



NEWS

from the Consumer Health Action Network

October 2007

Convenient Care Clinics – What they are and where to find them

Convenient Care Clinics are health care clinics located in large retail stores, supermarkets and pharmacies that treat everyday illnesses and provide preventative health care services. They are sometimes called “**retail health clinics**” or “**walk-in clinics.**” Anyone can walk in without an appointment and get medical treatment at reasonable prices. You don’t have to have insurance coverage. Usually they post a list of services and prices, and are open some nights and weekends.

When SHOULD I use a convenient care clinic, instead of the hospital or a doctor’s visit? Convenient Care Clinics are available to treat problems that may require medical attention, but are not life threatening. Minor burns, flu and cold symptoms, earaches, sore throats, small fevers, allergies, and pinkeye are examples of some conditions which are treated at convenient care clinics. Other services include immunizations, flu shots, and blood pressure tests.

When should I NOT use a convenient care clinic? Walk-in clinics are not a substitute for a doctor or hospital! If someone has a life threatening medical emergency, **do not** take them to a clinic. You should call 911 or go immediately to the emergency room for serious medical problems. These clinics are not suited to treat serious problems such as life-threatening injuries, major burns, childbirth, drug overdose or other poisoning, or severe chest pain and shortness of breath.

CVS Pharmacies’ “Minute Clinics” have nine locations in Connecticut. The clinics are open weekdays from 8:00am – 8:00pm, and on the weekends from 10:00am – 4:00pm. No appointments are necessary. Current locations are located within CVS pharmacies:

279 Boston Post Road
Orange, CT

22 Depot Hill Road
Southbury, CT

593 Newfield Avenue
Stamford, CT

358 West Main Street
Avon, CT

3514 Main Street
Coventry, CT

690 Wethersfield Avenue
Hartford, CT

323 Cromwell Avenue
Rocky Hill, CT

1240 Farmington Avenue
West Hartford, CT

219 Broad Street
Windsor, CT

If you would like more information on the CVS Minute Clinic’s, you can call them directly toll-free at 1-866-389-2727, or call us toll-free at 1-888-873-4585 for information about other programs in your area.

Consumer Health Action Network www.cthealthconsumer.org toll-free 1-888-873-4585

Funded by the Universal Health Care Foundation of Connecticut

If you prefer to receive this newsletter in Spanish, call us toll-free at 1-888-873-4585

New HUSKY program being designed – get your voice heard

In response to problems with the HUSKY HMOs, the state has agreed to build a new program called PCCM or Primary Care Case Management. PCCM is a different way to run HUSKY that doesn't involve HMOs at all. Consumers will have a choice of enrolling in the new program or staying in their HMO. The state plans to start the program next spring or summer in one or two places in Connecticut.

In PCCM, consumers choose a “medical home”, a doctor or clinic usually, that is responsible for coordinating all their care. Consumers will receive all their regular care from that doctor or clinic – checkups, vaccinations, regular tests, prescriptions, etc. And when they get sick, they can call their doctor or clinic for care. If they need a specialist or test that their doctor or clinic cannot perform, they will arrange for that care, get all the results, and let the patient know what to do to get well.

The state is looking for input from consumers and health care providers on how to build the program, where to start it, and how to evaluate if it's working. Please call us toll-free at 1-888-873-4585 or email us at information@cthealthpolicy.org if you have ideas or comments. The Consumer Health Action Network is on the state committee designing the program – we will make sure you are heard. There will soon be a public hearing on the program. If you are interested in testifying, let us know – we can help.

New Free Clinic Open in Bridgeport!

AmeriCares Free Clinics have opened a new clinic in Bridgeport. It is called the Weisman and is located at 115 Highland Ave. (the driveway is located at 112 Sanford Ave.). The clinic is open on Thursdays (noon-4pm) and Saturdays (8:30am-12:30pm).

AmeriCares Free Clinics provide free, quality medical care to Connecticut's uninsured who cannot afford medical care. AmeriCares has other clinics in Norwalk, Danbury, and Bridgeport. The hours and appointment policies are different for these clinics, so you should contact them if you are interested.

To be a patient, you must have no private or public health insurance (this includes HUSKY), meet income guidelines (\$34,340 for a family of three; \$41,300 for a family of four), be a resident of the area, be at least 18 years old for the Danbury and Bridgeport clinics (the Norwalk clinic will see children if they are with a parent or legal guardian), and provide photo ID. You may also be required to verify your income.



For more information on becoming a patient, you can call AmeriCares at 1-888-26-CARES (1-888-262-2737) or the new clinic in Bridgeport at (203) 333-9175.

FLU SEASON IS COMING!

The Flu is a contagious illness caused by influenza viruses, and each year in the United States over 200,000 people go to the hospital from flu complications. The best way to protect yourself and your children against the flu is to get vaccinated every year. Flu season can start as early as October, and continue through May.

Help is available!

Trying to get health care in Connecticut can be frustrating. We have tip sheets to help. Visit our website at www.cthealthconsumer.org or call us at 1-888-873-4585 to receive a copy in the mail.

Available tip sheets include:

- ✓ Ways to reduce my health care bills if I don't have insurance
- ✓ Managing hospital debt.
- ✓ Negotiating bills with a doctor's office or clinic
- ✓ I'm pregnant, now what do I do?
- ✓ Help getting dental care
- ✓ How to cut my prescription drug costs?
- ✓ What's an HSA (health savings account)? Would it help me?
- ✓ What is COBRA?
- ✓ Worker's compensation
- ✓ Medical discount cards
- ✓ Help applying for HUSKY
- ✓ Limited benefit plans
- ✓ Help for caregivers
- ✓ What are Convenient Care Clinics?
- ✓ I don't qualify for Medicare or Medicaid. What are my options?
- ✓ I'm not uninsured. So it doesn't affect me, right?

All tip sheets are available in English or Spanish. Be sure to let us know which you prefer.

• When to Get Vaccinated

October or November is the best time to get vaccinated, but you can still get vaccinated in December and later.

• Who Should Get Vaccinated

Anyone can get vaccinated, but people who are at high risk of having serious flu should get vaccinated each year, these include:

- Children ages 6 months to 5 years
- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People who live in nursing homes or other long term care facilities

Also, vaccination is recommended for people who care for or live with those at high risk for the flu, including:

- If you live with, or care for someone who has a high risk for complications from the flu
- If you live with, or care for, children less than 6 months of age
- Healthcare workers

• Can I get the flu from the shot? Are there any side effects?

You cannot get the flu from a flu shot. However, there may be some side effects of the shot.

- Soreness, redness, or swelling where the shot was given
- Slight Fever
- Aches

These usually last only 1 to 2 days. On very rare occasions flu shots can cause serious problems, like an allergic reaction. If this happens contact your doctor immediately.

• Where can I get a flu shot near me?

The vaccine is expected to be widely available this year. You can contact the American Lung Association's Flu hot line at 1-888-NO-TO-FLU (1-888-668-6358), or contact the Consumer Health Action Network at 1-888-873-4585 for more information.

Did you fill out the Member Survey yet?

Last week we sent out our annual survey to all our members. We do this every year to see what we can be doing better, and your input helps us put out the best information possible. If you haven't done so already, please take the time to fill it out and send it back to us and you will be registered to win \$50 in groceries!

If you have any questions, please give us a call at 1-888-873-4585

New Outreach Dates!

The Consumer Health Action Network is taking a Wednesday of each month to talk with people about their health care concerns and questions.

Come out and see us.

Date	Time	Location	Address
Oct 24 th	6:00 PM	Mitchell Branch, New Haven Library	37 Harrison Street in New Haven
Nov 21 st	6:00 PM	Stetson Branch, New Haven Library	200 Dixwell Avenue in New Haven



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