



Health Care Alert

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION PROVIDING HEALTH CARE TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR SUPPORT TEAMS

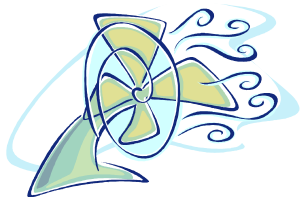
Risk Management Corner

Heat Safety 101

Just as we would not think about going outside in the winter without a coat, we need to stop and think what we need to do to protect ourselves when the weather is hot. There may be some people who need assistance to ensure that they can be safe during this time. We can be successful in preventing heat related illness and death by implementing preventative measures, understanding which individuals are at highest risk, recognizing symptoms, and obtaining medical attention swiftly when signs and symptoms occur.

The problem when the weather is hot is that people can develop a "heat-related illness". "Heat-related illnesses occur when the heat level in the body exceeds the amount it can normally release, or when there is impaired ability by the body for heat loss." The body cannot remove the heat and the temperature of the body's inner core begins to rise above its normal level.

Being aware of this potential problem is part of the solution. Read on to familiarize yourself with prevention, evaluating risk, and signs and symptoms of a problem.



Prevention

Instead of treating heat related illness, do the following to **prevent** it from happening:

Environmental Recommendations

- Stay in cool areas – if you do not have an air conditioner, consider a visit to a shopping center, senior center, movie theatre, friend's house, or public library for a few hours. If you can't get out, stay on a lower floor where it's cooler and open the windows.
- Use a fan – but only if there is cooler air blowing; do not use a fan in a hot closed area with no ventilation.
- Take a cool shower or bath

- Use your stove/oven less – keeps your home cool
- Keep curtains, drapes and blinds closed during daylight hours
- If going out in a car or van, turn the air conditioner on and cool the area before people get in
- Have a friend, relative, or neighbor check on you twice a day during heat waves

Eating/Drinking Recommendations:

- Drink plenty of water – avoid alcohol or caffeine as they are dehydrating
- For people who are unable to indicate that they are thirsty, offer fluids at regular time periods throughout the day
- Avoid hot foods and heavy meals – they add heat to your body
- Check tube feeding formulas to make sure they do not spoil. Some preventive measures include only filling the container one can at a time or obtaining a cooling pack to place around the container
- Ensure that people who receive tube feedings receive extra fluids, unless fluids are limited (check with doctor)



Clothing Recommendations:

- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose clothing – cotton is best
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat or use an umbrella for shade when outside
- Pack winter clothing away – some people cannot differentiate what type of clothing to wear

Other Important Actions:

- Use a sun block with SPF 15 or higher – sunburn affects your body's ability to cool itself and causes loss of fluids
- Pace yourself – take frequent rest periods in the shade or a cool area
- Limit your physical activity
- Limit your time outdoors in the heat – go out early morning or in the evening

Each summer information about Heat Safety makes the front page of our Health Care Alert because this information is extremely important to the health and safety of all people. Please note that each year the City of Philadelphia, Department of Behavioral Health/Mental Retardation Services (DBHMRS) creates and distributes a very comprehensive Heat Safety Policy and Program (a copy can be obtained by calling MRS at (215) 685-5900). Any excerpts used from that publication within this article will appear in quotes.

Evaluate Risk

Know which individuals are at highest risk – **heat related illness can affect anyone but some people are more at risk as listed below:**

- Age: young people (infancy to age four) and older (age 50+)
- Extremes in body size and percentage of body fat - those who are obese or underweight
- Lifestyle factors: Lack of air conditioning and proper ventilation for heat & humidity
- Living in upper floors of buildings
- Heavy clothing
- City dwelling
- Lack of information about heat related illness
- Chronic medical conditions
 - Heart disease, high blood pressure
 - Eating disorders
 - Hyperthyroidism
 - Kidney disease
 - Lung disease
 - Poor circulation
 - Uncontrolled diabetes
- Skin disease or damage, sunburn
- Any illness that causes general weakness or fever
- Acute medical conditions
 - Dehydration
 - Fever
- Prolonged exertion



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"Community Connections"

GYM BENEFITS THRU YOUR MCO'S...



AmeriChoice

AmeriChoice is partnering with *VigorWorks Fitness Center*, a Center City gym, to offer members, ages 12- 21, a 12-week Youth Challenge to encourage sustained healthy behaviors. The Youth Challenge kicked off on April 12th. Youth and their parents will participate in exercise and nutrition classes three times each week. The primary goal of the Youth Challenge is to educate youth and their families about the components of healthy lifestyle including portion control, healthy food selection and preparation, reading labels, exercise, and more. Program success will be

tracked and measured at the conclusion of the Program. For information about the Program call Vigor Works at 215-545-2000.

AmeriChoice also has a benefit with the *YMCA*

AmeriChoice members can receive \$75.00 discount towards a YMCA membership. This is available at the following YMCA locations:

1400 North Broad St 1-215-235-6440

1724 Christian St 1-215-735-5800

5120 Chestnut St 1-215-476-2700

About AmeriChoice: AmeriChoice, the public sector health care unit of UnitedHealth Group, facilitates access to community-based, culturally-

sensitive, quality health care for more than 1.7 million beneficiaries of Medicaid, Medicare and Children's Health Insurance Programs in seventeen states across the country, including in Southeast Pennsylvania. AmeriChoice believes that health care cannot be provided effectively without consideration of the environmental factors that affect a person's life, and through its unique Personal Care Model, takes a holistic approach to health care, emphasizing practical programs to improve its members' living circumstances as well as their health. Visit www.americhoice.com for more information or call Sarah Morvin, R.N., CCM, Director of Case Management: 215-832-4603.

Health Partners

Programs for healthy living

To qualify for a free Fitness Program membership, all you have to do is complete 12 visits within the first three months and pay a \$2.00 fee per visit. (Members under age 18 need to complete six visits within the first three months and do not have to pay the fee.) After completing the 12 visits during the first three months, your membership at the fitness center is free for the rest of the year. You don't have to pay the fee anymore.

For more information, call Health Partners' Well-

ness Administrator at 215-991-4293. Evenings and weekends, call Member Relations at 1-800-553-0784 or 215-849-9600 (TTY users can call 1-877-454-8477) or visit us at www.healthpart.com.

As a Health Partners member, you can lose weight with Weight Watchers for only \$2.00 a meeting. All you have to do is meet the simple requirements explained on this sheet. You must need to lose a least 10 pounds to join Weight Watchers. You must also be Health Partners member when you start the program and

throughout the benefit period.



Why wait? You can start enjoying the benefits of healthier eating habits right away: Call Health Partners Member Relations anytime at 1-800-553-0784 (TTY1-877-454-8477) to sign up for this benefit. We will pay your membership fee to Weight Watchers and send you 10 coupons to attend weekly Weight Watchers meetings for only a \$2.00 co-pay. We will also send you a list of meeting locations.



SQA Pharmacy Services

About Us

SQA Pharmacy Services is a full service closed door pharmacy that provides care to all types of community-based residential facilities. This includes personal care and group homes, assisted living communities as well as skilled living facilities--no matter what their size or the special needs they may have.

SQA Pharmacy Services sqa@sqapharmacy.com was formed in 2006 by Resources for Human Development (www.RHD.org). RHD provides residential services for individuals with mental illness, mental retardation, chemical addiction, and those who are homeless, to job training, assisted transportation, and crisis intervention--we're ready to provide assistance wherever the

need exists. RHD recognized a need when their consumers (residents) were not receiving consistent quality pharmacy care. Since beginning in 2007, SQA has grown substantially and now provides pharmacy services to over 39 facilities.

Like the letters that our name represents, SQA's foundation is to provide excellent pharmacy **S**ervice, **Q**uality, and **A**ccuracy to our clients and their residents.

S(ervice) Q(uality) A(ccuracy) ... The Right Choice

Choosing a pharmacy is an important and multi-faceted decision for any facility. It's not just about pharmacy services; it's about building a relationship with an organization who under-

stands your needs. We know that each facility has unique needs. Our pharmacists and associates are experienced in the Long Term Care Industry and pride themselves in taking the time to understand your facility and residents.

SQA Pharmacy provides customer service tailored to the needs of your community. In addition, we can customize our services (ie. packaging of medications, communication methods, and delivery schedules) to best meet the requirements of your facility and residents.

We are continually changing and evolving our systems to ensure that our clients receive the best possible service. Our flexibility enables us to service you and your residents more efficiently.

While PCHC does not solely support the use of one type of pharmacy service, we are sharing this information from a newly designed pharmacy company as an available community resource. Please contact SQA Pharmacy directly for more information.

GYM BENEFITS THRU YOUR MCO'S...

Keystone Mercy Health Plan

Keystone Mercy Health Plan is committed to improving the quality of life of our members by helping to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors. Frequent exercise plays a major role in a person's overall health. Therefore, effective April 1, 2008, Keystone Mercy Health Plan will offer a Gym/Wellness Center benefit to our members who are 18 years or older.

The Benefit allows our members to receive an annual membership to one of our participating Gym/Wellness Centers. Keystone Mercy has contracted with local gyms, including many YMCA locations and other neighborhood gyms such as La Fortaleza Wellness Gym, to open their facilities to our membership.

"The key to a healthy lifestyle starts with watching what you eat, but it also includes staying active and getting exercise," states Dr Jay Feldstein, Chief Medical Officer. "We believe that everyone, especially our members, want to be healthy. It is important to encourage and increase access to exercise avenues. Our Gym/Wellness Benefit offers members an opportunity to exercise, focus on their health, and improve their quality of life."

If our members would like to utilize the Gym Benefit, please have them call our Member Services number (1-866-521-6860) for help finding a gym.

To access the Gym Benefit, members must follow these steps:

1. Find a contracted gym (see list)
2. Meet with a gym representative and fill out the Initial Health Survey Form
3. Make 18 visits within the first 90 days, and pay a \$2 co-pay per visit
4. Once the above visit requirement is met, and a Follow-Up Health Survey Form is completed
5. Keystone Mercy Health Plan will cover the cost of an annual membership to that gym

Contracted Gyms:

1. La Fortaleza Wellness Gym, 4231 N. 5th St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19140 (215) 455-5370
2. VIGORworks Fitness Center, 1315 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19107 (215) 545-2000

Frequently Asked Questions:

Effective 4/1/08, Keystone Mercy Health Plan offers a gym benefit. All members 18 years of age and older will be eligible to participate.

Q: Which providers can the members utilize to access the gym benefit?

A: The current Contracted Gyms are:

- La Fortaleza Wellness Gym, 4231 N. 5th St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19140 (215) 455-5370
- VIGORworks Fitness Center, 1315 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19107 (215) 545-2000

This list of contracted gyms will be posted on Insight and updated as new gyms are contracted with KMHP.

There will be additional gyms available over the next 30 days. If a member would like to be contacted directly, please forward their name and number and submit to the Retention Unit (Jada Wright or Victor Negron) and they will contact the member directly.

Q: Is the member responsible for a co-pay?

A: The member is responsible for a co-pay of \$2.00 per visit up to 18 visits within a 90 day period, totaling \$36.00. The member is allowed (1) visit per day. The member is required to pay this fee annually.

Q: What does the member have to do to join?

A: The member will contact the Gym benefit provider directly to enroll. They need to be eligible at the time of enrollment to take advantage of the benefit, and provide their member ID card. The member must maintain eligibility throughout the probationary period; eligibility will be checked after the initial 18 visits.

Q: What is done if the member fulfills his/her 18-visit requirement prior to the 90 day period?

A: The membership probationary period is completed by achieving 18 visits. The actual annual membership begins the day they enroll on the first visit and completion of the Initial Health Survey.



Surfing the Web for Health Information

If you surf the web for health information, it is important to be able to evaluate the reliability of the sources you retrieve. Googling a diagnosis may result in hundreds of "hits" but the ones at the top may not be sites owned by medical experts or national nonprofits. Instead, a site may be owned by a commercial advertiser more interested in selling a product or service than presenting current, unbiased information.

Before searching for health information for yourself or the individuals you support, consider

spending a few minutes learning how to evaluate whether the health information on which you may rely is worthwhile. The National Library of Medicine has developed a tutorial to assist the



web surfer in identifying accurate and up-to-date sources of information. **The tutorial can be found at www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/webeval/.** It runs for about 15 minutes and explains how to evaluate a website's ownership, source of funding, content selection and quality, whether the information is current, and privacy of the surfer in accessing or e-scribing to downloads and newsletters. Taking the tutorial will enhance your ability to search critically for the best information for record-keeping and decision making.

Heat Safety 101 continued from cover

- Increased agitation and psychomotor activity
- Previous heat stroke
- Medications
 - Psychotropic medications
 - Antihistamines
 - Antiseizure medications
 - Heart and blood pressure medication, diuretics
 - Lung medications
 - Illegal drugs (cocaine, heroin, etc.)

Recognize Signs and Symptoms

Time is important; don't hesitate or think that you can "cure" this.

Heat Exhaustion

- Heavy sweating
- Weakness
- Skin that is cold, pale and clammy
- Pulse that is thready, rapid, weak
- Rapid breathing
- Chills
- Fainting
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Throbbing headache
- Visual disturbances



While a normal temperature is possible, it can also rise to dangerous levels. If heat exhaustion is not treated, the victim's condition will worsen, and the body temperature will keep rising, possibly leading to heat stroke (see below).

Any of these symptoms or a rise in body temperature over 100 degrees should be evaluated immediately by a physician. The measures listed below may be used while seeking medical attention.

While contacting medical help:

- Move the person to a cooler environment with an air conditioner or fan if possible
- Remove excess clothing
- Reduce body temperature with cool wet cloths (forehead, wrists, underarms, groin)
- Check and continue to monitor the person's breathing and pulse
- Give sips of water if not nauseous or vomiting

Heat Stroke (or Sun Stroke)

Heat Stroke is a **SEVERE MEDICAL EMERGENCY**. Summon Emergency Medical Assistance (Call 911) or get the victim to a hospital immediately. Delay to a hospital can be fatal.

- Elevated body temperature
- Rapid, shallow breathing or slow, deep breathing.
- Mental status changes e.g., confusion,

irritability, combativeness, slurred speech, unsteadiness

- Possible unconsciousness

Please note: If sweating stops and a person's skin is hot and dry – this is a life threatening situation!

Brain damage and death can occur very quickly unless medical help is immediate!



While waiting for medical help:

- Move the victim to a cooler environment with an air conditioner or fan if possible
- Remove excess clothing
- Reduce body temperature with cool wet cloths (forehead, wrists, underarms, groin)
- Do not give fluids if the person refuses or is vomiting or there are changes in the level of consciousness
- Check and continue to monitor the person's breathing and pulse

Resolve to take a moment to evaluate the people you work with and the environment in which they live and work. List your concerns and work to eliminate them. Let's keep everyone safe while enjoying the summer months!

Information taken from Heat Safety Policy DBH/MRS
June 6, 2008

COMING SOON!!!

As you may know PCHC hosts the Special Needs Unit (SNU) Meetings, quarterly at the PCHC office
123 S. Broad Street, 22nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA

To re-evaluate the purpose of those meetings, PCHC is conducting a survey. Please look forward to this very short survey, which will help us to make any changes in our approach to the meetings.

Your input is valuable!

The information presented to you is to increase your awareness of health conditions. It is not intended to replace medical advice. Please seek the advice of a physician for any health related concerns.

Save the Date!!!

SEPTEMBER 19, 2008

FROM 10:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care is having a

Stay Healthy Fair

at

Holiday Inn Philadelphia Stadium
900 Packer Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19148

There will be many "interactive" sessions and activities geared towards promoting "healthy lifestyles" for individuals and their caregivers.



Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care

123 S. Broad Street ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19109 ♦ 215-546-0300 ♦ fax 215-790-4976
PCHC is a core program of PMHCC, Inc.