



**ILLINOIS
HEALTH
CONNECT**

Your Home For Healthcare™

ILLINOIS HEALTH CONNECT CLIENT NEWSLETTER

September 2010, volume 3, issue 2

WOMEN'S HEALTH

What Is A "Pap Test"?

A Pap test can be done with a quick and painless female exam. A Pap test is the primary way to detect cancer of the cervix. The cervix is the lower part of the uterus that plays an important role in female health and childbirth. That's why regular Pap tests are so important. They can help detect abnormal cells in the lining of the cervix. Abnormal cells look different than healthy cells.



A Pap test with abnormal results can be the first sign that the virus "HPV" is present. Some HPV viruses can be common and cause no problems. But some, like the HPV virus that can be in the cervix, can be harmful and need to be treated.

Your PCP will determine how often you should get a Pap test. If the results are abnormal, your doctor will make sure you have additional tests done to find out more. Make sure you go see your PCP for regular check-ups. Make sure you follow up with the doctor or health clinic that did your exam.

What Is a "Mammogram"?

A mammogram is an x-ray that looks at the soft tissues of the breasts. A mammogram looks for changes in the breasts that may show signs of cancer.

All women need to start having mammograms at some time in their life. When you start getting mammograms depends on many things. Your age and the health of the other women in your family help your PCP decide when is best for you. Make sure you go see your PCP for regular check-ups. Ask when you should have a mammogram.

All women should also check their breasts. Your doctor or health clinic can show you how to do this. Talk to your doctor if you think something about your breasts has changed.

"I'm Going to Have a Baby...Now What?"

Here are some important reminders for you about your pregnancy:



It is best to get prenatal care as soon as you know you are pregnant and continue to get care throughout your

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1375 E. Woodfield Rd.

Schaumburg, IL 60173-5418

1-877-912-1999

www.illinoishealthconnect.com

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pregnancy. You should use the same doctor or clinic for all your prenatal care. Take good care of yourself while you are pregnant. Take prenatal vitamins with folic acid. Get exercise and don't smoke, drink alcohol or use street drugs. It is also very important to see your PCP or OB/GYN after the baby is born to talk about family planning and birth control.

Eating healthy foods is important when you are pregnant! WIC can help you learn how to eat well for your growing baby and get off to a great start with breastfeeding. WIC is a supplemental nutrition program to help pregnant women, new moms, babies and young children eat well and stay healthy. WIC staff will help you with any questions or concerns about feeding your baby. Make sure you sign up for WIC while you are pregnant! It is also very important that babies and young children eat right. This helps them grow up healthy and strong. With WIC, you can get healthy foods like whole grains, milk, eggs, cheese, fruits and vegetables, juice, cereal, dried beans or peas, baby foods, and peanut butter. To see if you qualify for WIC, visit a WIC Clinic. To find the WIC Clinic nearest you, call 1-800-323-4769 (TTY 1-866-295-6817) or go to the DHS website at www.dhs.state.il.us and click on "Food."

Family Case Management (FCM) is a program that helps pregnant women, infants and children get needed services, like healthcare and transportation, and provides education on issues such as pregnancy, childbirth,



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FLU SHOTS

With flu season right around the corner, it is important to get your flu shot. One of the best ways to protect yourself and stay healthy is with immunizations (shots). Shots help your body fight diseases and stay healthy. Make sure to talk with your PCP about getting a flu shot today! If you need help making an appointment with your PCP, call the Illinois Health Connect Client Helpline at 1-877-912-1999 (TTY: 1-866-565-8577). The call is free. 

parenting, family planning and birth control. For more information, visit your local family community resource center (FCRC or local office). If you don't know where your FCRC is or if you are unable to go there, call 1-800-843-6154 (TTY 1-800-447-6404), or go to the DHS website at www.dhs.state.il.us.

Pay attention to your feelings during and after pregnancy. If you are feeling sad nearly all the time, can't feel pleasure, worry too much, or have lost interest in food, talk to your doctor right away.

Illinois Health Connect is always here to help! Feel free to call us between 8am and 7pm, Monday through Friday at 1-877-912-1999 (TTY 1-866-565-8577). The call is free. 



BREASTFEEDING IS GOOD FOR YOU AND YOUR BABY!

Babies need good food to grow up healthy. Breastfeeding helps babies get off to a great start!

Best for Baby, Best for Mom

If you are pregnant or thinking about having a baby, make plans now to breastfeed your baby for the first year of life.

- Breastfeeding is the normal and natural way to feed your baby.
- Breastmilk is all your baby needs for the first six months.
- You can keep your baby healthier by breastfeeding.
- Breastmilk protects babies from ear infections, colds, allergies, diarrhea and constipation. Your baby will be sick less and have fewer doctor visits.
- Breastfed children are less likely to have diabetes or become overweight in later years.
- Breastfeeding saves money – no formula or bottle costs, fewer doctor bills and medication costs.
- Breastfeeding saves time – no messy bottles to fix at night.
- Breastfeeding helps you bond with your baby. Holding your baby while you nurse makes your baby feel loved and close to you.
- Nursing uses extra calories and makes it easier to for you to lose weight after your baby is born.
- Breastfeeding has health benefits like lowering your risk of ovarian cancer, breast cancer and osteoporosis
- Only you can breastfeed your baby!

The WIC program can help mothers who breastfeed their babies. WIC helps women understand how to breastfeed, answers



questions about breastfeeding and provides support and counseling.

When you go back to school or work, ask your doctor or WIC about a breast pump. WIC will teach you how to use the breast pump and how to store your milk safely. With a breast pump, your baby can continue to get your breastmilk and all the protection it offers.

WIC can also help you get healthy food. WIC can give you information and advice on how to eat healthy. Best of all, WIC is free! You may be able to get WIC services if you:

- Are pregnant or had a baby within the past 6 months;
- Are breastfeeding and your baby is younger than 1;
- Have a child younger than 5.

Call the toll-free Illinois Department of Human Services Help Line at 1-800-323-4769 (TTY 1-866-295-68417) to find a WIC agency near you.

For **breastfeeding support** or to talk to a counselor, call the toll-free National Women's Health Information Center at 1-800-994-WOMAN (9662) or TTY 1-888-220-5446. You can call Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You can also visit the National Women's Health Information Center Web site: www.4woman.gov.

Make sure your baby gets off to a great start – breastfeed! 





State of Illinois

Department of Healthcare and Family Services
Pat Quinn, Governor
Julie Hamos, Director



1375 E. Woodfield Road
Suite 600
Schaumburg, IL 60173-5418

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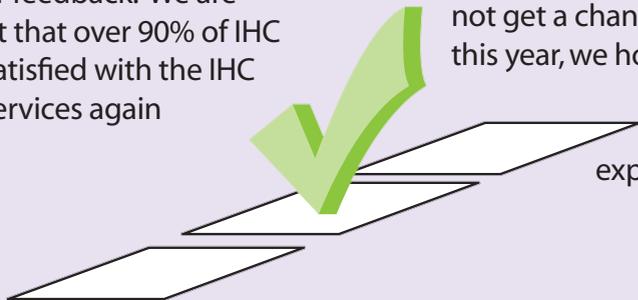


2010 IHC MEMBER SURVEY FEEDBACK

Thank you for your feedback! Illinois Health Connect would like to thank everyone who took part in the member survey we recently conducted. This is the second year we have called Illinois Health Connect members to find out what is working and what we can do better. We want you to know we appreciate your feedback. We are happy to report that over 90% of IHC members are satisfied with the IHC program and services again this year!

We use your feedback to help us make our program better. Your feedback helps us decide if we are meeting the goals of the Illinois Health Connect Program. Goals like reducing Emergency Room visits and finding better ways to notify you when you or your children are due for checkups.

IHC will conduct a member survey again in 2011 to see how the program is working and to find new ways to make it better. If you did not get a chance to take part in the survey this year, we hope you will next year.



We enjoy learning from your experiences. Thank you again! 