

HeartBeat

NEWS AND UPDATES

Winter 2011



Working together for your health

A publication for Healthy San Francisco participants

WHY TAKING CARE OF

Whooping Cough is Important



In California this year, whooping cough has already caused the death of babies, some younger than six months old. Adults who are around babies need to know about whooping cough, also known as pertussis. Anyone can get the infection because it spreads when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. People with whooping cough also experience coughing attacks that end with a high "whoop" sound. While children and adults may feel like they have a bad cough and cold, babies can develop pneumonia and experience seizures and brain damage.

See your doctor if you are pregnant, are around babies or have been in contact with someone who has been infected with whooping cough. Whooping cough can be very dangerous, but there are ways to protect yourself and your loved ones. Visit your doctor to learn more about the following:

VACCINES The Tdap vaccine is available for young people, adults and pregnant women. Adults age 65 or older should get the shot as well.

ANTIBIOTICS Get them from your doctor early. They can help ease symptoms and stop the infection from spreading to others.

PREVENTION Stop spreading germs. Practice washing your hands often, covering your coughs and staying home when you're sick.

LOVE YOUR HEART



February may be a time for showing love with valentines and candy but the American Heart Association wants to remind you that it's also a time to take care of your heart. Unchecked, cholesterol and blood pressure can reach dangerous levels that can lead to a heart attack or stroke. To avoid the danger zones for both conditions, make a greater effort to show love to your heart this month by doing the following:

- Eat healthy foods that are low in fat and salt
- Exercise more
- Follow your doctor's advice
- Quit smoking
- Limit alcohol intake



Healthy Blood Pressure 140/90 • Borderline or hypertension 140-160/90-95 • High Blood Pressure 160/95



Welcome to *HeartBeat*, your *Healthy San Francisco* newsletter

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As another winter arrives, Healthy San Francisco wants you to stay healthy during flu season. In this issue, we provide the details on what you need to know when it comes to whooping cough and the flu and the importance of being vaccinated.

Colds and the flu are spread by germs passed from one person to another through the air or by human contact. In this issue we talk about germs, the "five-second rule" and the benefits of getting vaccinated for the winter.

Drinking water not only keeps you hydrated, but helps you stay healthy. Many of us buy bottled water, which is convenient, but not all bottles are the same. We discuss which bottles are safe and good for the environment. Also, read our healthy household tips and learn how cleaning with baking soda can create a healthy environment at home.

In this issue, we outline the care your Healthy San Francisco Medical Home provides, when you should call us, and when you should contact your Medical Home. For example, you should call your Medical Home for check-ups, prescription medications and care for ongoing health issues.

As a doctor, patient, advocate and health director who has worked on efforts to ensure that everyone has access to health care, I'm excited about federal health care reform and the opportunity it provides to the millions of Americans and thousands of San Franciscans who do not have health insurance. In this issue, we provide information on the federal health care reform both nationally and locally.

Never forget that we're in this together – working together – for your health.

Mitchell Katz, M.D.
Director of Public Health

***P.S. Never forget that we're in this
together – working together – for your health.***

**Healthy San Francisco is proud to announce
that we are now providing health care services to over 55,000
participants. Thank you for being a part of our program and we look
forward to providing care to you and even more of the uninsured in
the coming year.**

Endorphins: That Feel-Good Feeling

**EVER WONDER WHY SOME PEOPLE LIKE TO EXERCISE?
The answer may be endorphins.**

Endorphins are known as the body's natural pain relievers. Studies show that activities such as jogging or bike riding release endorphins that reduce stress and help deal with pain. This process makes us want to continue with the activity even though it makes parts of our bodies feel sore. Endorphins also help to reduce stress and anxiety and may help to take away the blues.

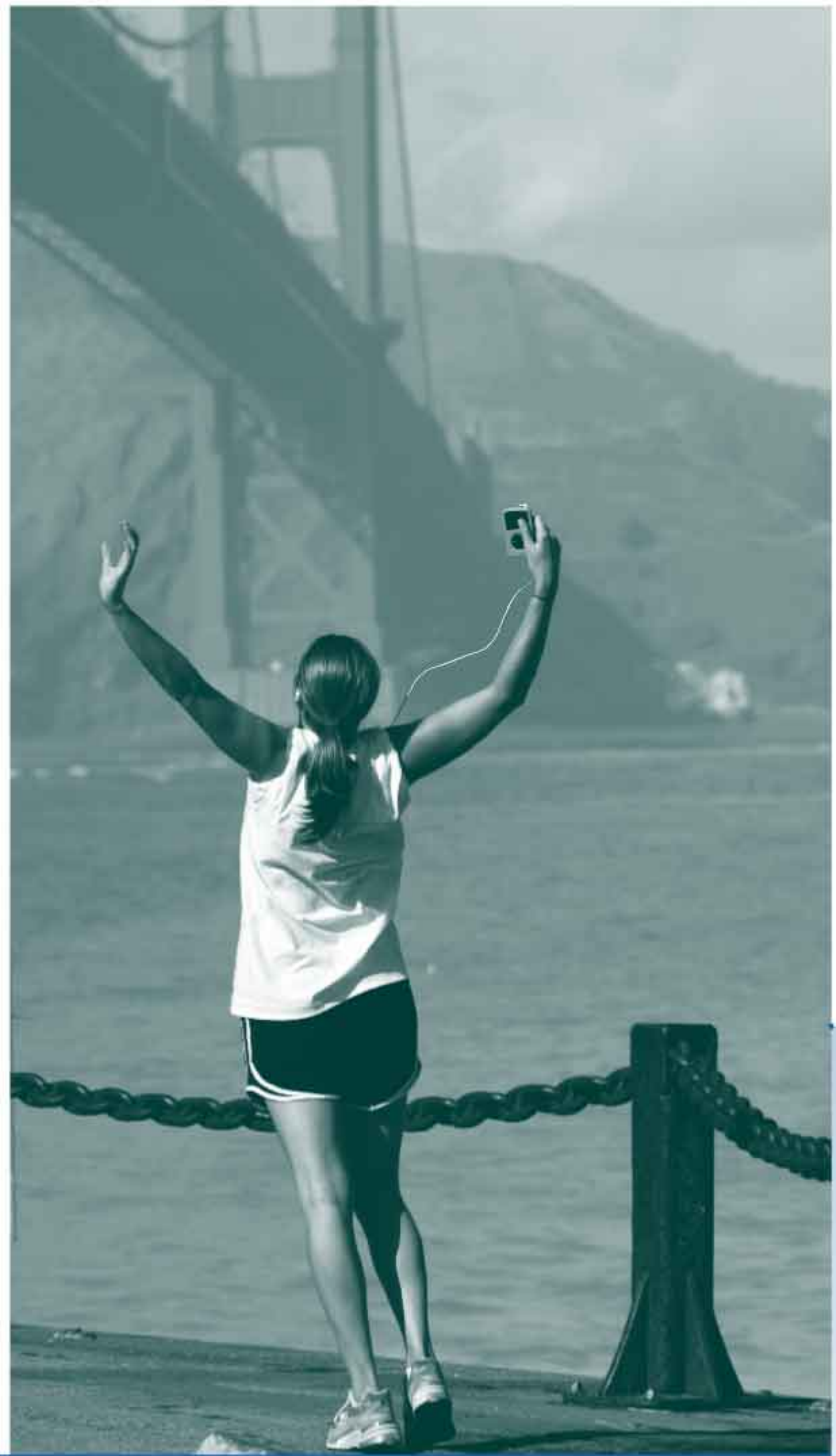
This "feel-good" chemical is produced in the nervous system. Nerves connecting the various parts of the system work together to send messages to the brain. In the brain, endorphins work together with areas that are responsible for blocking pain and controlling emotion.

Here are few things you can do to release endorphins and increase your mood.

- Exercise
- Eat something spicy
- Think positive thoughts
- Spend some time in the sun

A great walk can be great exercise too, Try:

- The Filbert Steps
- Across the Golden Gate Bridge
- Through the Golden Gate Park
- Along the cable car lines
- Through Chinatown
- Along the Embarcadero



The Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Program

Thanks to the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, people with pre-existing conditions who have not had health insurance in the past six months may qualify for insurance. The Pre-Existing Condition Insurance Program (PCIP) is a new program in California that will give many Healthy San Francisco Participants the opportunity to get insurance even if they already have a health problem.

Healthy San Francisco is available to all eligible San Francisco residents, but it is not insurance. Right now, Healthy San Francisco Participants are only able to receive health services in San Francisco. PCIP offers coverage throughout the state of California. Participation in the program will not prevent you from enrolling in PCIP.

To learn more about this new opportunity, call PCIP at (877) 428-5060 weekdays from 8:00am to 8:00pm and Saturdays from 8:00am to 5:00pm. Visit www.pcip.ca.gov for more information.





BE RESPONSIBLE, GET VACCINATED!

If you think vaccines are just for children, you're wrong. In fact, everyone needs to get shots to stay healthy and to keep others healthy as well. When it comes to vaccines for the flu and whooping cough (pertussis), it's important to know the facts.

WHO SHOULD GET THE FLU VACCINE?

Everyone six months or older. Pregnant women, adults 65 years or older and people with certain medical problems should get their shots when a new vaccine is available. If you're afraid of shots, ask your doctor if the nasal spray vaccine is right for you.

WHAT IS WHOOPING COUGH?

Whooping cough is an infection that attacks the respiratory (breathing) system. It comes with cold-like symptoms such as sneezing and coughing, which can spread to others. This can be very dangerous for infants.

WHAT'S THE VACCINE FOR WHOOPING COUGH CALLED?

Children should get the DTaP vaccine and adults (especially those who are around children) should get the Tdap booster every 10 years. Both vaccines also protect against tetanus and diphtheria.

In Case of an Emergency...

Emergencies can happen to anyone. You might be having a medical emergency if you're having:

- **Difficulty breathing and/or shortness of breath**
- **Chest or upper stomach pain, or feel pressure in your chest**
- **Fainting, sudden dizziness or weakness**
- **Uncontrolled bleeding**
- **Vomiting or diarrhea**
- **Thoughts that you want to hurt yourself or others**

If you think you're having an emergency, call your medical home first. If you feel that your situation may be life-threatening, dial **9-1-1** or go to a nearby hospital.

The closest hospital to my neighborhood is not partnered with my Medical Home. What should I do?

The hospital treating you may offer free or reduced-cost emergency care. Depending on which San Francisco hospital you go to, your income and assets may qualify you for no-fee or reduced-fee services.

What if I need an ambulance?

Healthy San Francisco will pay for ambulance transport within San Francisco. This service is only offered in the case of a life-threatening emergency.



Healthy Household Tips *Non-Baking Uses* FOR BAKING SODA

Baking soda isn't just for cooking. While store-bought cleaning products can do the job, they can harm your health and the environment. Try baking soda as a non-toxic solution for common household problems.

- **Clean fresh fruits and vegetables**
- **Give your dog a dry bath**
- **Put out small kitchen fires (call 9-1-1 in case of an emergency)**
- **Clear foggy car headlights**
- **Clean tile grout (add water)**



National Health Reform

IT'S GOOD FOR YOU

Last year, President Obama signed into law a national health care reform bill that will help millions of Americans get health insurance – including some *Healthy San Francisco* Participants. Keeping up with all the changes can be difficult.

Some parts of the health care reform law began this past September.

Young adults up to the age of 26 can now stay on their parents' health insurance. Before, young adults needed to find their own health insurance and this increased the number of people without it. *Healthy San Francisco* Participants under the age of 26 who have parents with health insurance should see if that coverage can be extended to them.

Before the health care reform law, many Americans with pre-existing medical conditions had a difficult time getting health insurance.

Now, insurance companies cannot deny insurance to children with pre-existing medical problems.

For adults with pre-existing medical problems, the government has given

funds to states including California to create their own health insurance programs.

Inside you will find information on California's new program that provides health insurance for adults with pre-existing medical conditions.

The program is called the Pre-existing Conditions Insurance Program (PCIP) and it has begun taking applications. *Healthy San Francisco* Participants who qualify may be eligible for this new health insurance program.

Most parts of the new health care law will not take effect until January 2014.

That date is closer than it sounds and we want to make sure that



our *Healthy San Francisco* Participants are prepared. The State of California launched a new website to help keep you informed. Go to www.healthcare.ca.gov and continue to read our *HeartBeat* for updates on all the health care reform changes.

For *Healthy San Francisco* Participants who are not sure about their health care, stay enrolled and renew on time!



The New Five-Second Rule

Chances are that you've picked a piece of food off the ground within five seconds. According to a study, you can probably wait a little longer before bacteria sets in and spoils your food. Although research shows that wet foods may collect germs quicker than dry foods, doctors advise to apply another rule: rinse it before you eat it.



Bottled Water Safety

Water bottles provide an easy and convenient way to drink water. But while a single-use bottle of water can quench thirst when you're on the go, chemicals in the plastic may be harmful to your health and can pollute the environment. While you may not want to give up your water bottle, there are some things you can try to stay healthy and help the environment:

- Use a stainless steel bottle and fill it with filtered tap water
- Keep your plastic bottles in areas that are cool
- Don't reuse germmy plastic bottles



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KEEP YOURSELF COVERED

As a Healthy San Francisco Participant, you must renew your enrollment each year. We'll remind you when it's time to renew by sending a letter to the address you provided when you last enrolled. If you've moved, please call Customer Service at **(415) 615-4555** to update your information.

Once you receive your notice, you must schedule an appointment to meet with us.

Remember to bring the following:

- **Picture ID (Driver's License or passport)**
- **Proof of address (rental agreement, lease or utility bill)**
- **Proof of income (recent pay stubs or tax returns for everyone living at your address)**
- **Proof of assets (bank statements)**

It's important that you schedule your appointment as soon as we notify you by mail. If you don't meet with us before your enrollment expires, you will no longer receive services from *Healthy San Francisco*.

For more information about renewing your benefits, visit www.healthysanfrancisco.org.



Eating Healthy on the Web

More and more people are getting their health information from the internet. While your doctor is the best source of advice for your health, the internet is quite useful when it comes to nutrition information. You can find delicious recipes to prepare for you and your family and you can even look up nutrition information on some of your favorite foods.

Check out these popular nutritional websites.

CDC – FRUITS & VEGGIES MATTER:
www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

MEALS MATTER:
www.mealsmatter.org

FEELING GOOD PROJECT:
www.sfdph.org/dph/comupg/oprograms/MCH/FeelingGood.asp

