks after giving birth followed by a more complete visit within 12 weeks. Your provider may recommend an earlier visit if you had problems during pregnancy or delivery.

What happens during a postpartum visit?

Your provider will do a physical exam and ask about your health. They can explain how any complications you had during pregnancy may still affect you. They can also talk with you about lowering risks in future pregnancies.

Your provider will ask about your emotional health. Many new moms struggle with postpartum depression. This type of depression is caused by pregnancy-related hormone changes. It can cause feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, and anger, as well as trouble sleeping and focusing. Your provider can screen you for it and offer treatment options like therapy or medication.

A postpartum visit is also a good chance to ask questions about life with a new baby. You can talk about sleep, feeding, breastfeeding, exercise, sex, and birth control.

Take care of yourself!

A postpartum visit is an important chance to check in with your provider about your health, ask questions, and get support.

Sources: American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists, March of Dimes

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Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): SERVICES AND RESOURCES

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that usually shows up in early childhood. It can cause social and behavioral challenges and make communication difficult. **There are many different signs and symptoms of ASD, and they are different for everyone.** This can make knowing how to best help a child with ASD confusing. Having the right services and resources can help.

Services

Services that can help children under age 21 with ASD are called "Early Intensive Developmental and Behavioral Intervention (EIDBI)." These services are designed to provide education, help the person with ASD be more independent, and improve the quality of life for the person and their family

A "Comprehensive Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation (CMDE)" is required to determine eligibility for EIDBI services. Providers who can give a CMDE, as well as EIDBI service providers, are listed in PrimeWest Health's ***Provider and Pharmacy Directory***. Go to **www.primewest.org/programs** and click the name of your program. Then click *Provider and Pharmacy Directory* in the orange box on the left side of the page labeled "Member Materials." All EIDBI services must be approved by PrimeWest Health in advance. This is called a Service Authorization. You can work with your provider to submit a Service Authorization. Or, you can submit one on your own. To learn how, call Member Services.

Resources

The Minnesota Autism Resource Portal has resources and information to help parents and other caregivers learn more about ASD and helpful services. The portal is at **https://mn.gov/autism**.

Questions

Let us know if you need help finding a provider or have questions about Service Authorizations. We also provide care coordination services. Call Member Services at **1-866-431-0801** and ask to speak with a behavioral health care coordinator to learn more. TTY users call **1-800-627-3529** or **711**. These calls are free.

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You Don't Want the Flu!

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends everyone age 6 months and over get the flu vaccine every year with very few exceptions. Talk to your health care provider today about getting a flu vaccine to help keep you healthy! If you have asthma, check out page 4 for more tips on staying healthy this flu season.

Cannabis and Oral Health

Cannabis (marijuana) use affects your teeth, gums, and overall oral health. This makes it important to tell your dental provider if you use it.

Cannabis can cause dry mouth. This is when the mouth doesn't make enough saliva (spit). Saliva helps keep your mouth healthy by washing away food, controlling bacteria, and neutralizing acids that can cause tooth decay. When you have less saliva, your risk for cavities and gum disease goes up. Regular cannabis use has also been linked to periodontitis. This is a serious gum disease that can damage the tissues and bone that support your teeth.

If you use cannabis, let your dental provider know. They can help you understand how it is affecting your oral health and suggest ways to manage dry mouth. They can also give you education about good oral hygiene habits. This includes brushing 2 times a day with fluoride toothpaste, flossing once a day, and getting regular dental care.

Source: American Dental Association (ADA)



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VACCINES: MYTH vs. FACT

Myth

Following vaccine schedules can overwhelm your child's immune system.

Children get many vaccines in their first months and years. The schedule of when they should get these vaccines is carefully timed. Vaccines are given when each works best with the immune system and when kids have the highest need for protection.

Following the recommended schedule means different vaccines may be given during the same visit. Research has shown this is safe, and there is no evidence that getting more than one vaccine at a time can "overwhelm" the body. Doctors study how vaccines interact and make recommendations based on which ones are okay to give together.

Spacing out vaccines longer than recommended delays development of your child's immune system and can leave them unprotected from a disease when it is most dangerous for them.

Fact

Vaccine schedules help protect kids when they need it most.

Staying on schedule is the best way to protect your child from serious illness. If your child has fallen behind, the best time to get caught up is now! Talk to your child's health care provider to learn more.

Stay tuned to future issues of ***PrimeLines*** for more in our "Vaccine: Myth vs. Fact" series. You can also learn more on the website of the Pan American Health Organization at **www.paho.org/en/topics/immunization/debunking-immunization-myths.**

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics, Pan American Health Organization



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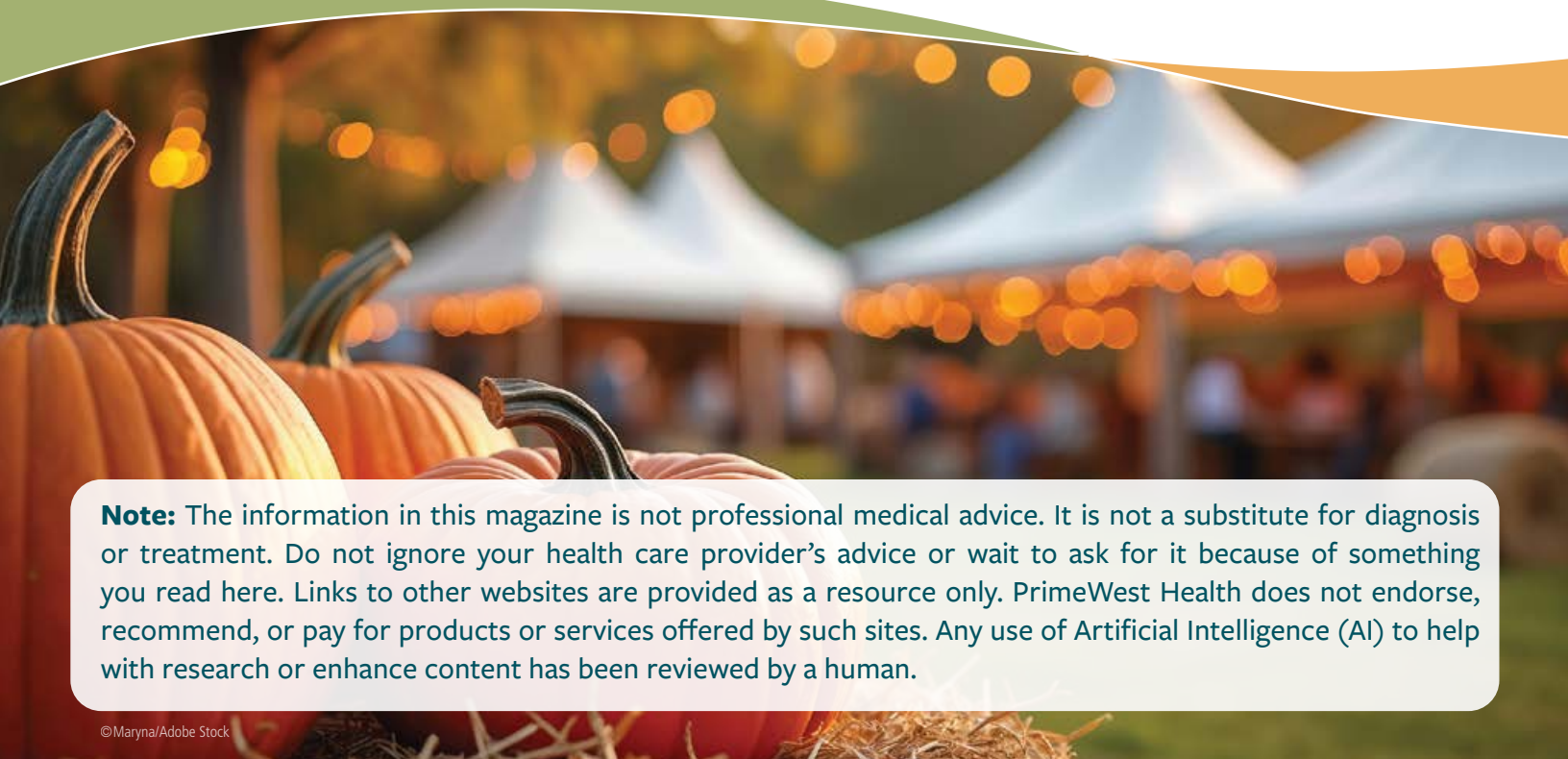

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