

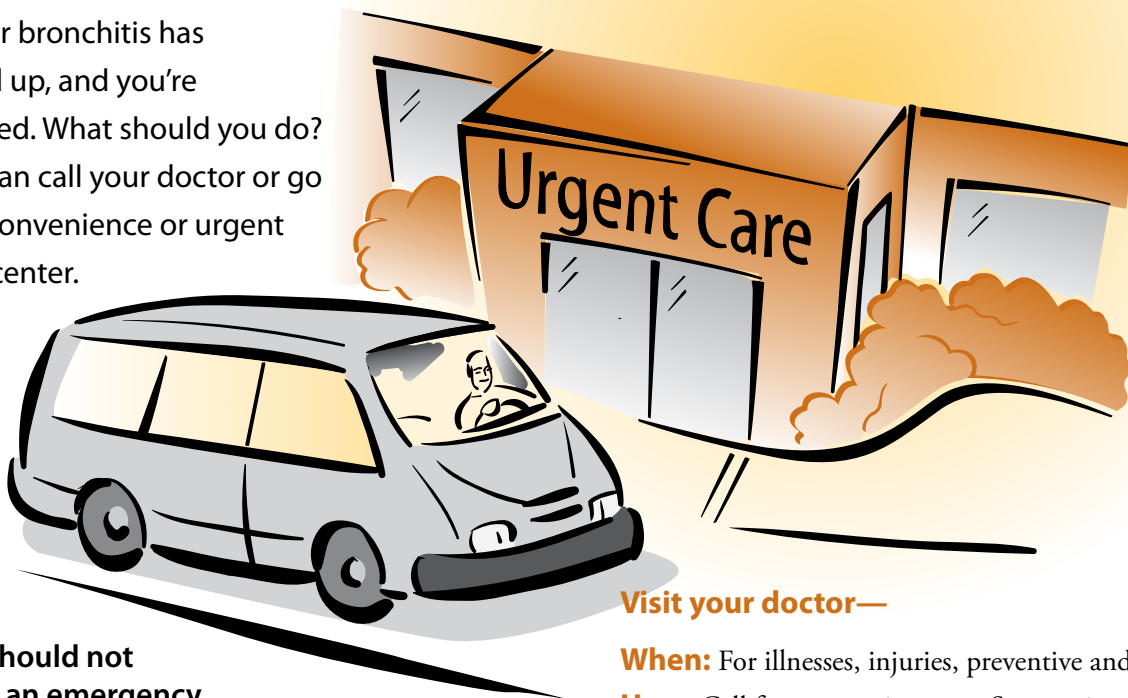
Patient Choice Connection

Patient Choice News for Members

Fall 2007

Knowing Where to go for Care can Save Time and Money

Your bronchitis has flared up, and you're worried. What should you do? You can call your doctor or go to a convenience or urgent care center.



You should not go to an emergency department for minor problems.

Emergency care can be five times as expensive or more—and you are much more likely to encounter a long wait.

Here are the approximate treatment costs for bronchitis:

- **Your doctor: \$80**
- **Convenience care \$50**
- **Urgent care: \$110**
- **Emergency department: \$390**

Visit your doctor—

When: For illnesses, injuries, preventive and routine care.

How: Call for an appointment. Some primary care clinics are now offering extended and/or weekend hours.

Visit a convenience care center (such as MinuteClinic®)—

When: For a limited number of services such as a sore throat, earache or other minor problem. Patients must be older than 18 months.

Where: Certain retail settings such as supermarkets (e.g., Cub Foods) and pharmacies (e.g., CVS/pharmacy stores). Check your Provider Directory for convenience care centers in the Patient Choice Signature network.

How: No appointment needed. Sites may be open evenings, weekends and holidays.

continued on page 3

In this issue:

Health Help | 2

Snoring Can Signal Sleep Disorder

Health Help | 3

Put Back Care Tips To Work

Choices & Changes | 4

Resource Sheds Light on Health Care Cost and Quality

Choices & Changes | 4

Medical Groups Rewarded for Optimal Diabetes Care

Choices & Changes | 6

National Survey Helps You Size Up Hospital Performance

Q & A | 8

Commonly Asked Questions and Answers



Snoring Can Signal Sleep Disorder

Question: What condition ...

- a. affects millions of Americans and is often undiagnosed?
- b. causes breathing to stop repeatedly during sleep?
- c. is often accompanied by loud snoring?

Answer: Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA).

OSA is a common sleep disorder that often occurs when loose or floppy soft tissues in the mouth, nose or throat close during sleep and block the airway. Typical symptoms individuals with this condition may experience include heavy snoring and episodes where they stop breathing for 10 seconds or longer, causing them to wake up. These episodes can occur anywhere from 5 to 50 times an hour.

Sleep apnea is serious. Individuals are likely to experience daytime drowsiness, even though they have



If you suspect that you have a sleep disorder, talk to your health care provider about testing and treatment. You should also try these self-care measures:

- Avoid alcohol and sedatives.
- Lose excess weight.
- Sleep on your side to keep your tongue from blocking your airway.
- If you smoke, quit.

slept for several hours. Untreated, it is linked to high blood pressure, heart problems and weight gain.

According to the National Institutes of Health, sleep apnea affects more than 12 million Americans. Risk factors include being male, over the age of forty and overweight. While more common in men, it can affect anyone, including children.

For more information, visit the American Sleep Apnea Association Web site at www.sleepapnea.org.

Note: The benefits available for sleep disorders vary by plan. Check your Summary Plan Description document for specific information about your plan benefits or call Customer Service at 1-877-390-7632. ●

Patient Choice Helpline Medical Benefits

Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

1-877-390-7632

TTY (for the hearing impaired): 1-800-627-3529

Patient Choice Web Site

Your source for the most up-to-date information and access to online customer service features

www.patientchoicesignature.com

Patient Choice Signature is administered by Fiserv Health

Medical Claims Submission:

Fiserv Health
Patient Choice Claims
P.O. Box 450
Pueblo, CO 81002-0450

Put Back Care Tips to Work

Whether a full day's work means sitting in meetings, driving long distances or standing for extended periods of time, your back is at work, too—and subject to strain and injury. Lifting, sitting, repetitive movements and awkward positions can all increase your risk of backache.

Do you know how to protect your back? Incorporate these basic ergonomic principles into your daily habits:

- Avoid slouching when sitting or standing.
- Avoid leaning forward while working at your desk or standing at a workstation, such as a counter.
- Avoid bending over low objects.
- Use a lumbar cushion to support your lower back when you sit or drive for long periods.
- Before lifting an object, test its weight by lifting a corner of the object.
- When lifting heavy objects, bend your knees and power the lift with your leg muscles, not your back.
- When moving an object, push rather than pull.
- When standing for long periods, wear supportive, cushioned shoes.



- Stretch every day to build strength and flexibility in your spine.

More Back Support:

Lose excess belly fat. Added weight around your middle can cause lower backaches.

Get up and go. Lack of activity weakens back muscles—use ‘em or lose ‘em. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise most days.

If you smoke, quit. Smokers are twice as likely to have back pain as nonsmokers. Smoking reduces the amount of oxygen-rich blood available for maintaining spinal health. ●

Knowing Where to go for Care can Save Time and Money

continued from cover

Visit an urgent care center

When: For urgent problems, such as strains, sprains or minor bone fractures, when your regular doctor's office is closed.

Where: Check your Provider Directory for urgent care centers in the Patient Choice Signature network.

How: No appointment needed. Sites may be open evenings, weekends and holidays.

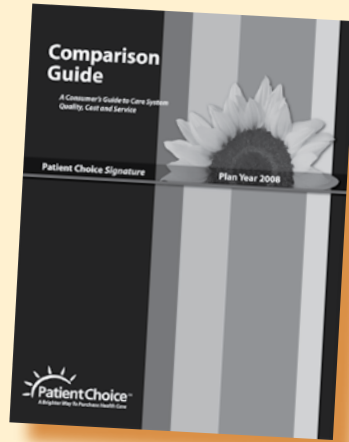
Visit an emergency department

When: For serious illnesses and injuries needing immediate care, such as chest pain, severe burns or head injury.

How: No appointment needed. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. ●

Resource Sheds Light on Health Care Cost and Quality

As many companies begin the “open enrollment” season, you may be re-evaluating your health care providers to determine those who will best satisfy your needs. As you weigh your options, take a look at the *Patient Choice Comparison Guide, a Consumer’s Guide to Care System Quality, Cost and Service*. This helpful resource includes a wealth of information about Care System performance and capabilities to support your decision-making process. In the guide, you’ll find information about:



Clinical Performance. Shows the results of our Quality Credit program which evaluates Care Systems’ health outcomes and care processes (as reported by providers), as well as service and satisfaction levels (as reported by their patients) for asthma, diabetes, coronary artery disease and preventive services.

Customer Service Capabilities. Highlights innovative programs and service enhancements that Care Systems have in place to serve patients. Use this information to learn which Care Systems offer evening and weekend appointments, utilize electronic medical records, provide health education programs and have other services that are important to you.

Internet Capabilities. Provides an overview of a Care System’s ability to

provide services via the Internet. Find out which online tools Care Systems use to connect with their patients.

Patient Satisfaction. Shows what individuals think about key aspects of service and their overall experience with Care Systems.

As you make your Care System choices for 2008, you can use the information in the Patient Choice materials available in print and online at www.patientchoicesignature.com, to gauge value based on a variety of factors, and choose those providers that best meet your personal needs.

Note: The 2008 Patient Choice Comparison Guide includes cost group information that may vary from your current plan. 2008 cost groups do not affect your cost of coverage for the current plan year. Rather, they are effective on the first date of your employer’s 2008 plan year coverage (which can vary from company to company). ●

Bridges to Excellence (BTE) is a national employer-sponsored pay-for-performance program that pays providers who deliver safe, timely, effective and efficient care to chronically ill patients.

The Minnesota BTE effort rewards medical groups that have delivered excellent diabetes care. This local effort is supported by several large employers including Carlson Companies, Honeywell, the State of Minnesota and General Electric, and is managed by the Buyers Health Care Action Group (BHCAG), a large employer business coalition in Minnesota.

Under the program, medical groups who had at least 20 percent of their diabetic patients meet five specific treatment goals, were awarded a \$ bonus for each diabetic patient in their care covered by a participating purchaser.

The measures used to determine optimal diabetes care were established by the Institute for Clinical System Improvement (ICSI), a Minnesota non-profit organization that develops “best practice” guidelines for treating various conditions. They include:

- A blood sugar level that indicates diabetes is under control (hemoglobin A1c count less than 7)
- LDL (bad) cholesterol level less than 100
- Blood pressure is less than 130 over 80
- Patients are not smoking
- Patients over the age of 40 take daily aspirin

Groups Rewarded for Optimal Diabetes Care

Congratulations to the Minnesota BTE honorees that participate in the Patient Choice Signature network:

Health Care System/Clinic	Care System Affiliation
AALFA Family Clinic—White Bear Lake	Minnesota Healthcare Network
Allina Medical Clinic—Farmington	Allina Medical Clinic Care System
Camden Physicians, Ltd—Minneapolis	Access Quality Care System
Fairview Cedar Ridge Clinic Fairview Chisago Lakes Clinic Fairview Crosstown Clinic Fairview Eagan Clinic Fairview Eden Center Clinic Fairview Elk River Clinic Fairview Hugo Clinic Fairview Lakeville Clinic Fairview North Branch Clinic Fairview Princeton Clinic Fairview Ridges Clinic Fairview RidgeValley Clinic Fairview Rush City Clinic France Avenue Family Physicians, PA Richfield Medical Group	Fairview Physician Associates
Fairview Red Wing Medical Center	Fairview Red Wing Health Services
Family Practice Medical Center of Willmar	Midwest Community Providers
HealthEast Downtown St. Paul Clinic	HealthEast Care System
HealthPartners Central Minnesota Clinics—St. Cloud	HealthPartners Central Minnesota Clinics
HealthPartners Como Clinic—Inver Grove Heights	HealthPartners Medical Groups and Clinics
MeritCare Medical Group—Halstad	MeritCare Health System
Park Nicollet Clinic—Eden Prairie, Minnetonka, St. Louis Park	Park Nicollet/Methodist Care System
Southdale Internal Medicine—Edina	Minnesota Healthcare Network
Western Wisconsin Medical Associates—Hudson Physicians, New Richmond Clinic and River Falls Medical Clinic - Ellsworth, River Falls, Spring Valley	Minnesota Healthcare Network

For more information on the Bridges to Excellence program, visit www.bridgestoexcellence.org.

National Survey Helps You Size Up Hospital Performance

Hospitals are not all alike. And while you may not always have an opportunity to research a hospital prior to receiving services—especially in the case of an emergency—when you do, it’s important to do your hospital homework.

The Leapfrog Group, a coalition of more than 170 public and private organizations that purchase health care, is one important resource to consider. The organization publishes information about hospital performance on four categories (or leaps) that it recommends hospitals should have in place to improve patient safety including:

Leap 1—Computer Physician Order Entry (CPOE): Physicians enter patient prescriptions and other orders into computers linked to error prevention software.

Leap 2—Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Physician Staffing: ICUs are staffed by trained ICU specialists called “intensivists.”

Leap 3—High Risk Treatments or Evidence-based Hospital Referral (EHR): Hospital has proven outcomes or extensive experience with several high-risk procedures/ conditions.

Leap 4—National Quality Forum (NQF) Safe Practices: Hospital is progressing on the additional 27 NQF measures. NQF has identified 30 practices that can have a major affect on the safety of patients

in health care settings. Leaps one, two and three (listed above) are included among these 30 practices. The other 27 practices—including communication among workers, doctor/patient communication and infection prevention—form the fourth leap.

Recognizing Hospital Progress

Hospitals across the country voluntarily share information about their progress toward implementing the recommended safety practices by completing the Leapfrog Group’s Hospital and Quality Survey. The following tables highlight several Minnesota hospitals that have made significant progress on implementing the four leaps. ●

Leap 1—Computer Physician Order Entry (CPOE)

Hospital requires doctors to use computerized physician order entry systems or CPOE systems. CPOE systems used to order prescription medication and laboratory and imaging tests can greatly reduce the risk of prescription and text errors.			
Fully implemented:			Good progress toward implementing:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbott Northwestern Hospital Buffalo Hospital Fairview Ridges Hospital First Care Medical Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hennepin County Medical Center Mercy Hospital New Ulm Medical Center Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regions Hospital United Hospital Unity Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Madelia Community Hospital Mayo Clinic – Rochester Methodist Mayo Clinic – St. Mary’s Meeker County Memorial Hospital

Leap 2—Intensive Care Unit Physician Staffing

Hospital has an Intensive Care Unit (ICU) that is managed or co-managed by specially trained physicians called “intensivists” who staff the ICU during daytime hours. Numerous studies have shown that ICUs staffed by critical care physicians, that take care of patients at least eight hours per day, have lower death rates and shorter ICU stays for patients.			
Fully implemented:		Good progress toward implementation:	Good early stage implementation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children’s Hospital – Minneapolis Children’s Hospital – St. Paul Fairview Ridges Hospital Gillette Children’s Hospital Mayo Clinic – St. Mary’s 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Memorial Hospital Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital Regions Hospital United Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> University of Minnesota Medical Center 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abbott Northwestern Hospital Immanuel St. Joseph’s Hospital Mercy Hospital Riverwood Healthcare Center

Leap 3—Evidence-based Hospital Referral (EHR)

Hospital has proven outcomes or extensive experience with specific high-risk procedures/conditions. Studies show that the more experience a hospital has performing a specific surgery, the less likely the patient is to be the victim of a preventable medical mistake.

These eight procedures are:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) Coronary artery bypass graft | 3) Abdominal aortic aneurysm repair | 5) Pancreatic resection | 7) Aortic valve replacement |
| 2) Coronary angioplasty | 4) Esophagectomy | 6) Bariatric surgery | 8) High-risk delivery |

Hospitals that have implemented one or more of the eight high-risk procedures:	Procedures that have been fully implemented:	Procedures that have good progress toward implementing:
• Abbott Northwestern Hospital	4, 5, 8	2, 6
• Children's Hospital – Minneapolis	8 (hospital does not perform 1-7)	
• Children's Hospital – St. Paul	8 (hospital does not perform 1-7)	
• Cuyuna Regional Medical Center		6 (hospital does not perform 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8)
• Fairview Southdale Hospital		2, 6 (hospital does not perform 8)
• HealthEast St. Joseph's Hospital		1, 6, 7 (hospital does not perform 8)
• Hennepin County Medical Center	8	1, 2, 6, 7
• Mayo Clinic – Rochester Methodist	5 (hospital does not perform 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7)	
• Mayo Clinic – St. Mary's	4, 5	3, 6, 8
• Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital	6 (hospital does not perform 8)	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
• Regions Hospital		5, 6, 7 (hospital does not perform 8)
• St. Joseph's Area Health Services	6 (hospital does not perform 1, 2, 3, 7, 8)	
• United Hospital		6, 7, 8
• Unity Hospital	6 (hospital does not perform 1, 2, 5, 7, 8)	
• University of Minnesota Medical Center – Minneapolis Campus		1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8

Leap 4—National Quality Forum Safe Practices

In 2003, the National Quality Forum (NQF) released its Safe Practices Consensus Report identifying 30 practices that can have major impact on the safety of patients in health care settings. Leaps one, two and three are included among these 30 practices. The other 27 identified practices form the fourth Leap.

Fully implemented:	Good progress toward implementation:	Good early stage implementation:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbott Northwestern Hospital • Cambridge Medical Center • Children's Hospital – Minneapolis • Children's Hospital – St. Paul • Fairview Northland Medical Center • HealthEast St. John's Hospital • HealthEast St. Joseph's Hospital • HealthEast Woodwinds • Madelia Community Hospital • Mayo Clinic – Rochester Methodist • Mayo Clinic – St. Mary's • New Ulm Medical Center • Park Nicollet Methodist Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regions Hospital • St. Luke's Hospital • United Hospital • Unity Hospital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo Hospital • Fairview Ridges Hospital • Fairview Southdale Hospital • Hutchinson Community Hospital • Mercy Hospital • Northfield City Hospital • Owatonna Hospital • Phillips Eye Institute • Rice Memorial Hospital • Ridgeview Medical Center • University of Minnesota Medical Center – Minneapolis Campus • Worthington Regional Hospital
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Care Medical Services • Gillette Children's Hospital • Meeker County Memorial Hospital • Melrose Area Hospital • North Country Regional Hospital • North Memorial Medical Center • Northwest Medical Center • Riverwood Healthcare Center • Roseau Area Hospital and Homes • Stevens Community Medical Center • Waseca Medical Center – Mayo Health System

Not all of the results from the Leapfrog Group's Hospital Quality and Patient Safety Survey are shown in the tables above. You should also know that survey results are frequently updated. To view the most complete, up-to-date information collected by The Leapfrog Group, as well as other information about hospital performance, visit www.LeapfrogGroup.org.

Note: To be eligible for in-network coverage for hospital services, Patient Choice participants should verify that the hospital is affiliated with their selected Care System prior to receiving services.

Patient Choice Connection

Patient Choice News for Members
Fall 2007

Fiserv Health
P.O. Box 450
Pueblo, CO 81002-0450

Connection, Patient Choice News for Members, is published quarterly.

NOTE: The information provided in Connection is for general education purposes only. It should never be a substitute for medical advice from your qualified health care provider.

PUBLISHER: Medica®, in connection with its Patient Choice Program

MANAGING EDITOR: Michelle Nied

LAYOUT: Lori Lindquist

MEDICAL ADVISOR: David Player, M.D.

Copyright © 2007 Medica®

All rights reserved.

SIG 405 (10/07)

PRSR STD
US POSTAGE

PAID

PERMIT NO. 31742
MPLS MN



Commonly asked questions and answers

Q: Can I burn more calories if I run instead of walk?

A: Not necessarily. The number of calories you burn has more to do with how far you go, rather than how fast. The average adult burns about 100 calories for each mile walked. The number can vary with body weight, metabolism and a little bit with the speed of movement; but not significantly. That means you would not use up many more calories running a mile versus walking a mile. The key to burning more calories is to cover more ground.

Q: Is it safe for my one-year old to receive a flu shot?

A: Yes. The flu shot is safe for most adults and children ages six months and older. In fact, it is highly recommended for children six months to five years of age as well as:

- Anyone age 50 or older
- Pregnant women
- Anyone who has a health condition (such as diabetes or asthma) that puts him or her at risk for flu complications

■ Anyone who may pass the flu virus to others at high risk for complications

Also know that your child may need a second flu shot one month after the first shot, if he or she is between the ages of six months and eight years and has never had a flu shot. Check with your child's doctor.

For more information about flu and a listing of flu shot clinics, check the Minnesota Department of Health's Web site at www.health.state.mn.us.