

SOONERCARE

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Would you like to share your story?

If the health care you got through SoonerCare has made a difference in your life or your child's, we'd like to hear from you.

Other SoonerCare members might be encouraged by your story. If you'd like to share

it, contact Sarah Harding at
(405) 522-7635 or e-mail her at
sarah.harding@okhca.org.

Welcome to the new SoonerCare Companion! This newsletter is just for SoonerCare members. It will tell you about any changes or updates to your SoonerCare benefits. It will also give you other useful news to help keep you healthy. However, if you have specific questions about your health, please talk to your doctor.

Your SoonerCare Companion will arrive in your mailbox about every four months from the Oklahoma Health Care Authority. If you have questions about SoonerCare, please call the SoonerCare Helpline at 1-800-987-7767.

**Winter
2009**



oklahoma
health care
authority

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COMPANION



Baby, it's cold outside!

As the fall leaves quickly blow away, the cold north wind chills our entire body. If you think that air is crisp on your face, just think how your baby might feel. Here are some tips on keeping your baby warm and toasty and some helpful numbers in case you need a little extra hand this time of year.

- Make sure your baby's feet are covered at all times when he or she is outside in the cold. (You should also keep baby's feet covered if you have hardwood floors. If you're worried about them slipping, get socks with grips. You can also stick textured Band-Aids on the bottom of socks to give them more grip.)
- Keep your baby's head covered.
- Layer clothes to keep the baby warm. If baby gets too warm,

you can easily remove a layer of clothing. You can always check this by taking the baby's temperature.

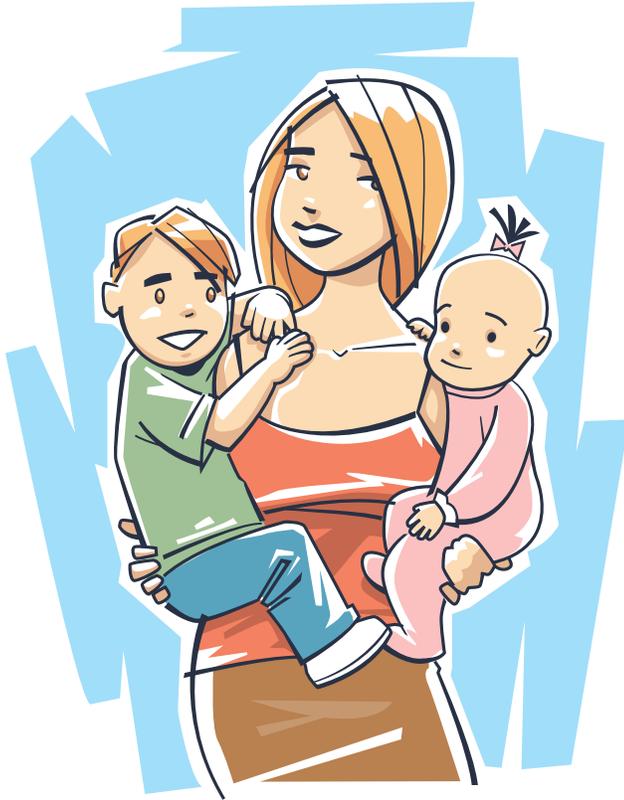
- Always cover your baby's hands.
 - Keep the temperature in your home at 68 to 70 degrees F.
- (Tips provided by Your Baby Today, a national publication.)*
So, what if you need some help staying warm this winter? Contact the OKDHS Energy Assistance Unit at (405) 521-3444 or 1-866-411-1877.

If you need help getting enough food during the winter months, your local OKDHS office can tell you where the nearest food pantry is in your county.

You can also always dial 2-1-1 for other resources and help.

Things to remember when scheduling a checkup for your child

Don't forget to re-enroll!



There are 130,723 Oklahoma children who still don't have health insurance. Did you know that many of them don't have it because their families didn't re-enroll? The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools reports that happens more than you'd think. Forgetting to re-enroll causes people to lose coverage without intending to.

Your child's SoonerCare re-enrollment begins with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (OKDHS). OKDHS mails each member a benefit review letter. The letter explains all the information that you must fill out and return to OKDHS.

OKDHS will need to know:

- The member's current address.
- Who lives at the member's residence.
- Sources and amounts of income.
- Medical and child support expenses.
- Information on medical insurance they may have (other than SoonerCare).
- Any new pregnancies.

OKDHS will send the renewal letter about a month and a half before your child is scheduled to lose coverage.

Once you complete the information, send it back to OKDHS. When it is approved, your child will keep SoonerCare benefits for another year, as long as he or she still qualifies.

It is very important for families to fill out these renewal forms and send them back to the OKDHS as soon as they are completed so their children do not lose out on health benefits.

- Be sure to call and make an appointment with your child's SoonerCare doctor. It may take some time for them to fit you in. When you call, tell the doctor or the person at the front desk that your child is a SoonerCare member.
- Bring your child's SoonerCare card with you to the appointment.
- Make a list of questions you have for the doctor and bring it with you.
- Bring your child's shot records to every appointment. The doctor's office will want to write down any shots given. You will need your child's shot records for school and child care programs.
- Ask your nurse or doctor to explain if you don't understand what they tell you.
- Bring all your child's medication to the office visit also.

Good communication = healthy patients



Next time you visit your doctor's office, be ready to ask these three questions:

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

Asking these questions will help you take care of your health, prepare for medical tests and take your medicines the right way.

For more information and tips for your next appointment, go to www.askme3.org.

Expect the best during your pregnancy

It's important for all pregnant women to get prenatal care (office visits during pregnancy) as early as possible. As soon as you think you might be pregnant, call your provider for an appointment.



Pregnancy to-do list:

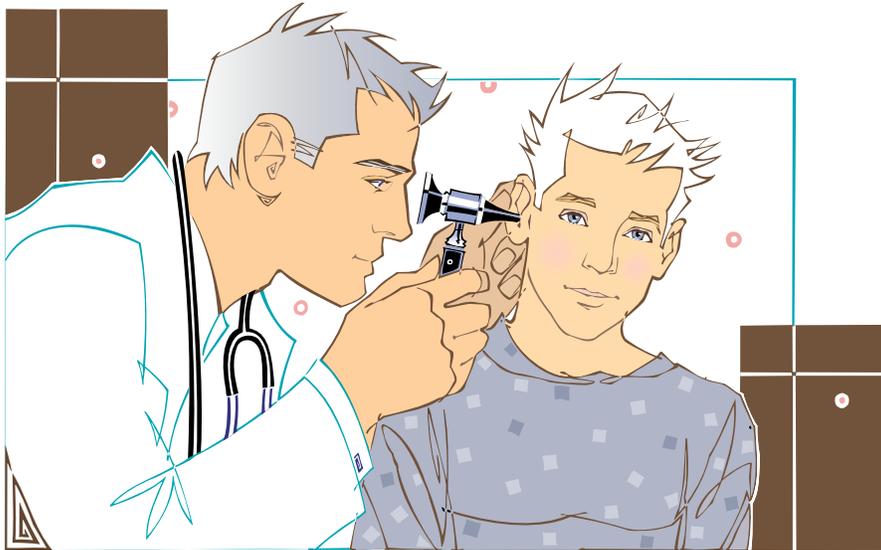
- Make an appointment with your doctor right away. Call your provider's office, or if you don't have a doctor to take care of you during your pregnancy, call **1-800-987-7767**. We can help you find one in your area.
- Take a prenatal vitamin each day. Nutrients are important for your growing baby. The B-vitamin folic acid can prevent certain birth defects. Call your doctor and ask for a prescription right away.
- If you use alcohol or illegal drugs, stop now. They can hurt your baby. For help quitting, call the Reachout hot line at **1-800-522-9054**. It is answered 24 hours a day.
- If you smoke, stop now. Smoking can cause problems in your pregnancy and hurt your baby's health. Talk to your doctor about help quitting. Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** for help.
- Keep seeing your doctor regularly throughout your pregnancy. Regular checkups during pregnancy are important for your health and your baby's well-being. They allow your doctor to closely watch your health and progress, and the baby's, too. By going to regular visits, you will help your baby to have a healthy start in life and help yourself to feel your best!



SoonerCare Obstetrical Care Coverage



SoonerCare Obstetrical Care Coverage Comparison Chart Choice	SoonerCare Choice Health care coverage for pregnant & postpartum women eligible for SoonerCare.
Office Visits	
-Routine Visits	Covered
-Specialty Visits	4 per month
Dental Coverage (while pregnant)	
-Comprehensive exam	Covered
-Cleaning	Covered
-Radiography	Covered
-Some fillings	Covered
Vision Coverage	
-Vision checks	Only for individuals age 20 and younger
Hospital Care	
-Delivery services	Covered
Ultrasounds Must be performed by OB/GYN, radiologist, OHCA contracted MFM, nurse midwife, family practice physician, advance nurse practitioner in OB, certified in OB ultrasonography	
-1 st trimester abdominal or transvaginal	1 per pregnancy
-Abdominal during 2 nd or 3 rd trimester	1 per pregnancy
Specialty Ultrasounds For women with suspected or identified fetal maternal abnormalities Must be performed by Maternal-Fetal Medicine Specialist	
-Fetal/maternal evaluation with detailed fetal anatomic exam	1 per pregnancy as medically necessary
-Re-evaluation	As medically necessary
Other Covered Services	
-Prescriptions	Covered
-Labs and some diagnostics related to pregnancy	Covered
-Maternal and infant health social work services	Services are covered while women are pregnant and up to 60 days postpartum
-SoonerRide (non-emergency transportation)	Covered
-Lactation consultation services	Services are covered while women are pregnant and up to 60 days postpartum Counseling and Nicotine replacement prescriptions
-Smoking cessation	
-Diabetes testing supplies	Covered
-Genetic counseling	Covered
-Patient advice line	Covered
High Risk OB Care Additional limited services for approved high-risk pregnancy conditions.	
-Fetal nonstress tests	Prior Authorization Required
-Biophysical profiles	Prior Authorization Required
-Additional Ultrasounds	Prior Authorization Required
-Enhanced antepartum management	Prior Authorization Required



Teens need checkups, too

The teen years bring huge changes that have an effect not just on the kids but their families, too. Social, emotional, mental and physical changes happen at different times for different teens. This is why it is important for them to get health checkups every two years, or more often if needed. Listed below are some changes that may happen between the ages of 12 and 20:

Social

- Mood changes.
- Sleep patterns, needing more sleep.
- Feeling awkward about “who they are” and their bodies.

Physical changes and sexuality

- Girls begin developing as early as 8.
- Boys and girls may act shy or blush when sex is discussed.
- Boys and girls may begin to show modesty.
- Boys and girls begin to show interest in body changes and sexual topics.
(This is normal and does not always mean a teen is having sex.)

Emotional changes

- Boys and girls worry about whether they are normal.
- Boys and girls change relationships often.
- Boys and girls need their parents to talk to them about sex so they can feel safe and healthy.

PCPs may start charging co-pays

Starting Jan. 1, 2009, doctors (PCPs) can charge co-pays to their adult SoonerCare Choice members. (Adult means age 21 or older.)

There are still no co-pays for services for pregnant adults, family planning services and emergency services. A PCP cannot deny services if a member says he or she cannot pay. The member is still responsible for the payment, though. The PCP can still try to collect the co-pay later.



Special help offered for some members

Did you know there is a SoonerCare program focused on improving your health?

SoonerCare Choice members with chronic illnesses may receive a call or visit from a Health Management Program (HMP) nurse.

If you are chosen for the HMP, you will get a letter from the director and a phone call from your nurse asking you to join the program. Once you agree to be in this free program, the nurse can give you more information about your health condition and help you develop a plan to improve your health and reach your goals.

Check out the HMP at www.okhca.org/HMP
call us at **1-866-538-9510**.

New asthma rescue inhalers

Beginning on Jan. 1, 2009, the old asthma inhalers that harm the environment will no longer be sold. Here are some things to know about the new inhalers:

- The new inhalers may smell, taste, and feel different. The spray might not be as strong or feel as “cold” as the old inhalers. The size or color of the inhaler may also be different. This does not change how the medicine works.
- Remember that it’s the way you use the inhaler that allows the medicine to go into your airways, not the strength of the spray. If you are not sure how to use your inhaler, ask your doctor or pharmacist.
- Clean your inhaler every week. Not cleaning the inhaler can keep the medicine from coming out. To clean your inhaler, take out the canister and wash the mouthpiece in warm running water. Shake off the water, and let the inhaler air-dry. If your inhaler is blocked and you need to use it, rinse it, shake off the water, and spray two puffs away from your face before using it.
- Ask your doctor or pharmacist when your inhaler needs to be primed and how to prime it.
- If your doctor prescribes pills or other daily-use inhalers for asthma, be sure to take the medicine as prescribed. Taking these medicines can help prevent asthma attacks, so you won’t need to use your rescue inhaler as often.

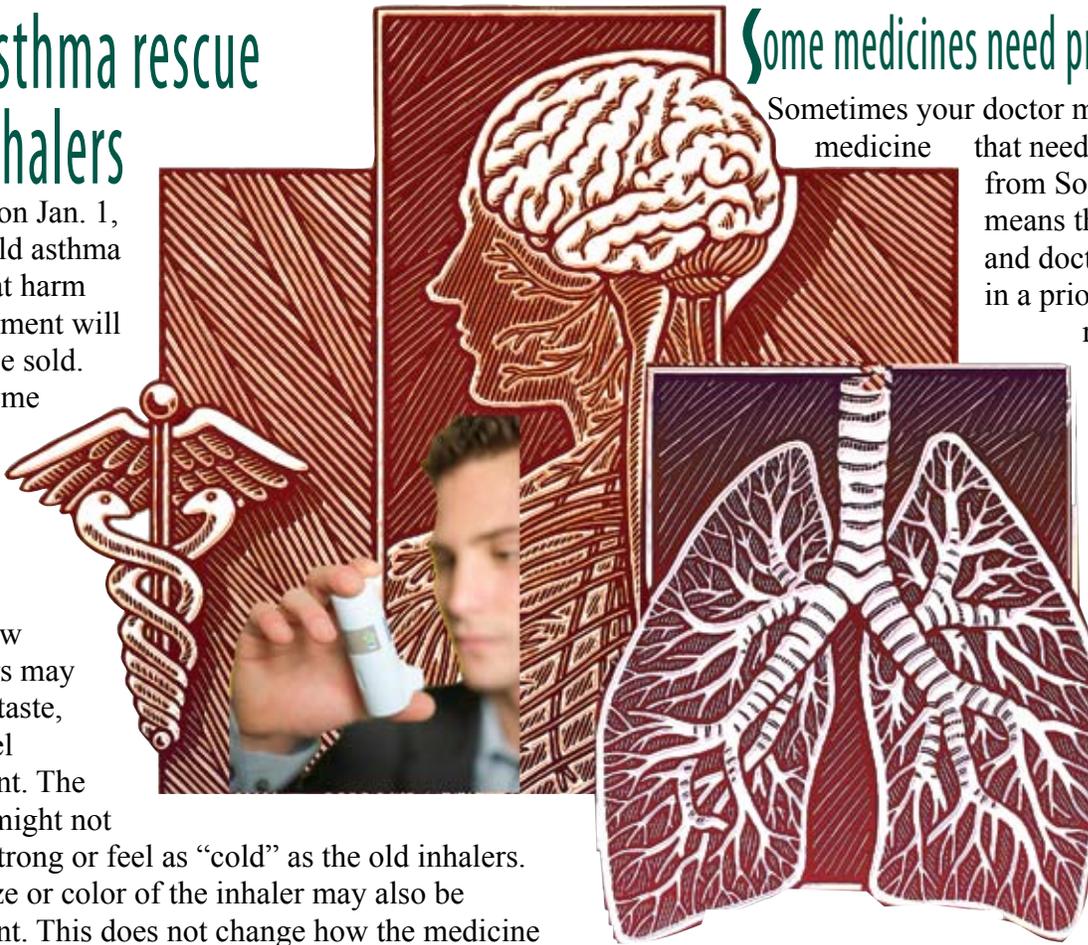
Some medicines need prior authorization

Sometimes your doctor may prescribe a medicine that needs prior authorization from SoonerCare. This means that your pharmacy and doctor will need to fax in a prior authorization request before SoonerCare will pay for the medicine.

How prior authorization works

- 1) The prior authorization request is usually started by your pharmacy. The pharmacist will fill out the top half of the form, then fax it to your doctor.
- 2) Once the doctor gets the form from the pharmacy, he or she will fill out the rest of the form and fax it to SoonerCare.
- 3) When SoonerCare gets the form, they will approve or deny the request, based on the information written by your doctor. SoonerCare will fax back a reply to both the pharmacy and the doctor within 24 hours.
- 4) If the request is approved, the pharmacy will fill your prescription.
- 5) If the request is denied, the doctor may decide to fax the form back to SoonerCare with more information. The doctor may also choose to prescribe a different medicine that does not require prior authorization.

If you have questions about prior authorization for a medicine, please call the SoonerCare Pharmacy Help Desk at (405) 522-7171, option 4, or (800) 522-0310, option 4.



Looking for a new line of work?

If you would like to become a certified nurse aide, the Oklahoma Health Care Authority and OSU-OKC offers you the training for **FREE**.

The program gives you the training you need to get ready to take Oklahoma's nurse aide test. You can work full-time or part-time.

You may go to the classes for FREE if you agree to work in a nursing home that has a contract with SoonerCare after you finish your program. You must work in a nursing home for at least 12 months during the next two years after you finish your classes and pass your test.

The classes will teach you to talk with and help patients. You'll also learn how to teach them how to do daily living activities. You will learn how to respect patient rights and the right way to make a bed and lift and turn patients.

**The program is 96 hours,
72 hours of classroom training
and 24 hours of supervised clinical training.**

Day classes meet from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for 12 days. Night classes meet from 5:30-9:30 p.m. Monday through Friday for four weeks.

Training classes are offered in:

- Bartlesville
- Chickasha
- Corn/Weatherford
- Enid
- Grove
- Hollis
- Jenks
- Lawton
- McAlester
- Muskogee
- Pocola
- Ponca City
- Sallisaw
- Stillwater
- Tahlequah

Coming soon:

Holdenville and Mangum

Please call for the next open class.

For more information, call Melissa or Jennifer at 1-405-945-8615 or LaQueda Viewins at 1-405-522-7538.

Cleaning child's trach important part of home care

Caring for a child with a tracheostomy tube can seem like a difficult task. Here are a few tips from the American Thoracic Society about tracheostomy care in the home.

- ❖ PVC tubes may be used in a patient for three to four months before they stiffen. Rotate the tubes to increase the lifetime of the tube by keeping a spare. Silicone tubes may last longer since they do not stiffen. Inspect the tracheostomy tubes from time to time.
- ❖ Choose a trach tie that fits securely; don't choose one based on the type of material alone. Trach ties should be kept clean and dry. How often they need to be changed varies from patient to patient.
- ❖ Suctioning the trach tube is critical to your child's health. In the home setting, the most common and accepted method is the "clean technique" – washing hands before and after the

suctioning procedure. The caregiver should always wash his or her hands completely before suctioning. The caregiver must use clean hands or sterile gloves for the procedure. The suction catheters must be clean and not have touched any unclean surface.

- ❖ To clean the suction catheters:
 - Wash and flush the catheter with hot, soapy water.
 - Disinfect the catheter by soaking it in a vinegar and water solution or a commercial cleaning solution (ask your DME supplier).
 - Rinse the catheter inside and out with clean tap water.
 - Wipe the outside of the catheter with rubbing alcohol.
 - Air-dry.
 - Store the catheters in a clean, dry place.

Source: American Thoracic Society "Care of the Child with a Chronic Tracheostomy" www.thoracic.org

Family Fun



Winter Fun!

Winter is a wonderful time for fun and play. It is important that you spend at least 60 minutes each day in active play: running, skipping, skating, hopping, jumping or building snowmen! This will help you stay healthy and grow strong. When you play outside in the winter be sure to bundle up to stay warm and dry. It is important to wear a hat and gloves. Draw and color a picture of the things that will keep you warm and healthy this winter: coat, mittens, scarf, socks, sweater, hat and boots.

What can a snowman wear?

Which items should you wear on a cold day?

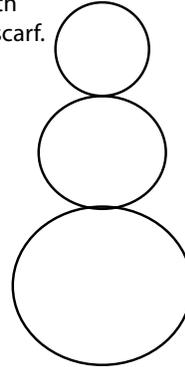
What games can you play outdoors?

What games can you play indoors?

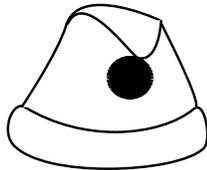


Draw a snowman.

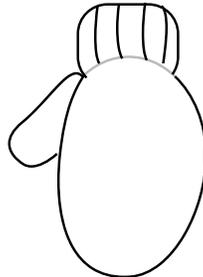
Add a hat, eyes, nose, mouth and scarf.



Draw a hat.



Draw some mittens.



Gray skies may bring blue moods

When the bright skies of summer turn to the cooler and overcast colors of fall and winter, some people begin to show signs of depression. They may have problems with sleep, like sleeping too much. They may be tired during the day for no special reason. They may feel hopeless or lonely. They might even lose interest in life. This condition, when it occurs in late fall and winter, is known as Seasonal Affective Disorder, or SAD.

SAD usually occurs between November and March, a reaction to changes in how much light we get. Because the earth tilts in late fall, the sun rests much lower in the sky than it does in spring and summer.

The symptoms of SAD are usually mild to moderate, but they can be very troubling to people who don't understand why they are feeling depressed. SAD can occur in adults, children and teens. It helps to go outside as often as possible and be exposed to the light outdoors, but that may not be enough to help some people. People with SAD also should make sure they have bright lights

inside. Lamps with fluorescent bulbs that provide full spectrum lighting are especially helpful.

If those steps don't help, your provider may suggest spending about 30 minutes in the morning in front of a specially built box with fluorescent bulbs that mimic full morning sunlight.

If symptoms of SAD are so severe that they keep you from functioning in daily life, your provider may prescribe antidepressants for you to take during the late fall into early spring.

Some treatments for SAD may result in your PCP referring you to a mental health specialist.



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New moms: Have you looked into SoonerPlan?

If you recently had a baby and will soon stop qualifying for the full span of SoonerCare benefits for yourself, you may want to think about SoonerPlan.

SoonerPlan is a family planning program for adults age 19 and older. It provides family planning services for low-income, uninsured women and men. Covered benefits include birth control information and supplies, physical exams, Pap smears and pregnancy and lab tests. Members may also be screened for sexually transmitted infections if the purpose of their office visit is family planning.

Tubal ligations and vasectomies are available for adults age 21 and older.

Applications for SoonerPlan are available at local health departments, Oklahoma Department of Human Services county offices, family planning providers and clinics.

You can visit the OHCA Web site, www.okhca.org.

You also can call OHCA at **1-800-987-7767** or **1-800-757-5979 (TDD)** from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Translation services are available.

Are you ready to kick the habit this year?

It's no secret that smoking and using tobacco can cause many major health problems. If you're ready to take the big step of quitting, SoonerCare offers free stop smoking benefits.

SoonerCare members can get nicotine patches and gums. Pills that help fight cravings also are available. Ask your PCP about how to get them.

For the first 90 days, you can get stop-smoking products as a pharmacy benefit without prior authorization. Those products will not count toward the monthly limits for members age 21 and older. After 90 days of treatment, adults will need prior authorization to continue getting them.



You also can call the Oklahoma Tobacco Helpline for coaching. Call **1-800-784-8669** (English), **1-800-793-1552** (Spanish) or **1-877-777-6534 (TTY)**.

Si usted quiere leer este artículo en español, visite la pagina web del OHCA al www.okhca.org

Disclaimer: Clinical, legal and other comments are offered for general information only. Please talk to your doctor about specific health concerns.

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