

Back-to-School Homework: Get Vaccinated, Get Boosted

Kids across the country are groaning about returning to school in just a few weeks as parents are scrambling to get their kids ready for back-to-school. Part of that back-to-school readiness should include health screenings and getting boosters and vaccinations. Boosters and vaccinations usually come in waves—entering kindergarten/1st grade, entering 6th grade and entering 11th grade.

- The kindergarten/1st grade round of boosters/vaccines typically includes: MMR (measles, mumps, rubella), chickenpox, DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis) and polio.
- The 6th grade round typically includes a Tdap booster (similar to DTaP but for older kids), a first meningococcal vaccine, and a recommendation for the HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccine.
- The 11th grade round typically includes the second meningococcal vaccine.

You should also confirm that your child's flu and Covid vaccines/boosters are up to date. And, if you have a college kid who might be studying abroad, he/she might need special vaccines or boosters to protect against diseases less commonly found in the U.S, such as cholera, yellow fever, typhoid and hepatitis A. Refer to documentation from the study abroad program to determine what your child may need.



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Back to school is also a great time for regular health screenings such as annual physical exams and hearing screenings and vision screenings (both of which can be performed in a pediatrician's office).

Don't forget that all regular vaccinations and doctors' visits for all plan participants are covered by our EWTF Health Plan.



**Learn more by visiting
Child Wellness Visits and
Examinations: [https://
www.ewtf.org/health-
benefits-spd/your-medical-
benefits/#understanding-your-
medical-benefits](https://www.ewtf.org/health-benefits-spd/your-medical-benefits/#understanding-your-medical-benefits).**



SCAN this QR code to access
all of the valuable links
mentioned in this issue of
Through the Wire.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act, better known as HIPAA, and even better known as the form you sign at the doctor's office protecting your medical privacy, can also keep you from knowing important medical information about your child. If you have a child who has turned 18 which is considered a legal adult, neither the EWTF nor medical providers (including hospital emergency rooms!) can share medical information about your child unless your child has signed a HIPAA release form granting permission for their medical information to be shared with you even if your child still lives with you and is covered by your health insurance. That means, that if your child has been in an accident and is transported to the hospital, that hospital cannot give you any information on the condition of your child. What's more, if your child has not signed a medical power of attorney form, you as the parent cannot make any medical decisions about your child, should decisions be needed.



There are websites that offer legal services providing HIPAA release forms (for the release of medical information) and medical power of attorney forms (to grant permission for you as the parent to make medical decisions on your child's behalf). **Mama Bear Legal Forms** is an easy-to-use site that offers all legal forms a young adult may need. You could

also search online for your state's forms. Be sure to have the forms accessible—filed away at home and even scanned and saved to your smartphone—in the event you may need to present them.

Hopefully you will never need these forms, but in the event of an emergency you will be prepared.



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KIDS' CORNER



WORD SCRAMBLE

This year, Labor Day, the day to honor the achievements of America's working men and women, will be celebrated on September 1. Did you know that union members have always led the way in fighting for and protecting workers' rights.

You can form 276 words just by using the letters in the words

LABOR UNION

How many words can you make?

See the Difference Between a Screening and an Exam

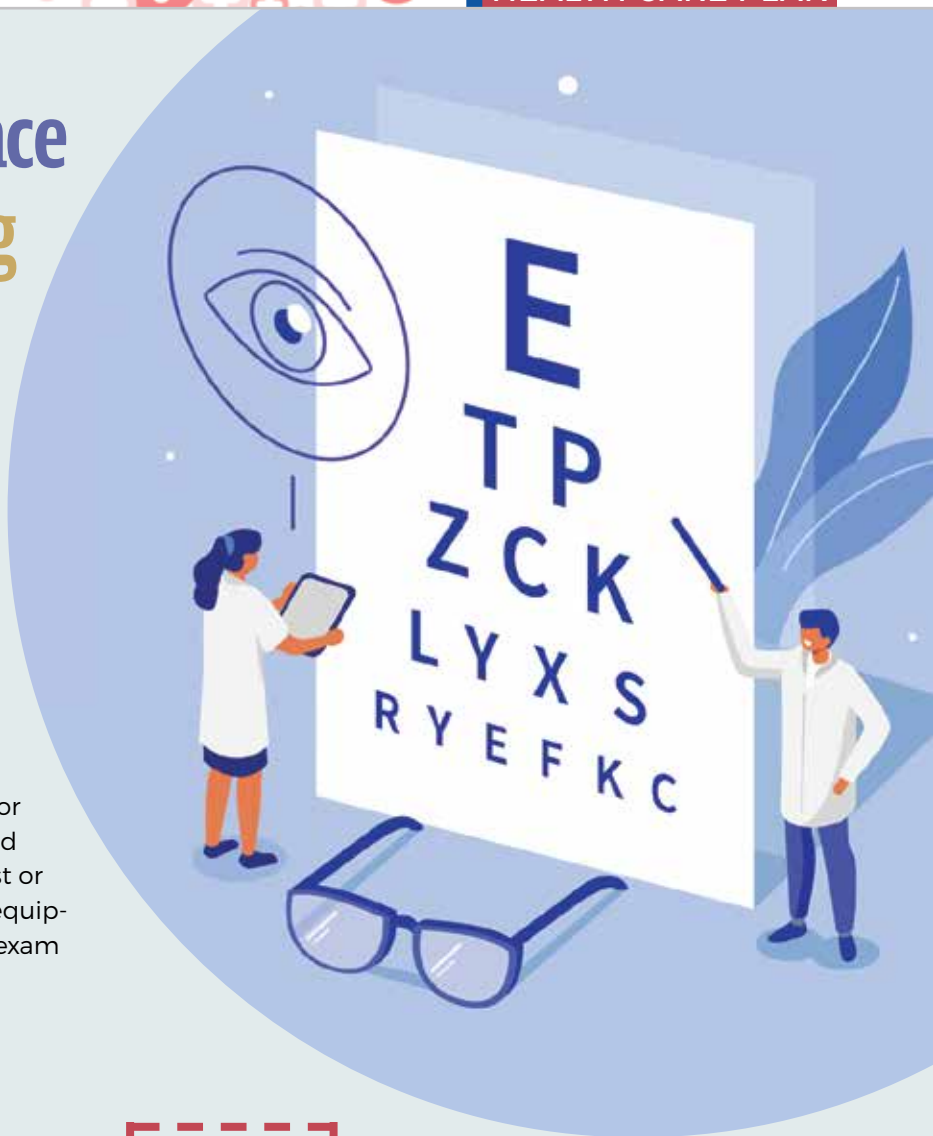
To be crystal clear, not all vision tests are equal. Do you know the difference between a vision screening and an eye exam? A vision screening is a basic test to detect eye or vision issues and can be done in a physician's office or even by a school nurse or other health care provider. It can be done quickly and without any special equipment. If problems are detected through a vision screening, a recommendation to see an ophthalmologist will be made.

An eye exam, on the other hand, not only screens for vision acuity but also exams the eye for diseases and overall eye health. It is conducted by an optometrist or ophthalmologist and includes high-level medical equipment taking an in-depth look into the eye. An eye exam can diagnose:

- ❑ Age-related macular degeneration
- ❑ Amblyopia (lazy eye)
- ❑ Cataracts
- ❑ Convergence insufficiency, which prevents eyes from working together
- ❑ Diabetic retinopathy, which is damage to the retina
- ❑ Glaucoma
- ❑ Refractive errors, such as blurred vision, nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism
- ❑ Strabismus (crossed eyes)



Visit <https://www.ewtf.org/health-benefits-spd/vision-benefits/> to learn more about your EWTF Vision Plan benefits.



The EWTF Vision Benefits, administered by VSP, offers plan participants a vision exam and vision analysis once each calendar year at no charge if conducted by a VSP provider. If lenses for glasses are prescribed, they are covered at 100% of the allowable charge once per calendar year and new frames have a \$150 allowance every two calendar years. Contact lenses are covered up to \$100 once every two calendar years. Exceptions are made for prescriptions that change before eligibility for new lenses, frames or contacts and additional benefits such as progression lenses, light-reactive lenses and anti-glare lenses are also afforded to Plan participants when using a VSP provider.



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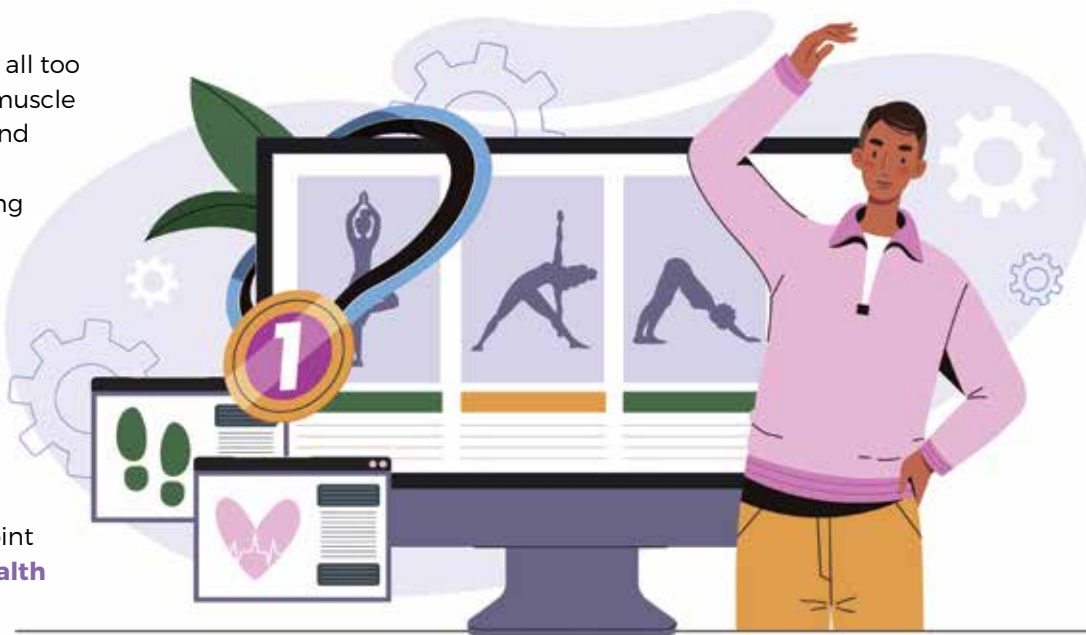
YOUR
HEALTH CARE PLAN

protecting your family

Give Pain the Boot

Construction workers are all too familiar with joint and muscle pain. The heavy lifting and pulling, crouching in tight spaces and constant bending are not easy on the body. But, just because you experience this pain doesn't mean you have to live with this pain.

The EWTF's newest health plan partner—your newest health plan benefit—can help you mitigate joint and muscle pain. **Hinge Health is a digital exercise therapy program available at no cost to all EWTF Plan participants. Through Hinge Health participants have access to licensed physical therapists and a health coach and care team. No doctor's referral is required and same day appointments are available.**



Gentle exercises and one-on-one support can be just what your muscles and joints need to keep you living your best life!

Hinge Health can help you get back to working—and living—without pain!



**Check out Hinge Health at
<https://www.hingehealth.com>.**