



ACCREDITED  
HEALTH PLAN

# healthy NOW

WINTER 2009

**FirstChoice**  
by Select Health of South Carolina  
*Your Hometown Health Plan*

**FirstChoice**  
**Kids**



## H1N1 (Swine) Flu: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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### What is the H1N1 flu?

H1N1 flu is a new and different flu virus that is spreading worldwide among people. It was first called the “swine flu.” However, the H1N1 virus has not been found in U.S. pigs. This flu season, the new virus may cause a lot more people to get sick than during a regular flu season.

### What are the symptoms of H1N1 flu?

The symptoms are very similar to the regular flu, and include fever, achiness, lack of energy, lack of appetite and coughing. Some people also have a runny nose, sore throat, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

### How can I keep my family and myself from catching H1N1 flu?

- Washing your hands a lot
- Not touching your nose, mouth and eyes
- Staying away from sick people

- Staying home if you are sick
- Practicing a healthy lifestyle—get plenty of sleep and regular exercise, and eat healthy foods
- Coughing into a tissue or your sleeve

### Who should get the H1N1 vaccine (shot)?

The 2009 H1N1 vaccine is suggested for the following people:

- Pregnant women
- Household and caregiver contacts of children younger than 6 months, including parents, siblings and day care providers
- People who work in healthcare services
- People 6 months through 24 years of age
- People 25 through 64 years old who have medical conditions

Contact your doctor or your local health department to see how you can get your H1N1 vaccine. ■

## USING AN **Interpreter** IS **Easy!**

**G**etting health information in languages other than English can be hard sometimes. Not at First Choice and First Choice Kids! We want to make sure that all our members' needs are met. We can help members who speak a language other than English. We have Spanish-speaking Member Services representatives ready to help. Also, we use the Language Line interpretation services to talk with our members in more than 170 other languages. These services are offered to members for free.

Our nurses and Member Services representatives enjoy how easy it is to use the Language Line. "I have never had to sit on hold for more than five seconds while waiting for an interpreter. They are always polite and pleasant. Before calling the member, I explain to the interpreter the reason I am calling and the types of questions I will need to ask," says Phyllis, a nurse at First Choice. "Using a

medical interpreter has made the task of asking questions and educating our members easier. I am confident that what I am saying is interpreted to the member clearly."

Don't forget to tell your doctor about the Language Line! Your doctor can use it for free by calling our Member Services Department:

First Choice: **888.276.2020**  
First Choice Kids: **866.299.9594**



You can also use the Language Line when calling the Nurse Help Line at **800.304.5436** for free medical advice 24 hours a day. ■

## **Living Well** WITH HEART FAILURE

**If you have heart failure, you may wonder if you can live well.** We want you to know that the answer is **YES**.

If you have heart failure, it means that your heart is not as strong as it used to be. Your heart may have trouble pumping the blood to your lungs and the rest of your body. This can make you hold on to extra fluid, causing you to gain weight. It might make it harder for you to breathe or make your feet and legs swell.

### **What can you do to live well with heart failure?**

- **Take your medicine as instructed by your doctor.** Some medicine may make you go to the bathroom more often, which can be difficult. But the medicine keeps your lungs clear, reduces swelling and makes less work for your heart.
- **Weigh yourself every day.** If your weight is up 3 pounds in one day, you may have extra fluid. Call your doctor right away.
- **Limit your salt intake.** When you eat too much salt, it makes your body hold on to more fluid.
  - Don't add salt to your food.
  - Read food labels. Some foods may not taste salty, but they may be loaded with sodium.

- Avoid snack foods, fast foods and processed foods such as canned meats and hot dogs. These foods are usually very high in sodium.



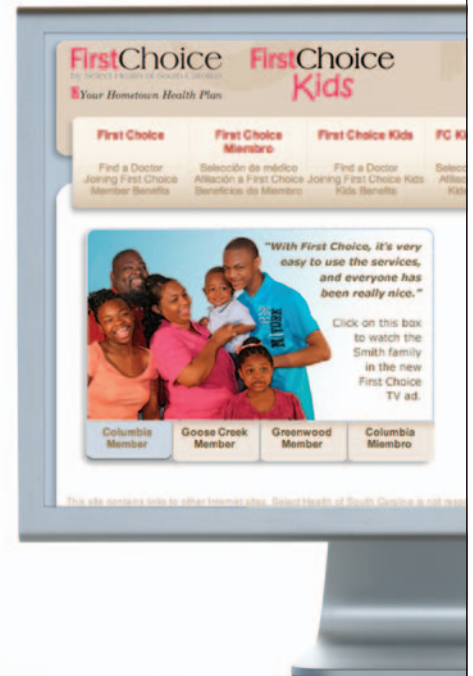
First Choice has a heart failure program called Living Well. We can make sure that you have the medicine and equipment you need to live well with heart failure. This program is free for First Choice members. If you would like to sign up or speak to one of our nurses, call us at **888.559.1010**, extension **55251**. ■

**Make sure to see your doctor as scheduled. Even if you are feeling well, there are important things your doctor needs to do, like take your blood pressure and test your blood for cholesterol and sugar. When you see your doctor, take all your medicines with you or take a list.**

## USE **Antibiotics Wisely!**

**D**id you know that antibiotics are not always the answer if you are sick? Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria or viruses. Antibiotics are powerful drugs that are only effective against bacterial infections. **Antibiotics can't cure viral illnesses** such as a cold, sore throat, bronchitis and the flu. Taking antibiotics for a viral illness won't help you feel better or shorten the course of your illness.

If a virus is making you sick, taking antibiotics may do more harm for you. It could make it harder to kill the bacteria the next time you are sick with a bacterial infection! Remember that antibiotics only work for bacterial infections. You should talk with your doctor about the right medicines for your illness. ■



## CHECK OUT OUR **New Website**

**H**ave you visited our website lately? If so, you may have noticed our new look. In addition to the new design, we have made our website easier to use. We have also added lots of information just for members.

From our new website, you can:

- Search for a doctor
- Get a copy of your member handbook or the member newsletter
- Find more information about your benefits
- Get the list of covered drugs

To check it out, visit

[www.selecthealthofsc.com/firstchoice](http://www.selecthealthofsc.com/firstchoice).

If you have any comments or suggestions, please let us know! Send an e-mail to [shcorporatecom@selecthealthofsc.com](mailto:shcorporatecom@selecthealthofsc.com), and share your thoughts on our new website. ■

# MEASURING Your Health

Every year, we measure the healthcare services that you and your family receive from our network of doctors. We look to see if members are receiving their checkups and healthcare in areas such as child and teen well visits, mammography, diabetes testing, medicine used by people with asthma and prenatal visits.

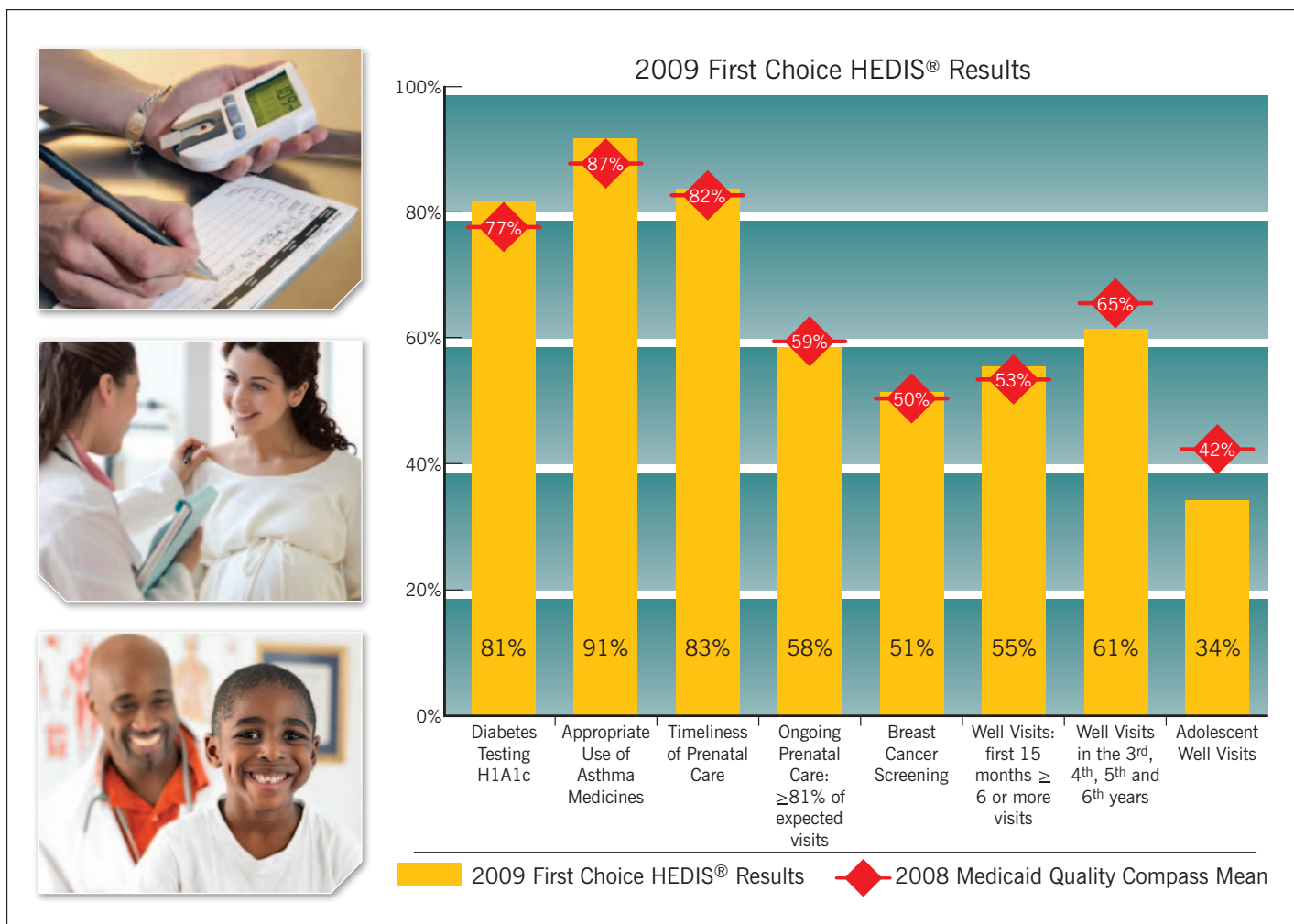
This information is measured through a tool called HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set). This is the most widely used tool in the industry to measure healthcare performance. HEDIS is able to measure this information by reviewing data such as the claims received from your doctor.

Additionally, HEDIS results from all Medicaid plans are then calculated together into a national database called Quality Compass. Results are then combined together for each area of healthcare measured to get an average

rate. The results are published on an annual basis through Quality Compass. First Choice utilizes this information to compare our results to other Medicaid plans across the country.

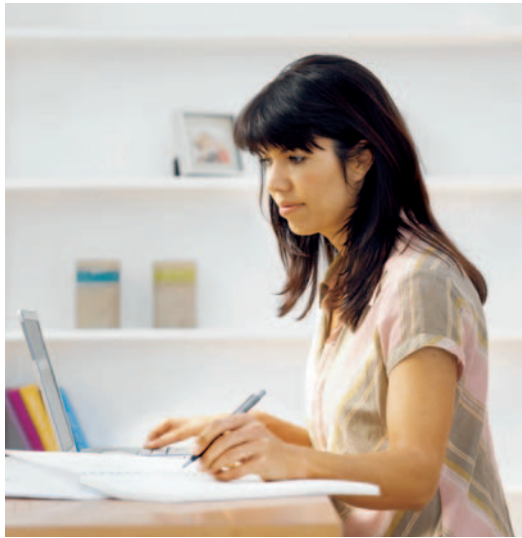
The results from HEDIS are important to First Choice and your doctor because they indicate if you and the members in your family are receiving the appropriate care and checkups. Monitoring and improving our HEDIS scores reflects our commitment to you by improving the quality of your healthcare and life. This commitment is a team effort by First Choice and your doctor!

Highlights from the 2009 HEDIS results are listed in the graph below. To compare First Choice results with Medicaid plans across the country we have included results from Quality Compass, the national database. ■



## We Are Listening TO YOU!

We always want to hear back from our members about the things they like and dislike about their health plan. That way, we know what we need to work on and improve. This year, we held focus groups with members in the Charleston and Florence areas. We asked them questions about our TV commercials, newsletters, website and other materials that we send out. We also asked about benefits they like and use as well as benefits they would like to have.



We want you to know that we have taken the feedback we received from these focus groups and we are working to improve our materials, services and benefits. Thank you to those who participated in the focus groups, and we look forward to hearing from more of our members in the future. ■

## CHANGES TO Your Extra Benefits

We take pride in offering you benefits that you wouldn't get with regular Medicaid. As of January 1, 2010, we made the following changes:

- Children can now get a replacement pair of eyeglasses each year with no copay if they lose or damage their first pair.
- Women who complete all prenatal and postpartum doctor visits are eligible for gift card rewards.
- Members receive special rewards for on-time well child and EPSDT screenings.
- Members are eligible for personal care items per household every 3 months.

For more information on the benefit changes, call Member Services. ■



## Using Your Benefits THE RIGHT WAY

We work with you and your primary care provider to make sure your benefits are used the right and most cost-effective way.

We make decisions based only on the appropriateness of care and services and existence of coverage. We also do not give rewards or financial incentives to our staff who make decisions, or to providers or anyone else for denying, limiting or delaying healthcare coverage or services.

Please call Member Services to find out if we cover specific services and benefits. ■

First Choice: **888.276.2020**  
First Choice Kids: **866.299.9594**





# Calendar of Community Events

Winter

## LOWCOUNTRY

### Safe Kids Car Seat Check

January 5, 4–6 p.m.  
Babies “R” Us,  
North Charleston, S.C.  
**843.792.5327**

### March for Babies

January 28, 5:30–7 p.m.  
North Charleston  
Convention Center,  
5055 International Boulevard,  
North Charleston, S.C.  
**843.571.1776**

### Valentine's Day Dinner

February 13, 7–10 p.m.  
YES Resource Center,  
3262 Landmark Drive,



North Charleston, S.C.  
**843.767.9969**

### Safe Kids Car Seat Check

February 2, 4–6 p.m.  
Babies “R” Us,  
North Charleston, S.C.  
**843.792.5327**

### Safe Kids Car Seat Check

March 2, 4–6 p.m.  
Babies “R” Us,

North Charleston, S.C.  
**843.792.5327**

### KidFest 2010

March 27, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.  
Cross Creek Shopping Center,  
Beaufort, S.C.  
**843.470.4542**

### Safe Kids Super Saturday

March 27  
Orangeburg Fairgrounds,  
350 Magnolia Street,  
Orangeburg, S.C. 29115

### Safe Kids Car Seat Check

April 6, 4–6 p.m.  
Babies “R” Us,  
North Charleston, S.C.  
**843.792.5327**

## UPSTATE

### Healthy Kids Day

April 17, 9 a.m.–noon  
Caine Halter Family YMCA,  
721 Cleveland Street,  
Greenville, S.C. 29601

### Healthy Hoops Upstate Challenge

April 24, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.  
Caine Halter Family YMCA,  
721 Cleveland Street,  
Greenville, S.C. 29601

## PEE DEE

### VITA/EITC Income Tax Training

Provided by  
Community  
Development  
Corporation  
of Marlboro County  
January 11, 5–7 p.m.  
CDC of Marlboro County,  
Bennettsville, S.C.



### 12th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration! Celebrating the Legacy, Living the Dream

Presented by the Greater Pee  
Dee Chamber of Commerce  
January 14, 6:30 p.m.  
Chapman Auditorium,  
Francis Marion University,  
Florence, S.C.

### Florence Safe Kids Safety Fair

Provided by Safe Kids and  
led by McLeod Hospital  
January 21, 8:30–10:30 a.m.  
Delmae Heights Elementary  
School, Florence, S.C.



### Child Safety Seat Check

Sponsored by Safe Kids and led by  
McLeod Hospital and Kohl's  
January 21, 4–7 p.m.  
Kohl's, Florence, S.C.

### Florence Safe Kids Safety Fair

Provided by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital  
February 11, 8:30–10:30 a.m.  
Royall Elementary School,  
Florence, S.C.

### Child Safety Seat Check

Sponsored by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital and Kohl's  
February 18, 4–7 p.m.  
Kohl's, Florence, S.C.

### Florence Safe Kids Safety Fair

Provided by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital  
February 25, 8:30–10:30 a.m.  
Henry Timrod Elementary  
School, Florence, S.C.

### Florence Safe Kids Safety Fair

Provided by Safe Kids and led by

McLeod Hospital  
March 11, 8:30–10:30 a.m.  
Wallace Gregg Elementary School,  
Florence, S.C.

### Child Safety Seat Check

Sponsored by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital and Kohl's  
March 18, 4–7 p.m.  
Kohl's, Florence, S.C.

### Florence Safe Kids Safety Fair

Provided by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital  
March 25, 8:30–10:30 a.m.  
Dewey L. Carter Elementary School,  
Florence, S.C.

### Florence Safe Kids Safety Fair

Provided by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital  
April 8, 8:30–10:30 a.m.  
Savannah Grove Elementary School,  
Florence, S.C.

### Child Safety Seat Check

Sponsored by Safe Kids and led  
by McLeod Hospital and Kohl's  
April 15, 4–7 p.m.  
Kohl's, Florence, S.C.





## Member Rights and Responsibilities

### It is up to you to:

1. Establish you or your children with a primary care provider (PCP) within 30 days of entering the First Choice plan.
2. Not change your child's PCP without approval from First Choice.
3. Inform First Choice of any loss or theft of your ID card.
4. Present your First Choice ID card whenever you see any doctor or visit a hospital, clinic or pharmacy.
5. Become familiar with First Choice procedures. If you have any questions or require additional information, contact the First Choice Member Services Department.
6. See your doctor regularly for preventive services such as prenatal care, well-child visits, adult physicals and well-woman exams.
7. Provide, to the extent possible, information that First Choice and its practitioners and providers need in order to care for you.
8. Treat your PCP(s) and their staff with kindness and respect.
9. Help the PCP(s) obtain all your child's medical records and fill out new ones.
10. Participate in understanding your health problems and follow the recommended treatment of care from your doctor. You must let the doctor know the reasons the treatment cannot be followed as soon as possible.
11. Obtain a referral from your PCP(s) before you go to a specialist or to the hospital. Only go to the ones your PCP(s) recommends.
12. Not go to the emergency room for routine care.
13. Call your PCP(s) as soon as you or a family member feels ill. Do not wait. If you think you have a life-threatening emergency, go to your closest hospital.
14. Be on time for all appointments. If you cannot make an appointment, please cancel at least 24 hours in advance of your originally scheduled time.
15. Notify First Choice if you or your child/children's name, address or phone number changes.
16. Inform First Choice of any change in your legal status regarding your authority to make decisions on behalf of your child or children.

### You have the right to:

1. Be treated with respect and with consideration for your dignity and privacy.
2. Participate in decisions regarding your healthcare, including the right to refuse treatment.
3. Be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation, as stated in the federal regulations on the use of restraints and seclusion.

*continued on next page*

4. Request and receive a copy of your medical records, and request that they be amended or corrected.
5. Receive healthcare services that are accessible or comparable in amount, duration and scope to those provided under Medicaid Fee-For-Service and are sufficient in amount, duration and scope to reasonably be expected to achieve the purpose for which the services are furnished.
6. Receive services that are appropriate and are not denied or reduced solely because of diagnosis, type of illness or medical condition.
7. To receive all information—enrollment notices, informational materials, instructional materials, available treatment options and alternatives in a manner and format that is easily understood.
8. Receive assistance from both the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services and First Choice in understanding the requirements and benefits of the plan.
9. Receive oral interpretation services free of charge for all non-English languages, not just those identified as prevalent.
10. Be notified that oral interpretation is available and how to access those services.
11. As a potential member, to receive information about the basic features of managed care, which populations may or may not enroll in the program and First Choice responsibilities for coordination of care in a timely manner in order to make an informed choice.
12. Receive information on First Choice services, to include, but not limited to:
  - *Benefits covered.*
  - *Procedures for obtaining benefits, including any authorization requirements.*
  - *Any cost-sharing requirements.*
  - *Service area.*
  - *Names, locations, telephone numbers of and non-English language spoken by current contracted providers, including, at a minimum, primary care physicians, specialists and hospitals.*
  - *Any restrictions on your freedom of choice among network providers.*
  - *Providers not accepting new patients.*
13. Receive a complete description of disenrollment rights at least annually.
14. Receive notice of any significant changes in the benefits at least 30 days before the intended effective date of the change.
15. Receive information on the Grievance, Appeal and Fair Hearing procedures.
16. Receive detailed information on emergency and after-hours coverage, to include, but not limited to:
  - *What are emergency medical conditions, emergency services and poststabilization services.*
  - *That emergency services do not require prior authorization.*
  - *The process and procedures for obtaining emergency services.*
  - *The locations of any emergency settings and other locations at which providers and hospitals furnish emergency services and poststabilization services covered under the contract.*
  - *Your right to use any hospital or other setting for emergency care.*
  - *Poststabilization care services rules (detailed in 42 CFR 422.113SC).*
17. Receive First Choice policy on referrals for specialty care and other benefits not provided by the member's PCP.
18. Have your privacy protected in accordance with the privacy requirements (45 CFR parts 160 and 164 subparts A and E to the extent that they apply).
19. Exercise these rights without adversely affecting the way First Choice, its providers or the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services treats members.
20. To have a candid discussion of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for your conditions, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
21. To voice grievances or appeals about First Choice or the care it provides.
22. To make recommendations regarding First Choice's member rights and responsibilities. ■

# Preventive Health Guidelines

## CHILD GUIDELINES

Well-child visits are regular medical checkups that are important for all children from birth to age 21. The visits may also include immunizations (shots). Well-child visits make sure your child is growing up healthy. If the doctor finds a problem, he or she will watch it and treat it early. First Choice wants parents to make sure their children are getting their regular medical checkups. First Choice rewards you when you take your child to the doctor. Call Member Services for details.

### How often should my child have a well-child visit?

- From birth to age 2: at 2 weeks, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months and 24 months.
- From ages 3 through 21: every year.

### What will be done at a well-child visit?

- Eye and hearing tests
- Blood pressure check
- Dental checkup
- Any needed immunizations
- Any needed lab tests
- A check for proper growth and development
- Advice about growth progress



## ADULT GUIDELINES

Healthy adults between 21 and 65 years old should visit a doctor every one to three years. After age 65, adults should see a doctor every year. Talk to your doctor about any risk factors that may require additional preventive care.

## Needed Screenings

- Medical history, physical exam and routine lab work
- Height and weight measurements including check for obesity
- Blood pressure check
- Blood cholesterol levels
- Colon cancer check
- Physical testicular exam for men every year and PSA for men starting at age 40
- Mammogram (X-ray to screen for breast cancer):
  - Every one to two years for women age 40 and older with breast exam by a healthcare provider
  - Every year at age 50 and older
  - Every year for high-risk women beginning at age 35
- Pap test (cervical cancer screening test):
  - Every year for women younger than 30
  - Every two to three years for women age 30 and older who have had only normal results
- Skin exam every three years and then every year at age 40 and older

## Preventive Counseling

- Quitting smoking
- Alcohol/drug treatment
- Diet and exercise
- Injury prevention
- Skin cancer
- Dental health
- Folic acid
- Self-examination
- Depression

## Prenatal Guidelines

Most women with uncomplicated pregnancies should be examined every four weeks for the first 32 weeks, every two to three weeks until 36 weeks and weekly from 37 weeks until delivery. Women with medical or obstetric problems may need to go to the doctor more often. The visits you should have during your pregnancy will be determined by your needs and risks. ■



# 2009 Member Satisfaction Survey Results

Every year, we work with an outside company to do a member satisfaction survey. The company, The Myers Group, randomly selects First Choice members to take part in the survey. This gives members a chance to rate the services we provide and the quality of care they get from their doctors.

The Myers Group uses a member satisfaction survey tool that Medicaid plans across the country use called the CAHPS® (Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) Survey. Member satisfaction survey results from all

the Medicaid plans are then added to a national database called Quality Compass, and those results are published every year. We use this to compare First Choice to other Medicaid plans across the country.

In 2009, 1,485 surveys were sent out to First Choice members. First Choice received favorable ratings in nearly every area, such as how well doctors communicate and how members rate their personal doctor and specialist. Survey results also showed that members are very satisfied with our health plan! Nearly eight out of 10 members said they

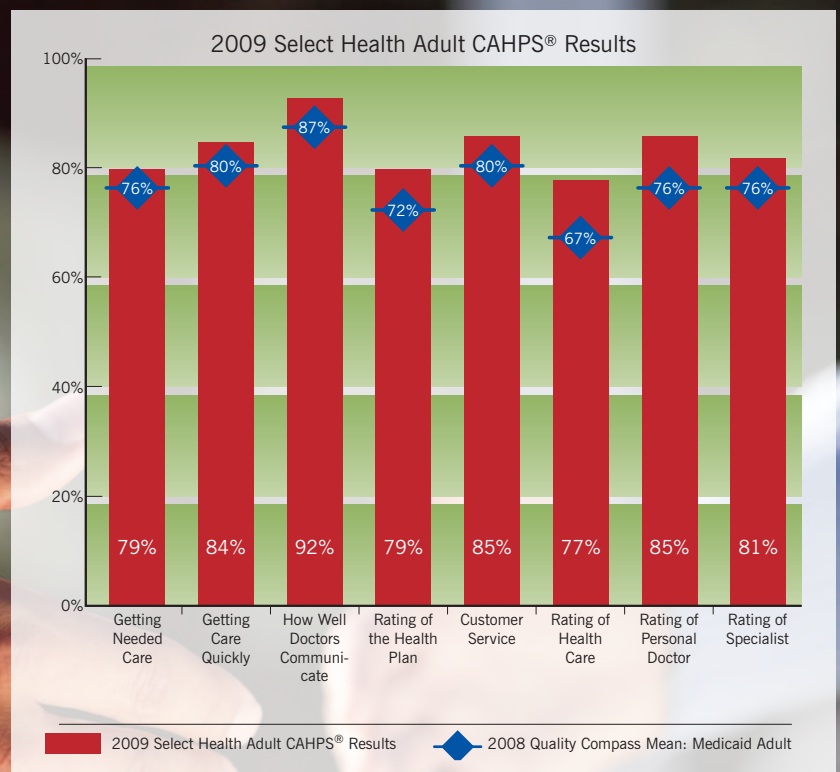
were very satisfied with the First Choice activities, such as customer service, paperwork and resolution of complaints!

The survey results are listed in the graph below. To compare First Choice results with Medicaid plans across the country, we have included results from the national database. Remember, if you get the survey next year it is very important that you fill it out and return it right away. Your feedback is very important to us!

**You can make a difference!** ■



*First Choice received favorable ratings in nearly every area, such as how well doctors communicate and how members rate their personal doctor and specialist.*



Para obtener una copia de este documento en español, por favor llame al Departamento de los Servicios para Miembros al **888.276.2020**.

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## Prevent Sickle Cell Pain THIS WINTER

**A pain crisis is one of the most common problems** of sickle cell disease. A crisis can begin suddenly and last for hours or even several days. The severity and frequency of pain varies among people with the disease. Exposure to cold air, wind and water can start a painful event.

Tips to help prevent a pain crisis:

- Stay away from cold places. Keep your body warm and at a temperature that feels right for you. Avoid going from a warm to a cold place quickly.
- Stay away from extreme temperatures.
- Make sure you dress warmly and appropriately for the weather. A coat, hat and gloves are suggested for the winter.
- Check your temperature if you feel warm. See your doctor if your temperature is 101 degrees or above.
- Call your doctor right away if you have pain anywhere in the body that will not go away with self-treatment.
- Drink plenty of fluids each day. Water is best.
- Eat a healthy, balanced diet.
- Get plenty of sleep each night.
- Rest whenever you feel tired.
- Take your medicine as directed by your doctor. Children up to age 5 should take penicillin as ordered by the doctor to help stop infection.
- Get a flu shot. Children and adults with sickle cell should have the flu shot every year.
- Go to all your appointments with your doctor. ■



We have special services for members with sickle cell disease. For more information, call **888.559.1010**.