



# Warm and well



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Aetna Better Health® of New Jersey

## Keeping well this cold and flu season.

It's that time of year again — when everybody seems to have a sore throat, a cough or the sniffles. It can seem almost impossible to avoid getting sick yourself.

The good news? You can take steps to keep your family well. More good news? If one of you does get sick, you probably won't have to see a provider to get well again.



### How to avoid germs

Most people in your family should get a flu shot every year.

Besides that, one of the best ways to protect yourself against germs is by washing your hands often. Use soap to scrub your hands under warm, running water.

Try to stay away from people who are sick so you don't get their germs.



### How to feel better

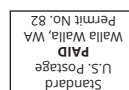
If you do get sick, it's likely you'll get better on your own. Antibiotics don't work on colds and most sore throats, and they won't help you get well.

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## Keeping well this cold and flu season.

*Continued from front page*

Here are some good steps to take instead:

- Get lots of rest.
- Drink plenty of fluids.
- Avoid smoking or secondhand smoke.
- Gargle with salt water to ease a sore throat.
- Breathe in steam from a bowl of hot water or a shower.
- Use over-the-counter medicines to relieve pain or fever. (Never give aspirin to children, though.)

### **When to see a provider**

Call your provider's office if you or your child isn't getting any better — or if you get worse.

For an infant, call your provider if your baby isn't eating, has no tears when they cry or has a fever with a rash.

*Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; U.S. Food and Drug Administration*

## Washing your hands the right way.

Do you spend enough time at the sink? Washing your hands is one of the best ways to avoid germs that can make you and your family sick. In order for it to work, though, you have to know how to wash your hands correctly. Follow these steps each time:

1. Wet your hands with running water (cold or warm). Add some soap.
2. Turn off the faucet and rub your hands together. Get them good and soapy.
3. Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. (That's about how long it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.) Be sure to scrub all over. Don't miss the backs of your hands and in between your fingers.
4. Rinse your hands well under running water.
5. Dry your hands with a clean towel or air-dry them.

### When should you wash?

Here are some important times to be sure to wash your hands:

- Before handling food.
- After using the toilet, changing a diaper or touching garbage.
- Before and after caring for a sick person.
- After you cough, blow your nose or sneeze.

When soap and water aren't handy, you can use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Keep it with you in case you need it.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*







## Teens and vaping: What parents should know.

Is your teen vaping?

It isn't always easy to tell. For one thing, they may refer to it by words you might not recognize, like *Juuling*, *e-juice* and *dripping*. The devices are also made to look like everyday items. A device might disguise itself as a pen, a car key fob or a flash drive.

There are a lot of reasons why you should know whether your teen is vaping. Most e-cigarettes contain nicotine. That's the chemical that hooks smokers on regular cigarettes. That means e-cigs are addictive too.

Nicotine isn't a harmless drug. It may be very risky for young people. That's because the human brain continues to develop until about age 25. Using nicotine at younger ages can harm a still-growing brain.

### How do e-cigs work?

E-cigs turn liquids (e-juice) into a vapor that users inhale. The vapor is made when the liquid comes in contact with small heated coils within the device. (Some kids forgo vaping through the mouthpiece. Instead, they drip the liquid directly onto a heated coil. This is called dripping.)

The liquids come in a variety of flavors that appeal to kids. Those include fruit, candy, coffee and chocolate. In addition to nicotine, they might also contain:

- Antifreeze.
- Solvents.
- Cancer-causing substances.

One of the so-called benefits of vaping is that it isn't as harmful as smoking regular cigarettes. That may be true. E-cigs haven't been around long enough to study their long-term effects. Still, less toxic doesn't mean nontoxic.

Another hyped benefit of vaping is that it can be used to help adult smokers quit cigarettes. The evidence for that is unclear, though. Plus, teens who vape may be more likely to smoke cigarettes in the future.

*Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

### Be a role model.

Talk to your teen about the dangers of vaping. Be a good role model by not vaping or smoking yourself.

You can learn more about the risks of vaping by visiting [CDC.gov/E-Cigarettes](https://www.cdc.gov/e-cigarettes). Need help with quitting? Visit [NJQuitline.org](https://www.njquitline.org) or call **1-866-NJ-STOPS (1-866-657-8677)**.

## Talking to your teen about drugs.

Parents often have to have tough talks with their teens. One of the most challenging topics for many parents is the use of drugs, including alcohol, marijuana and other substances like prescription medications.

If you are a parent of a teen, you may be unsure how to begin that conversation — or that your teen will even listen. Remember, it's important to let your teen know how you feel about drugs because research shows that you play a pivotal role in preventing your child from using them.

Here are some tips from experts about how to handle that talk:

**Decide what you want to say.** Have a plan in mind before you talk. Be prepared to discuss what your rules are. Make those rules clear, simple and specific, like no drugs or alcohol use.

**Find a time that works for both of you to have a serious conversation.** You want to be able to focus entirely on your child. Choose a neutral location with few distractions for the talk, and be sure everyone turns off their phones and other devices.

**Discuss consequences.** Let your teen know there will be consequences if rules about drug use are broken. Keep in mind that small consequences are better than drastic ones. Be sure to praise your child when rules are followed.

*Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse*

## What do you do if you think your teen is using drugs?

**Let them know you have suspicions.** Don't accuse. Let them know you're concerned. Tell them why you're worried. For example, you've found drugs or an empty pill bottle. Maybe you've noticed they've been acting differently.

**Stay calm.** Your child may try to argue with you. They may accuse you of spying on them or of being crazy. Remain in control of your thoughts and actions. If the discussion is getting too heated, postpone it for another time.

**Remind your child of how you feel.** That includes reinforcing that you love them and you don't want them to use drugs.

**Consider getting help from your child's provider.** A child who is using drugs or alcohol may need to be assessed for a substance abuse disorder.

You can also get help from ReachNJ. Call **1-844-ReachNJ (1-844-732-2465)** or visit **NJ.gov/humanservices/reachnj**.







## How to talk to your kids about underage drinking.

Kids aren't supposed to drink alcohol, but many of them do anyway. As a parent, what can you do to help keep your kids from participating in illegal and risky underage drinking? The answer: more than you may realize.

Kids themselves — up to 80% of teens, in particular — say their parents have the biggest influence over whether they drink. It does matter to kids what you say and do.

For starters, you can:

**Start talking to them at a young age.** Talk to your kids early and often about the risks of drinking. Many kids as young as 9 are ready for these important conversations. Of course, what you tell your kids will depend on their age and maturity level. Let them know you love them and want them to be safe.

You may want to:

- Ask them what they already know about alcohol.
- Tell them about someone you know who was harmed by alcohol.
- Help them practice saying “no” if offered a drink.
- Give them facts about the risks related to drinking, including poor grades, deadly car crashes, health problems and addiction.
- Encourage them to ask questions — don't do all the talking yourself.

### **Keep your rules against drinking clear and consistent.**

Make sure your child knows, without a doubt, that drinking is not allowed. Be steady with this message and with your enforcement of this rule. For example, you shouldn't joke about getting drunk. This could send the wrong message. Your kids might think that drinking is funny and therefore OK.

**Be involved.** Know where your kids go, who they're with and what they do. Check in with other parents about what your kids are doing.

*Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics; National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism*

## Need more advice about talking to your kids?

There's someone else you may want to talk to about underage drinking: Your child's health care provider.

Providers are used to talking with children and parents about sensitive topics like alcohol and other substance use.

## Helping a loved one eat well.


We all need to eat well for good health. That can be a problem if it's hard to move around because of a disability. It can also be a challenge to help those with memory problems like dementia or other special needs eat healthy foods.

If nutritious eating is difficult for you:


- Tell your provider. You should also speak up if you have lost weight.
- Ask friends or family to take you shopping.
- Look into home aides or services that deliver meals.

### How to help

If you are caring for a loved one, these tips may help him or her eat a healthy diet:

 **Make dining pleasant.** Turn off the TV, and focus on the meal. Set the table nicely, and maybe put on some music.


**Don't offer too many meal choices.** More than two options may be confusing.


 **Encourage your loved one to eat.** If the food is refused, though, don't push. Sometimes it helps to offer:


- Smaller, more frequent meals (for those who won't eat three traditional meals).
- One food at a time rather than full meals.




• Food on smaller plates (it may seem less overwhelming).

 **Offer finger foods, if using a fork is difficult.** Sandwiches are one option.

 **Get help for swallowing problems.** A speech therapist can help.

 **Flavor with spices.** Some foods taste bland to older people.

 **Be patient with kids.** Like all children, those with special needs often need time to try new foods.

*Sources: Family Caregiver Alliance; National Council on Aging; National Institute on Aging*



# Sheet-pan salmon with roasted Fall vegetables.

Makes 4 servings.

## Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice
- ¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 clove garlic, minced, plus 3 whole cloves, smashed
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated ginger
- 4 5-ounce, skin-on salmon filets
- 1 small butternut squash, peeled and cubed (around 2 pounds)
- 1 pound Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed and halved (or quartered, if large)
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds, for garnish

## Directions

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
- In baking dish, stir together soy sauce, sesame oil, maple syrup, lime juice, red pepper flakes, 1 clove minced garlic and ginger. Place salmon in marinade, skin-side up.
- Place squash and Brussels sprouts in a single layer on baking sheet. Add olive oil and pepper and toss to coat. Place smashed garlic cloves among the vegetables. Roast vegetables for 15 minutes.
- Remove from oven and stir, pushing vegetables aside in 4 spots to leave openings for each salmon filet. Place salmon on pan skin-side down in the open spaces.
- Pour any remaining marinade over salmon and return pan to oven for another 12 minutes or until salmon flakes easily with a fork.
- Garnish salmon with sesame seeds and serve immediately.



*You may substitute sweet potatoes for butternut squash and honey for maple syrup (or omit the sweetener entirely). This recipe can also be adapted for different types of fish and vegetables. Less hearty vegetables, such as asparagus or green beans, will not require as long a cook time.*

## Nutrition information

Serving size: ¼ of recipe. Amount per serving: 410 calories, 16g total fat (2.5g saturated fat), 80mg cholesterol, 34g carbohydrates, 34g protein, 8g dietary fiber, 390mg sodium.

*Source: American Institute for Cancer Research*

## Dental health: Why check-ups matter so much.


Going to the dentist is a good idea for everyone. Over time, the food we eat leaves a sticky film of bacteria called plaque on our teeth. It turns the sugars in foods and drinks into acid that can eat away at our teeth, causing tooth decay and cavities.


Brushing and flossing help, but they don't get rid of it all. Having your teeth cleaned at the dentist regularly will remove what's left behind.


Your dentist can also catch problems early, when they're easier to treat. For example, cavities are easier to fill when they're small — and gum disease can be reversed if caught early.

### When to see the dentist

Both adults and children should have preventive dental visits twice a year and complete all recommended treatments. You may need to go more often. Here's what experts usually recommend:

 **Babies.** Take your baby to the dentist after they get their first tooth. Babies should see a dentist before turning 1.

 **Children.** Most kids should see the dentist every 6 months.

 **Adults.** Most adults should go every 6 months. Your dentist may suggest going more often if you're at higher risk for gum disease.

*Sources: American Dental Association; National Institutes of Health*



### During your visit.

Tell your dentist if you've had a change in your health. Medical conditions may affect your teeth, especially if you have:

- Tooth sensitivity.
- Puffy or bleeding gums.
- Persistent bad breath.
- Pain or swelling in your mouth.
- Any ulcers, areas of soreness or lumps in the mouth.
- Dry mouth.
- Diabetes, heart disease, an eating disorder or HIV.
- A family history of tooth decay or gum disease.
- A history of smoking or tobacco use.



## Live well with a disability.

When you're living with a disability, you may have some unique health challenges.

In some ways, though, taking good care of yourself is no different for you than for anyone else. The same things that help keep most people healthy are likely to help you stay healthy as well.

### Here are 10 tips that can help

1. Get check-ups, and be sure you talk with your health care provider about when to get screenings.
2. Always be honest with your health care team.
3. If you have questions or concerns about your health, let your provider know.
4. Make sure you know how to take your medicines.
5. Eat healthy foods in the right amounts.
6. Be active each day. Follow your provider's guidance.
7. Don't smoke or use drugs.
8. Know the risks of alcohol.
9. Don't get too much sun.
10. Stay in touch with family and friends.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*



## Is it time for a medicine check-up?

Medicines can help us feel better and stay well. However, when you need to take more than one, there could be a chance for a problem.

Some medicines can interfere with each other, or there may be side effects you didn't expect. Note: It's not just medicines your provider prescribes that create problems. Over-the-counter drugs can have powerful effects too.

That's why you and your provider should talk about everything you take at each check-up.

You can bring all of your medicines to your next provider visit. You can also just make a list of the name and dose of each one you take.

Either way, be sure to include any:

- Prescription drugs.
- Over-the-counter products.
- Vitamin, herb or mineral supplements.

You and your provider will go over your medicines together. Your provider can look for drugs that:

- You may no longer need.
- Don't mix well with other medicines you take.
- Are causing side effects.
- May have a version that costs less.

To get the most from your medicines, you also have to know how to take them. A medicine check-up is a good time to ask any questions you have.

*Sources: Health in Aging Foundation; National Institute on Aging*

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## 3 reasons to make time for a well-child visit.

If your child is healthy and well, you want to keep them that way. Regular check-ups — called *well-child visits* — can help you do that.

These visits take place when your child is healthy, not sick. That lets your provider get to know you and your child — and focus on steps that can keep them safe.

Well-child visits also give you the chance to:


-  **See if their growth is on track.** At each visit, your provider will check your child's height and weight. You'll also talk about whether your child is learning and moving as they should. If not, finding out early can help make sure your child gets the help they need.
-  **Keep current on shots.** Vaccines help prevent serious illnesses. Staying up-to-date is the best way to protect your child.
-  **Talk about parenting concerns.** If you have questions about nutrition, sleep or behavior problems, this is a great time to ask.



Well-child visits start when your child is only a few days old. At first, your provider will want to see your child every month, then every few months. Later, the check-ups become a yearly visit.

**If you haven't kept up, it's not too late to start. Make the call today.**

*Source: American Academy of Pediatrics*

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