

## Quarterly Newsletter to Help Explain the Benefits Provided through the HCPC

This newsletter is designed to help you understand your benefits provided through the HCPC—how they work and how to use them. This is not an SPD. Look for this newsletter during the months of January, April, July, and October.



# BAC Health Care Purchasing Coalition

April 2011

Volume 10, Number 2

In This Issue – UnitedHealthcare’s Online Tools; Pollen is in the Air; Prevent Throat Cancer; Grow Veggies in Containers

**HCPC Mission Statement:** The BAC Health Care Task Force Committee formed the HCPC so that BAC funds could use their collective strength to negotiate better rates and services with insurance carriers and to stabilize or reduce the rate of increase in health care costs for participants, and their families, without sacrificing coverage. In place since April 1, 2008, the HCPC operates in partnership with your Local Health and Welfare Fund.



## General Health

Health care benefits can be complex and confusing. Tips for staying healthy seem to change daily. UnitedHealthcare’s online tools and information resources can help you make sense of it all.

## Remembering Anne Codd



The Board of Trustees of the International Health Fund (IHF) is sad to report the death of Anne Codd, Executive Director of the International’s Health Programs and chief administrator of the IHF. Anne passed away on

March 14, 2011 after a brief illness. She was 49. A native of Ireland, Anne eventually relocated to northern California, where she served as an administrator to the BAC Local 3 California pension and health funds prior to joining the IU staff in 1993. After assuming the reins of IHF in 2002, Anne helped transform the then tiny Fund into a thriving entity with thousands of participants and significant reserves. In addition to her executive duties, Anne’s dedication to personally addressing even the most routine matters with speed and meticulous attention to detail earned the lasting respect and gratitude of plan participants. Anne was also heavily involved with the implementation of the health care reform following passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act last year. “Anne worked tirelessly to improve the health and lives of BAC members, and she will be greatly missed by all our staff, our affiliates and the IHF Board of Trustees,” said IU President and IHF Board of Trustees Co-Chair James Boland.

## Take charge of your health and wellness choices

Be proactive about your well-being. Use tools and resources on myuhc.com to:

- Learn more about your coverage.
- Look up doctors and hospitals.
- Organize your medical claims.
- Use tools that help you make decisions.
- Learn more about health conditions and treatment options that you can discuss with your doctor.
- Help improve your health with online wellness coaches and health assessments.

To access these useful tools and resources, register and create login user name at myuhc.com.

## Search for UnitedHealth Premium® physicians and facilities



Get help finding the right doctors and facilities for your needs with United Healthcare Premiums® designation program. Designated physicians and specialty centers have met guidelines for providing quality and cost efficient care. All you have to do is look for the stars on myuhc.com to find a doctor that is right for you.

- **Two Stars: Quality and Cost Efficiency.** A doctor has met quality of care guidelines as well as guidelines for providing cost efficient care.
- **One Star: Quality of Care.** A doctor has met quality of care guidelines by following evidence-based medical standards and practices.

### To use the UnitedHealth Premium program:

- Go to myuhc.com, and click on Find a Physician or Facility. Look for the star designations in your search results.
- Or visit MyCoiceNotChance.com for a free interactive guide. Learn how to use the Find a Physician or Facility search tool. Find out how the program evaluates and designates physicians.



## Aaa-choo! Is pollen pestering you?

From longer days to budding blooms, spring is often thought of as a sweet, promising season. But, it can also be the beginning of some pretty unpleasant, even miserable, symptoms for millions of Americans with pollen allergies- or seasonal allergic rhinitis.

It is often when they start to sneeze, sniffle and rub their itchy eyes.

### It's in the air

Trees tend to produce pollen in the early spring. Grasses and weeds generally add their share to the air in summer and fall. Pollen season starts later the further north one goes. And, in warmer places it can be year-round.

Pollen's mission is to pollinate other pants. But, it often finds its way into human noses and throats- triggering an allergic response.

If you're sneezing and sniffing, you might think you've caught a cold. But, if you have coldlike symptoms that last for more than a week, see your doctor to help determine the cause. Pollen- or other allergies or conditions- may be to blame.

### Play defense

If pollen's the problem, it's difficult to escape entirely. But you can take steps to minimize your exposure:



## NurseLine and Live Nurse Chat

NurseLine® and Live Nurse Chat services can help you make smart health care decisions with immediate access to experienced registered nurses. You can:

- Find a doctor
- Understand treatment options that you can discuss with your doctor
- Seek answers to medical questions
- Locate available resources

To talk to a Nurseline nurse, call the customer care number on the back of your I.D. card. Or if you prefer talking to a nurse online, log in to [myuhc.com](http://myuhc.com) to access Live Nurse Chat.

(UnitedHealthCare, 2011)



## Your heart health and cancer awareness

### 2 habits send throat cancer risk soaring

Using tobacco and alcohol puts a person at dramatically higher risks of cancer of the throat and mouth.

Facts that help tell the tale, from the National Cancer Society:

- Cancers of the throat and mouth make up 3 to 5 percent of all cancers in the United States.
- Most of those cancers- 85 percent- are linked to tobacco use. And it is not just smokers at risk- this

- Keep windows and doors in your home and car closed. If possible use air conditioning- it cleans the air. Avoid window fans.
- Pay attention to area pollen counts- and if you can, avoid being outdoors when levels are high.
- Ask somebody else to cut your grass, if possible.
- If you must be outdoors, wear a pollen-filtering mask. When you come in, take a bath or shower, wash your hair and change your clothes.

For more relief, your doctor may advise antihistamines, eye drops or a nasal steroid spray. Take your medication as directed.

If symptoms persist, you may be referred to an allergist. Check your benefits plan to see what services may be covered.

Discover more information and resources at [myuhc.com](http://myuhc.com).

(Weese, UnitedHealthCare, 2011)

## Good food for better health



### Short on space? Grow veggies in containers

Who says you need green acres to grow your own veggies? Many varieties can flourish on a patio or a porch- or even in a window box.

And, what you harvest can help you get your daily dose of nutritious, colorful produce. Examples of plants that do well in containers:

includes smokeless tobacco, too.

- Alcohol use, particularly heavy drinking, also increases the risk of these cancers.
- People who combine these two habits have the highest risk of all. In fact, according to some reports, people who smoke *and* drink may be up to 100 times more likely to get these types of cancers than those with neither habit.
- Men are four times more than likely to get throat cancer. That's largely because tobacco and alcohol abuse is more common in men than women.

## Protect yourself

The best way to prevent throat and mouth cancers is to avoid all types of tobacco. Even secondhand smoke can increase your risk of these types of cancer.

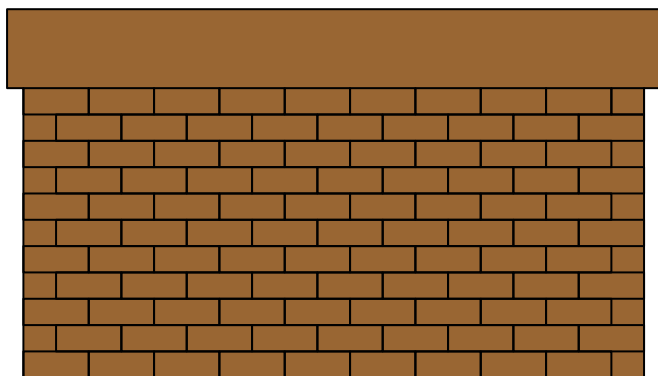
People who choose to drink alcohol should do so in moderation. That means no more than one drink a day for women and no more than two drinks a day for men.

If you are having trouble giving up tobacco, talk with your doctor. He or she can help you find the resources you need to quit for good. If you think you're drinking too much, discuss that with your doctor, too.

(Rosen, UnitedHealthCare, 2011)

## Need more reasons to quit smoking?

Discover more information and resources at [myuhc.com](http://myuhc.com). Click Health & Wellness > Conditions A to Z > Smoking.



- Tomatoes
- Eggplant
- Peppers
- Lettuce
- Spinach

### Contain yourself

Ready to plan your plot? Keep these basic tips in mind:

**Give roots their space.** If a pot's too small, a plant may not thrive. A roomier container will provide more water and nutrients. For top-heavy plants, such as tomatoes, choose sturdy, heavy pots that won't tip over.

**Allow for drainage.** There should be a drain hole in the bottom of each pot. Make one, if necessary.

**Start with good soil- and seedlings.** Select a light, fluffy potting mix. Fill containers to the rim. Beginners may want to start with young plants- ready to go from a nursery. If you're feeling more ambitious, you might grow your own seedlings. Plant seeds in pots indoors. Once the young plants are big enough, move them to your containers.

**Feed and water your crop.** You can add a time-released fertilizer to the soil. But, applying a liquid one- at least monthly- may be better. Containers may need daily watering- particularly in dry weather.

Have more questions? The garden gurus at your local nursery or county extension office can provide advice. You can also learn more about starting your garden from:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov). Search for "spring seedlings" or "gardening safety."
- Federal Citizen Information Center, [www.pueblo.gsa.gov](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov). Search for "gardening."

(Polk, UnitedHealthCare, 2011)

**Recent and Upcoming Hospital Additions to  
United Healthcare Group Network**

Hospital/System Name	<i>Location</i>	<i>Effective Date</i>
Interfaith Medical Center	Brooklyn, NY	1/1/2011
Cannon Memorial Hospital	Pickens, SC	2/1/2011
Scotland Memorial Hospital	Lariburg, NC	2/1/2011
St. Luke's Hospital	Columbus, NC	2/1/2011
CH Hospital of Allentown	Allentown, PA	2/15/2011
Edgerton Hospital and Health Services	Edgerton, WI	4/1/2011
Viera Hospital	Viera, FL	4/15/2011
St. Francis Medical Center	Grand Island, NE	5/1/2011

Reminder: You are responsible for verifying their Physician/Provider participation within your United Healthcare plan in order to receive the highest level of benefits in network

