

GEISINGER HEALTH PLAN FAMILY

# Member Update

Fall 2022



Geisinger

## Birth control: What's right for you?

Choosing a type of birth control isn't a snap decision for many. The possibilities seem endless, and you may want to consider side effects.

So, how do you know which is the right one? You do your homework. Once you know your options, picking the right one is a little easier.

### What types of birth control are available?

A variety of contraceptives are available — from a daily pill to a permanent surgery. If you're trying to find the right birth control for your needs, consider the pros and cons of each type.

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## Female birth control

### Birth control pill

Birth control pills use hormones to prevent pregnancy. They come in two types: combined pills (which contain both estrogen and progestin) and progestin-only pills (also called “mini pills”). The pill prevents pregnancy by:

- Suppressing ovulation
- Thickening cervical mucus to make it harder for sperm to reach an egg
- Thinning the uterine lining to make it harder for an egg to implant

Missing a pill can put you at risk for pregnancy, so be sure to take your pill each day.

### Intrauterine device

When a small, T-shaped intrauterine device (IUD) is implanted in your uterus, it prevents sperm from reaching the egg. An IUD lasts from three to 10 years, depending on the type.

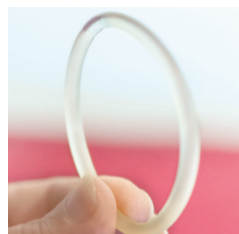
Hormonal IUDs emit a continuous dose of progestin. They may also reduce your menstrual flow. The non-hormonal IUD, Paragard®, emits copper ions that irritate sperm, preventing them from getting to an egg. However, the copper IUD may make your menstrual flow heavier or last longer.

### Arm implant

During a minimally invasive procedure, your doctor will insert a tiny, thin rod into your upper arm. There, it emits a continual dose of the hormone progestin. It's long-lasting, preventing pregnancy for up to five years.

### Vaginal ring

The birth control ring is a small, flexible ring you place inside your vagina. The ring contains both estrogen and progestin to prevent sperm from reaching an egg.



You'll keep the ring in for 21 days, then remove it for seven. During those seven days, you'll have your period. After the week is up, insert a new ring.

### Contraceptive patch

The patch works like combination birth control pills, emitting a low dose of hormones to prevent ovulation.

You just decide where to stick it. Choose from your:

- Arm
- Buttock
- Upper body
- Abdomen

Put on a new patch every week for three weeks, then go patch-free in the fourth week. During that week, you'll have your period.

Check your patch regularly. If it comes off or gets damaged, you could be at risk for pregnancy.

### Contraceptive injection

The contraceptive injection is a shot of progestin given by your healthcare provider every three months. It prevents pregnancy by suppressing ovulation and thickening cervical mucus.

## Male birth control

### Vasectomy

In this outpatient procedure, a surgeon cuts and seals the tubes that sperm travel to reach the testicles. It takes about three months until semen stops containing sperm.

A vasectomy is the most effective way to prevent pregnancy for men. It may be possible to reverse it with another surgery, but not always. So it's best to consider a vasectomy permanent.

### Condoms

Condoms can work up to 98% of the time to prevent pregnancy. If not used correctly, however, chances for pregnancy are pretty high. Some tips:

- Use only latex or polyurethane condoms kept in a cool, dry place.
- Don't carry condoms in your wallet — heat and friction can damage them.
- Check expiration dates.

An upside to condoms: They protect you and your partner from sexually transmitted diseases.



## Things to consider when choosing birth control

Birth control affects everyone differently. Before choosing a method, think about your goals. Start by considering:

- Whether you plan to have children in the future
- How often you'd need to use a particular method
- Effectiveness
- Your personal health
- Potential side effects

After weighing your options, talk to your healthcare provider. They can answer questions and explain the pros and cons of each type. Working together, you'll find the right birth control for you.

## Prescriptions, now made easier

The last thing you should have to worry about is getting the medication you need to stay healthy. That's why GHP has thousands of participating pharmacies in network. Search for one near you by visiting [geisinger.org/health-plan](https://www.geisinger.org/health-plan), then scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking "Find a pharmacy."

Hard to get to the pharmacy for your prescriptions? Try Geisinger Mail-Order Pharmacy and get a three-month supply (up to 100 days of medications\*) mailed right to your doorstep.

To get started, call 844-878-5562 between 6:30 a.m. and 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, or visit [geisinger.org/pharmacy](https://www.geisinger.org/pharmacy).

*\*This benefit includes maintenance medications, like diabetes, blood pressure or cholesterol medications, but does not include all medications. Benefits and costs will vary, depending on your specific coverage, or if you're enrolled in a cost assistance program.*

Contact the Customer Care Team with any questions.



## Geisinger hospitals recognized by U.S. News & World Report

Five Geisinger hospitals were recognized for high performance in the 2022 U.S. News & World Report “Best Hospitals” rankings. They received high performance rankings for a variety of specific procedures and conditions. Read on to find out where each hospital took top honors:



Badge shown is for Geisinger Medical Center and its subsidiaries.

### Geisinger Medical Center

Pulmonology and lung surgery, heart failure, kidney failure, stroke, COPD, colon cancer surgery, maternity care, abdominal aortic aneurysm repair, heart attack

### Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center

Pulmonology and lung surgery, heart failure, kidney failure, stroke, COPD, heart attack, hip replacement

### Geisinger Community Medical Center

Heart failure, kidney failure, stroke, COPD, knee replacement

### Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital

Hip fracture care

### Geisinger Bloomsburg Hospital

Maternity care

The annual U.S. News & World Report “Best Hospitals” report ranks hospital performance in 15 adult specialties, 10 pediatric specialties and 20 surgical procedures and medical conditions. Rankings are based on patient outcomes, as well as overall patient experience, hospital staffing and other factors, and are meant to help patients choose the right hospital for the care they need.

## When is Tamiflu right for you?

The antiviral medication Tamiflu® can prevent and treat certain strains of the flu. But should everyone take it?

### What does it do?

Tamiflu, or oseltamivir, is a prescription pill that helps your body's immune system fight off the flu virus. You need to take the medication within 48 hours of the start of your symptoms for it to be effective. Taken early enough, it can shorten your illness by a couple of days and ease your symptoms. Doctors can also prescribe Tamiflu preventively to high-risk patients who've been exposed to someone with the flu.

A pesky flu can sometimes turn into a more serious condition, like a sinus infection or pneumonia. Treating with Tamiflu helps make that less likely.

Tamiflu only works against the influenza virus — not bacterial infections or other viral infections, like the common cold or COVID-19.

### Who should take Tamiflu?

Since it's a prescription medication, you'll need to contact your healthcare provider as soon as you feel symptoms coming on. It's best for people who have certain conditions, such as:

- Diabetes
- Asthma or other lung problems
- Heart disease
- Kidney disease
- Liver, blood or neurological conditions
- Being significantly overweight

Even if you don't have any of these conditions, talk to your doctor. They may have other reasons for you to take this medication, such as being in contact with young children or older adults. Your doctor can also advise you of any side effects and risks from taking Tamiflu.

### What are the side effects of Tamiflu?

#### Common side effects include:

- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Nausea
- Vomiting

Usually, these side effects aren't severe and occur during the first couple days of treatment.

## Prevention is your best bet

You don't need an antiviral at all if you don't get sick. Preventing the flu starts with getting a flu shot. It reduces your risk of coming down with the flu — and makes it less severe if you do get it.

And of course, having your annual flu shot protects others, like your family members, friends and anyone else you meet.

These tried-and-true preventive measures can also help:

- Wash your hands frequently.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Clean high-touch surfaces often.
- Stay away from sick people.



## Easy access to your medical records and more

MyGeisinger allows you to manage your care at home and on the go with the MyChart app. Once you activate your MyGeisinger account, you'll be able to:

- Schedule and manage your appointments
- Message your healthcare provider and care team
- View most lab and test results
- Renew prescriptions
- Grant or change access to your electronic health information

Not only can you schedule office visits with a healthcare provider, you can have virtual visits online in the comfort of your home.

## Create your MyGeisinger account:

Geisinger patients age 18 and over can register for a MyGeisinger account online at [mygeisinger.org](https://mygeisinger.org). Click "create account" to get started.

Next, fill out the user registration form, create a user ID and password, choose a security question and accept the terms and conditions.

### Activate your account:

During registration, you'll request access to your Geisinger medical record. You can choose whichever activation method that works best for you:

- Instantly activate your account online by answering questions provided by a third party to verify your identity. You'll need to review and accept a second set of terms and conditions.
- Request an activation code to be mailed to your home address. Once you receive it, follow the instructions to activate your account.

### Manage care for your loved ones

With family access, you can view your loved one's online medical record, schedule and manage appointments, renew prescriptions, and communicate with their care team.

#### Just follow these simple steps:

1. Sign in to MyChart
2. On the menu, under "Sharing," choose "Request Family Record Access".
3. Fill out the appropriate form based on your loved one's age.
4. Follow instructions to submit. You'll get a response in five to seven business days.

Children age 13 to 17 can access their own records with approval from a parent or legal guardian. If you have proxy access to a child's account, you'll need to reestablish that access when the child turns 14.

### Need help?

Visit [geisinger.org/mychart/issue-help](https://geisinger.org/mychart/issue-help) or call us at 570-214-0003 if you run into any snags.

## Why get your kids vaccinated?

Vaccines are one of the best ways to protect your children's health. But why are they so important?

### Vaccines save lives.

Smallpox, polio, hepatitis A and B, tetanus and measles once caused serious long-term health problems or even death. Today, vaccines have largely controlled or eliminated these illnesses in the United States. And because kids' immune systems encounter millions of germs every day, vaccination can strengthen their resistance to the more dangerous diseases.

### Vaccines are safe.

Before a vaccine ever reaches a person, it's thoroughly tested — often over several years. Then the Food and Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health and other government agencies monitor the use of the vaccine and investigate any safety concerns.

Some websites claim vaccines are harmful and cause conditions like autism. Make sure you get your information from a reliable source, like the CDC, and it's backed by good data. No trustworthy scientific studies have found a link between vaccines and autism. Talk to your doctor if you have any concerns about your children's immunizations.

### Vaccines save you time and money.

When your child gets sick, they miss school. Then you may have to miss work to take care of them. This can cause hardships for the whole family, due to missed schoolwork and work days. By vaccinating your kids, you help them stay healthier — so they don't have to stay home from school. Better yet, vaccines are covered by your insurance.

Keep up with immunizations for your kids by following the schedule recommended by the CDC:

[Vaccine Schedules for Parents | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/schedules)  
[cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/schedules](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/schedules)

## Discrimination is against the law

Geisinger Health Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, creed, religious affiliation, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation.

Geisinger Health Plan does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, disability, creed, religious affiliation, ancestry, sex, gender, gender identity or expression or sexual orientation.

Geisinger Health Plan provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:

- Qualified sign language interpreters
- Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

Geisinger Health Plan provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:

- Qualified interpreters
- Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact Geisinger Health Plan at 800-447-4000.

If you believe that Geisinger Health Plan has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, creed, religious affiliation, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation, you can file a complaint with:

**Civil Rights Grievance Coordinator**  
**Geisinger Health Plan Appeals Department**  
**100 North Academy Avenue**  
**Danville, PA 17822-3220**

**Phone: 866-577-7733, PA Relay 711**  
**Fax: 570-271-7225**  
**Email: GHPCivilRights@thehealthplan.com**

**The Bureau of Equal Opportunity**  
**Room 223, Health and Welfare Building**  
**P.O. Box 2675**  
**Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675**

**Phone: 717-787-1127, PA Relay 711**  
**Fax: 717-772-4366**  
**Email: RA-PWBEOAO@pa.gov**

You can file a complaint in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a complaint, Geisinger Health Plan and the Bureau of Equal Opportunity are available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at [ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf](https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf), or by mail or phone at:

**U.S. Department of Health and Human Services**  
**200 Independence Avenue SW**  
**Room 509F, HHH Building**  
**Washington, DC 20201**

**Phone: 800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD)**

Complaint forms are available at [hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html](https://hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html).

**ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call: 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY 711).**

**ATENCIÓN:** Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**ВНИМАНИЕ:** Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**注意：**如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711)。

**CHÚ Ý:** Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**ملحوظة:** إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم 1-800-447-4000 (رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: 711: PA RELAY).

**ध्यान दिनुहोस्:** तपाईंले नेपाली बोल्नुहुन्छ भने तपाईंको निम्ति भाषा सहायता सेवाहरू नि:शुल्क रूपमा उपलब्ध छ । फोन गर्नुहोस् 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711) ।

**주의:** 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711). 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

**ប្រយ័ត្ន:** បើសិនជាអ្នកនិយាយភាសាខ្មែរ, សេវាជំនួយផ្នែកភាសា ដោយមិនគិតថ្លៃ គឺអាចមានសំរាប់លើអ្នក។ ចូរ ទូរស័ព្ទ 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711)។

**ATTENTION:** Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**သတိပြုရန် -** အကယ်၍ သင်သည် မြန်မာစကား ကို ပြောပါက၊ ဘာသာစကား အကူအညီ၊ အခမဲ့၊ သင့်အတွက် စီစဉ်ဆောင်ရွက်ပေးပါမည်။ ဖုန်းနံပါတ် 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711) သို့ ခေါ်ဆိုပါ။

**ATANSYON:** Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**ATENÇÃO:** Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**লক্ষ্য করুন:** যদি আপনি বাংলা, কথা বলতে পারেন, তাহলে নি:খরচায় ভাষা সহায়তা পরিষেবা উপলব্ধ আছে। ফোন করুন 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711)।

**KUJDES:** Nëse flitni shqip, për ju ka në dispozicion shërbime të asistencës gjuhësore, pa pagesë. Telefononi në 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).

**सुचना:** જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા હો, તો નિ:શુલ્ક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો 800-447-4000 (PA RELAY: 711).



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100 N. Academy Ave.  
Danville, PA 17822

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*Geisinger Health Plan Family (GHP Family) is a Medical Assistance (Medicaid) insurance program offered by Geisinger Health Plan in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services (DHS). Geisinger Health Plan is part of Geisinger, an integrated health care delivery and coverage organization.*

*Questions about GHP Family? Call us at 855-227-1302 (PA Relay 711); Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.; Wednesday, 7 a.m. – 8 p.m.; Saturday, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m.*

## Didn't take our survey yet? There's still time!

If you haven't responded to the survey mentioned in our last newsletter, we'd love your feedback. Tell us what newsletter topics you like (and don't) so we can give you more of what you want. Scan the QR code or visit [go.geisinger.org/familysurvey](https://go.geisinger.org/familysurvey). It's only three questions and takes about two minutes. Thanks!



## We want to hear from you

Join the GHP Family Health Education Advisory Committee, speak your mind, and make a difference. Plus, you'll get a \$5 gift card for participating! By attending quarterly meetings, you'll be able to:

- Give feedback and recommendations about GHP Family benefits and services
- Brainstorm ideas to improve health outcomes
- Identify health education needs in your community
- Learn about programs and benefits available to you as a GHP Family member

Sign up for our next virtual meeting on Friday, Oct. 21, from 10 to 11 a.m., by calling 855-214-8100 (TTY 711).

