



# Can We Talk?

News and Information for Teen and Young Adult TENNderCare Members

**Welcome!**

Welcome to the second quarter 2008 edition of **"Can We Talk?"** a quarterly newsletter on health tips for teens and young adults who are TLC members. **Here's to a happy, healthy life!**

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So, you're feeling great. No need to go to a doctor, right? **WRONG!** Consider a yearly TENNderCare checkup as a tune-up for your body to make sure you keep running in tiptop shape. You

take your car in for a regular tune-up. You should do no less for your body! Like machines, our bodies need proper care to keep running.

**Even if you think your body machine is doing great, you should still see your doctor or nurse for a checkup every year.** The doctor or nurse who is your primary care provider (PCP) knows your health better than anyone. Your PCP is the main person you should go to for your care. Your primary doctor or nurse should be able to take care of most of your medical needs. This includes preventive care and treatment for new medical problems. Your PCP is your **"medical home."** However, you may choose to go to one of the public health department clinics for your TENNderCare exam. You might also be able to have your checkup at your own school, if the exam is offered there.

**The good news is that the checkup is FREE if you are a TennCare member under the age of 21.** When you call to schedule a checkup, make sure you say it is for a TENNderCARE or EPSDT well-care checkup. This lets the PCP know how much time to set for your appointment so you get a complete exam.

Your PCP can help keep you healthy. He/she can find little problems and treat them before they become big problems. Going to the doctor or nurse may not be on anyone's "favorite things to do" list, but it is a lot better to get a checkup when you are well than wait until you have serious problems.

# KEEP ON TOP OF YOUR HEALTH: Get FREE Checkups Every Year



**Do you think that you are too old to get a regular annual checkup?** The answer should be **"No."** Your body is changing, and a doctor's visit gives you the chance to ask questions about anything, including sex, peer pressure and getting along with your family.

## What to Expect at a TENnderCARE Checkup

Here's what happens at a TENnderCare checkup (sometimes called a well-care checkup,

a yearly physical or an EPSDT exam):

- Expect to answer questions about your family history and any health problems you may have. (Make a list of things you want to discuss with your doctor or nurse.)
- A staffperson will give you a gown to change into.
- Your weight and height will be measured.
- You will be given a hearing and vision test.
- Your finger may be pricked for a blood sample.
- Or you may get a shot.

## You Deserve It!

You deserve to live a healthy life. Preventive health goes a long way. Get active in basketball, dance, football, cheerleading, baseball, hiking, scouts, wrestling, swimming or other sport activities.

**Go to your PCP every year for a checkup! Remember, you should never be ashamed to seek medical help.**



Think of proms, and you think of fun. But often, proms can become a source of pressure—pressure to drink, do drugs or have sex.

Keep a cool head and avoid getting into situations you will later regret. Besides being illegal, alcohol and drugs can impair your judgment. They can cause you to do things that might be dangerous and have long-lasting effects. An example is drunk driving resulting in a life-changing wreck that can leave you or someone else severely injured or even dead.

Alcohol and drugs can also affect your decision about having sex. Do not be pressured into doing anything you don't want to do. You are the one who will have to live with the consequences. It might even be helpful to think of different ways to say, "no" to something you don't want to do.

If you find yourself in an unsafe situation, have a backup plan for a safe ride home.

So go ahead and have fun, but plan a prom that will leave you with good memories.

## Click in to New Teen Website



**When should teens get a free checkup?** The answer—every year from the age of 13 through age 20—is one of many answers you can find about health on a new website just for teens!

Check out the site:

You'll find information on health, food and fitness tips, school violence, dating violence and many other topics.

## How's Your Driving?

So, you just got your driving license—and you're feeling like the “king” of the road. Just make sure you're not a king of terror.

A license to drive is not a license to show off to friends by driving fast, squealing tires, weaving in and out of traffic or tail-gating.

Sadly, the risk of motor vehicle crashes is higher among 16- to 19-year-olds than among any other age group. The crash rate per mile driven for this age group is four times the risk for older drivers, according to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. Risk is highest at age 16.

### Other statistics for male teen drivers:

- \* The motor vehicle death rate for 16- to 19-year-old male drivers was more than one and a half times that of female drivers of the same age in 2004.

- \* The presence of male teenage passengers increases the likelihood of risky driving behaviors among teen male drivers.
- \* Among male drivers between 15 and 20 years of age who were involved in fatal crashes in 2005, 38 percent were speeding at the time of the crash and 24 percent had been drinking.
- \* Male high school students (12.5 percent) were more likely than female students (7.8 percent) to rarely or never wear seat belts. Compared with other age groups, teens have the lowest rate of seat belt use.

So, make up your mind to defy poor driving records of male teens. It's better to drive safely than to become a crash or injury statistic.



## What You Need to Know about Pap Tests

You may have heard of Pap tests, but do you know what they are or when you should have one?

Listen up. A Pap test—sometimes called a Pap smear—looks for abnormal cells on a woman's cervix, which could become cancer over time. The cervix is the opening to the uterus, at the very top of the vagina. If the results of a Pap test show there are abnormal cells that could become cancer, your doctor can begin treatment to prevent cervical cancer.

The doctor usually uses a small spatula or tiny brush to collect cells from the cervix. You may feel a little discomfort, but it doesn't last long.

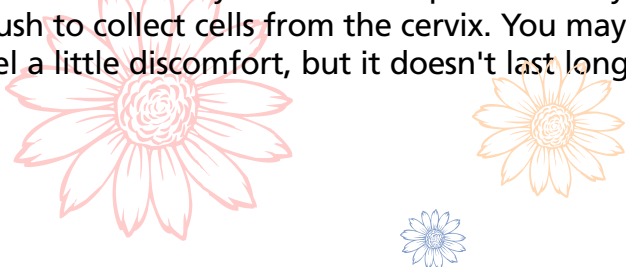
## When should you have a Pap test?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that women should have their first Pap test within three years of first having sex or at age 21, whichever comes first.

Cervical cancer often does not cause symptoms until after it is too late to do anything about it. That's why getting screened for cervical cancer is important.

There is now a vaccine that will protect girls and women from getting cervical cancer and genital warts due to a common virus. This virus is known as HPV or human papillomavirus. The vaccine is given in three doses. And TennCare pays for it if you are a TLC member.

Ideally, girls should get this vaccine before their first sexual contact. The CDC recommends that girls between the ages of 9 and 26 get the vaccine.



# Safe Schools

Have you ever been afraid at school?

When kids bring weapons to school such as guns or knives, are they just showing off, or posing a real threat?

It's not up to you to find out. Just notify a trusted adult at once. Tell the adult:

- ♦ exactly what you saw —was the weapon being shown off or used to threaten another student?
- ♦ the type of weapon—was it a knife, a gun, etc.
- ♦ where the incident happened, and who was involved.

Violence can come in many different forms—and without weapons. It can be physical fighting with someone. Or it can even be in the form of name-calling and bullying.

Be alert for anyone who talks a lot about weapons and violence, threatens others, or is cruel to pets and animals. These may be warning signs of someone who could act out in violence. You should take all warning signs and threats seriously and talk to an adult.

There's much students can do to help create safe schools. Talk to your teachers, parents, and counselor to find out how you can get involved and do your part to make your school safe.

SCHOOLS REQUIRE

## NEW SPORTS EXAM FOR 7TH AND 9TH GRADERS

If you are in the 7th or 9th grade next school year and plan to play sports, you must have a complete well-care exam. For TennCare students, this exam is the same as the TENNderCare well-care or EPSDT exam. **This is a new requirement from the Tennessee State Board of Education for the 2008-09 school year.** The exam is **FREE** for TennCare members under age 21.

More than just a short sports exam, the well-care exam includes:

- ★ health history
- ★ physical exam
- ★ hearing and vision checkups
- ★ lab tests
- ★ vaccines
- ★ developmental and behavioral screenings
- ★ health education

Even if you do not plan to play school sports, for better health get a well-care exam every year, no matter what grade you are in. Let's face it, it's better to find health problems when they are small and can be treated easily.

## FREE RIDE AVAILABLE!

If you need a ride to the PCP's office for your TENNderCare checkup, TLC will see that you have a ride. No problem. It is free.

**Just call 385-0025 if you live in Shelby County. If you live outside Shelby County, please call 888-385-4969.** To schedule a ride, call at least three days before your appointment. Also, please call if you need to cancel your ride.



# FLOSS



## EVERY DAY

### To Remove Plaque

#### What is plaque?

Plaque is a thin film on the teeth. Plaque is made of saliva (spit) and bacteria (germs). Foods that contain sugar or starches cause the bacteria in your mouth to produce acids. If you snack often, you could be having acid attacks on your teeth all day long. After many acid attacks, your teeth may decay.

Plaque can also hurt the gums, making them red, tender or bleed easily. If plaque is not removed by brushing and cleaning between your teeth every day with floss, the gums begin to pull away from the teeth forming pockets full of bacteria and pus. The teeth may become loose and have to be removed.

To prevent tooth decay and remove plaque:

- ✓ Brush your teeth every day in the morning and at bedtime with fluoride toothpaste.
- ✓ Clean between your teeth every day with floss.
- ✓ Eat a well balanced diet, and limit between-meal snacks.
- ✓ Drink lots of water.
- ✓ Visit your dentist regularly, every six months.

#### How do I floss my teeth?

- ✓ Break off about 18 inches of floss. Wrap it around your fingers, and hold it tight between your thumbs and forefingers.
- ✓ Guide the floss between your teeth using a gently rubbing motion.
- ✓ When the floss reaches the gum line, hold the floss tightly against the tooth.
- ✓ Gently rub the side of the tooth, moving the floss away from the gum with up and down motions.
- ✓ Repeat this on each and every tooth, including the back side of your last tooth.

If you have TennCare, you have TENNderCare (EPSDT) dental services until you become 21 years old. These services include **FREE** regular six-month checkups, fluoride treatments and sealants.

If you have TennCare, call Doral Customer Service at 1-888-233-5935, or visit the web site at [www.doralusa.com](http://www.doralusa.com) for:

- ✓ help finding a dentist.
- ✓ questions about your TennCare dental benefits.
- ✓ help with interpretation and translation.
- ✓ help with a ride to the dentist.

#### NEED HELP MAKING AN APPOINTMENT?



Call TLC Customer Service at **725-7100** in Memphis or Shelby County, or **800-473-6523** if you live outside Shelby County.

No one is treated in a different way because of race, color, religion, birthplace, language, sex, age, or disability. Do you think you've been treated unfairly?

Do you have more questions?

Do you need more help?

You can make a free call to the Family Assistance Service Center at 1-866-311-4287.

In Nashville, call 743-2000.

Interpretation and translation services are free to the member.

For more information please call Customer Service at 725-7100 (Shelby County) or 800-473-6523 (outside of Shelby County).

Para pedir una información en español, por favor llame 725-7100, (condado Shelby) or 800-473-6523, (condado exterior de Shelby).

Do you need help? Is it because you have a health, mental health, learning problem or a disability? OR, do you need help in another language? If so, you have a right to get help, and TLC can help you. Call TLC at 1-800-473-6523.

If you have a hearing problem, you can call TennCare on a TTY/TDD machine.

The TTY/TDD number is 1-866-771-7043.

# Quotables

“There is only one happiness in life, to love and be loved.”

~ George Sand

“Falling in love consists merely in uncorking the imagination and bottling the common sense.”

~ Helen Rowland, *A Guide to Men*

“All you need is love; All you need is love.  
All you need is love, love; Love is all you need.  
All you need is love (all together now)  
All you need is love (everybody)  
All you need is love, love; Love is all you need.”

~ The Beatles



TENNESSEE'S EPSDT PROGRAM

1407 Union Avenue, Suite 200  
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