

## Thinking of Sharing Your Bed with Baby? Consider benefits and safety issues

Bonding with your baby is one of the joys of parenting. In some cultures, mothers sleep with their babies. Parents should consider the benefits and the safety issues of co-sleeping.

Supporters of co-sleeping say it aids breastfeeding and makes nighttime nursing easier. They feel it can help babies fall asleep faster.

There are also safety concerns with co-sleeping. The Consumer Product Safety Commission suggests children less than 2 years old should not co-sleep.

Injury or death can result if a baby is wedged between a mattress and headboard. Sleeping on a waterbed, soft mattress, pillows or blankets can suffocate a baby.

Young children should not sleep with infants. Parents under the influence of alcohol or drugs or taking heavy medications should not sleep with baby. Parents who smoke should not co-sleep. This increases the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) associated with smoking.

The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests room sharing instead of bed sharing. Put a bassinet or crib near the parent's bed. This lets your baby know you are near. It makes nighttime nursing easier. It also helps parents get a good night's sleep knowing their baby is close by and safe.

When thinking about sleeping arrangements, make sure your baby is in the safest place possible. The Tennessee Department of Health



suggests following the ABCs of safe sleep. Babies should sleep **alone**, on their **backs**, and in **cribs**. Talk to your doctor about the benefits and risks of co-sleeping.

Sources:  
American Academy of Pediatrics - [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org);  
Nemours - <http://kidshealth.org>; Tennessee Department of Health - <http://safesleep.tn.gov>

## Text4baby:

**Are you pregnant or have a new baby?** Do you send and receive text messages on your cell phone? Get **FREE healthy pregnancy** and **healthy baby** information by

text every week. **Text the word "BABY"** (or "BEBE" for Spanish) to **"511411"** to get started, or register online at **text4baby.org**.

**Text4baby** is an educational program of the National Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies Coalition, provided by the Voxiva Corporation. Voxiva Corporation is an independent company that does not provide Volunteer State Health Plan branded products and services.

## Getting to Know You

**Veronica Stone, RN, CCM, Case Manager for the Chronic Care Department of VSHP**



In all the tasks she performs for members, Veronica Stone has one main goal. "I build relationships with members to educate them and give them resources. This empowers them to improve their quality of life."

She works with members who have chronic health issues. She helps them understand their condition and set goals to improve their health. This means

creating a "big picture" plan with the member. It includes the medical and behavioral care plan they need in their daily life. It is based on a member's abilities, needs, resources, and support system.

"This role is very rewarding. I am privileged to support members through their struggles and victories to live with chronic health conditions. I give them support to reach their goals and wellness," she said.

In her nursing career, she has worked in hospitals and home health care. She has also been a consultant, educator, author, and nurse manager. She serves the community through her church's missions and health ministry programs.



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**Do you have a mental illness and need help with this information?** The TennCare Advocacy Program can help you. Call them for free at 1-800-758-1638.

**If you have a hearing or speech problem you can call us** on a TTY/TDD machine. Our TTY/TDD numbers are: BlueCare - 1-800-226-1958; TennCareSelect - 1-800-226-1958.

**¿Hablo español y necesita ayuda con esta carta?** Los miembros de BlueCare pueden llamar al 1-800-468-9698. Los miembros de TennCareSelect, pueden llamar al 1-800-263-5479.

**We do not allow unfair treatment in TennCare.** No one is treated in a different way because of race, color, birthplace, religion, language, sex, age, or disability. Do you think you've been treated unfairly? Do you have more questions or need more help? If you think you've been treated unfairly, call the Family Assistance Service Center for free at 1-866-311-4287. In Nashville, call 743-2000.

**Need help in another language?** You can call TennCareSelect for assistance in any language at 1-800-263-5479 or the numbers below. Call BlueCare for language assistance at 1-800-468-9698 or the numbers below. Or you can get other help with TennCare by calling the numbers below. Interpretation and translation services are free to TennCare members.

### Foreign Language Lines

Call if you need help and need to speak with someone in one of these languages:

العربية (Arabic)	1-800-758-1638
Bosanski (Bosnian)	1-800-758-1638
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Ngúoi Việt (Vietnamese)	1-800-758-1638

To report fraud or abuse to the Office of Inspector General (OIG) you can call toll-free 1-800-433-3982 or go online to [www.state.tn.us/tenncare](http://www.state.tn.us/tenncare) and click on 'Report Fraud'. To report provider fraud or patient abuse to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's Medicaid Fraud Control Unit (MFCU), call toll-free 1-800-433-5454.



# Take Charge

Live Smart. Live Better. Take Control.

For BlueCare and TennCareSelect Members

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter 2013



The CareSmart FREE Population Health Management programs help TennCare members take charge of their chronic physical and behavioral health conditions. Call **1-888-416-3025** to enroll today.

### Make sure your mail follows you

Make sure TennCare has your correct mailing address. If you don't, you could miss important mail about your health plan and benefits. **If you're going to move or if you've moved, call the Family Assistance Service Center at 1-866-311-4287.**



### Events for Teens

Volunteer State Health Plan (VSHP) holds many events for teens. To find events near you call **1-800-771-0217**. It is a free call.

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*The information in this newsletter is not meant to take the place of your health care provider's advice.*



## Heart disease can be managed by practicing the ABCs

If you have heart disease or risk factors for it, simple steps can improve health and lower the risk of heart attack. They can start with a plan as simple as the ABCs.

**A**spirin helps many people with heart disease. Your doctor might suggest a daily aspirin to lower the risk of heart attack. Aspirin thins blood and helps keep blood clots from forming. You should not take a daily aspirin unless your doctor prescribes it. Risks exist for persons with other health problems. Ask your doctor if daily aspirin is right for you.

**B**lood pressure should be under control. Normally, high blood pressure does not have symptoms. If it isn't treated, it can damage your arteries, heart, brain and

kidneys. High blood pressure is easy to detect and can be controlled. Blood pressure checks are simple and should be done regularly.

**C**holesterol tests are important. Cholesterol is a fatty substance made by the body. It is also in meat and dairy foods. The body makes two types. Too much of one and not enough of the other put you at risk for heart disease. A cholesterol test measures both types.

Your doctor might also suggest that you eat a diet that is low in cholesterol and fat, get more exercise, limit the amount of sodium (salt) you eat, and get help to quit if you smoke.

**Source:** Department of Health and Human Services and Centers for Disease Control and Management - <http://millionhearts.hhs.gov>

## Long term medicines can help you get control of asthma

For someone who has asthma, avoiding things that trigger attacks is best. That is not always possible. If attacks are severe, can't be predicted, or happen more than twice a week, long term control medicines are usually the best treatment.

A doctor considers many things to choose the best medicines for each person. Treatment can include quick relief medicines for attacks. It can also include long term control medicines to reduce airway swelling and attacks.

Inhaled corticosteroids are effective for long term control. They reduce swelling and make airways less sensitive to substances that cause attacks.

This may prevent long term injury to airways.

A doctor may also prescribe long-acting inhaled or oral bronchodilators, oral corticosteroids, or other medicines to reduce swelling. Long term medicines are safe. They should be taken daily as prescribed. A doctor may prescribe several medicines for asthma control.

Some asthma is caused by allergies. This is allergic asthma. It can be helped with allergy shots. These are given as a series of vaccines. They can stop reactions to many triggers.

Your doctor will tell you how to track asthma symptoms. This helps him to see if treatment



is controlling your asthma or if medicines need to be changed. Talk to a doctor about the right long term control medicines for your asthma.

Sources: American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology - [www.aaaai.org](http://www.aaaai.org); National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute - [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

## Understanding how ADHD affects children and adults

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a behavior condition that affects children and adults. ADHD starts in childhood. Sometimes, it isn't diagnosed until adulthood.

Those with ADHD often act on impulse and without thinking. They have trouble focusing. They can be hyperactive.

All children act this way at times. They may be anxious or excited. This makes it hard to know when behavior is typical and when it needs to be assessed.

With ADHD, symptoms are present most of the time. They occur in all kinds of situations. They affect the ability to function with peers, at school, work, and home. Behavior interferes with daily life.

Those with ADHD have trouble



controlling behavior. It is hard to pay attention, learn and remember. Children can be labeled as misbehaving because of their actions and "spacey" because they can't focus.

Children whose ADHD is not treated typically have school performance problems. Adults who are not appropriately treated often miss deadlines, meetings, or events. They often have mood swings. They may have a history of problems at school and work.

Parents can't diagnose ADHD alone. Teachers, doctors and mental health experts can all help to diagnose ADHD.

About one third of children outgrow the main symptoms of ADHD before adulthood. A health care provider can develop a plan to help children or adults with ADHD control their behavior, have better focus, and do better at school and work.

For most children, a treatment plan will include medicine and behavior therapy. Medicine for ADHD can also help adults. Many adults also find it useful to join a support group. For more information or assistance with a behavioral health issue, call VSHP at (800) 468-9698.

Sources: American Academy of Pediatrics - [www.healthychildren.org](http://www.healthychildren.org); Nemours - <http://kidshealth.org>; Mayo Clinic - [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)

## Do you know the weight measurements to avoid serious health problems?

Many people think a healthy weight only means looking good. Healthy weight is more than being a smaller size. It is about lifestyle changes to avoid serious health problems.

It is important to have regular exams that assess weight. This can show your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, gallstones, and certain cancers.

A doctor will record your Body Mass Index (BMI). This screening tool uses height and weight and shows body fat levels that can lead to other health problems. Obese is a BMI of 30 or higher. Overweight is a BMI of 25 to 29.9.

Measuring waist circumference also helps screen for health problems. More fat around the

waist than hips increases risk of heart disease and diabetes. Risk is greater for waist sizes above 35 inches for women and above 40 for men. The measurement can be done with a tape measure placed just above the hip bones. You should measure after breathing out.

Other factors also put a person at greater risk for health problems. These include: high blood pressure, cholesterol problems, high blood sugar, lack of exercise, family history of heart disease, and smoking.

Those who are considered obese or overweight and have two or more risk factors should lose weight as a doctor suggests. Losing even 5 to 10 percent can improve health.



A health care provider can assess BMI, waist size and risk factors for other health concerns. You can check your BMI using online tools. This can help you track your weight loss progress.

Source: National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute - [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)

## Self-management tools can put you in control of diabetes

Managing diabetes with self-care can make you feel more in control. It can help to reduce the risk of other health problems.

Self-care is actively managing diabetes with simple habits that fit into your routine. A diabetes care team can suggest what will work best for you.

**Take control of eating habits.** You do not have to give up all favorite foods. But, you should know how food choices affect blood sugar. Learn about carbohydrates and fats to choose the proper foods and amounts. Read food labels and practice portion control.

**Get exercise to manage diabetes.** Physical activity lowers cholesterol and blood pressure. It keeps blood sugar levels closer to normal. It can relieve stress. Activities you choose



don't have to be strenuous. Start with brisk walks.

**Monitor your health.** Check blood sugar levels regularly. You also need HbA1C tests to check levels over longer periods. Have the tests your doctor suggests for heart, kidney, and eye health. Examine your feet daily and have foot exams by a doctor.

**Learn to problem solve.** High or low blood sugar, illness, and care when traveling are problems you might face with diabetes. Planning ahead can reduce stress and chances of the problem recurring.

Your health care providers can help you create a self-care plan. Talk with them about healthy eating, activity, coping, and managing the stress of diabetes.

Source: American Association of Diabetes Educators - [www.diabetesselfcare.org](http://www.diabetesselfcare.org)

## Lifestyle changes can help you live better with heart failure

Living with heart failure is a challenge. Lifestyle changes can relieve symptoms and help you stay healthier longer.

If you haven't quit smoking, ask your doctor about getting help to quit. Smoking damages blood vessels and raises blood pressure. It reduces oxygen in your blood. This makes the heart work harder.

Make weighing yourself a daily habit. Weigh each morning before eating. If you gain more than three pounds in one day, you could be retaining fluids. Your doctor needs to know this to adjust medicines.

You should limit sodium in your diet. Too much can cause you to retain fluid. You should consume

less than 2,000 milligrams a day. If you are 51 or older, have high blood pressure or are African-American, you should have less than 1,500 milligrams a day.

Choose foods that are low in saturated fats and cholesterol. A high fat diet can cause hardening of the arteries which contributes to heart failure.

Exercise can keep you healthy and reduce the demand on your heart. Your doctor can tell you the right type of exercise for your condition.

Reducing stress can help relieve symptoms of heart failure. Anxiety and stress make the heart beat faster, raise blood pressure, and cause shortness of breath.



Following your doctor's treatment plan is important. Take medicines as prescribed and limit alcohol which can interact with your medicine.

Sources: Mayo Clinic - [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com); National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute - [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov)



## A Simple Lung Function test can detect COPD early

Those with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) may not show symptoms until it is advanced. A simple breathing test can diagnose it early. This can prevent more lung damage by getting treatment as soon as possible.

Most people with COPD are over age 40 and have a history of smoking. Non smokers can also develop COPD if they have long term exposure to chemical fumes, second hand smoke or pollution.

Lung function tests can show if a person has or is likely to

have COPD. The main test is spirometry. A person blows into a tube connected to a spirometer machine. The results can tell a doctor if a person is at risk for COPD before there are symptoms. If it shows a person has COPD, this helps a doctor diagnose it as mild, moderate or severe.

Those with symptoms of COPD should ask their doctor about a spirometry test. Symptoms include chronic coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, constant breathlessness, and coughing up sputum or mucous. Your doctor may also

## FREE Help to Quit Smoking

Call the Tennessee Tobacco QuitLine at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669.

Hearing impaired Tennesseans call 1-877-559-3816.  
Hours (Eastern Time):  
• Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 11 p.m.  
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• Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Counseling is available in English or Spanish.

Find out more at the website: [health.state.tn.us/tobaccoquitline.htm](http://health.state.tn.us/tobaccoquitline.htm)

order other tests. These will show if your symptoms are caused by lung conditions other than COPD.

Source: COPD Foundation - [www.copdfoundation.org](http://www.copdfoundation.org)