

# Teen Talk

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FROM THE BOSTON CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL LEAGUE'S RESOURCE CENTER



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## Happy Holidays!

The staff and peer leaders at the Center for Young Women's Health wish our friends and supporters a very happy & healthy 2015!



## Mindful Eating During the Holidays

— By Dietitian Jill



In anticipation of buffet style eating or a big sit down meal during the holidays, try your best to follow your normal meal routine including having breakfast. Trying to "save up" calories by not eating in excitement of overindulging causes spikes and drops in blood sugar. Instead, if the main holiday meal is in the early to late afternoon, try the following tips to avoid over-eating:

- Have a regular breakfast and small snack with protein, fat, fiber, and carbohydrates
- Try to remember when you're at the main meal that there will always be leftovers!
- Eating smaller more frequent meals may be beneficial so try using a smaller plate during the main event, and then have another portion a few hours later.

To help stay balanced over the holiday season, try to practice mindful eating. Mindful eating helps you to enjoy your food and notice your hunger and fullness cues. To eat mindfully, try to be completely aware of all of your senses as you eat: how does the food smell, how does it feel in your mouth, what does it look like, and how does it taste? When practicing this technique, try to avoid good vs. bad food thinking. Recognize that all foods are "good foods" if you are eating a healthy and moderate portion. This means you can enjoy your favorite slice of pie or dessert too! If the way that you eat does end up taking a detour for a few days here and there, try not to spend too much time worrying – instead focus on the celebrations with family friends during this special time of year.



**Boston Children's Hospital**  
Center for Young Women's Health

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# Training Doctors to Communicate with Teens

— By Monica

One of the most satisfying parts of my job as a peer leader at the Center for Young Women's Health (CYWH) is working at the Resident Training sessions. Under the supervision of seasoned adolescent medicine staff doctors here at Boston Children's Hospital, the CYWH peer leaders provide residents with an opportunity to practice their communication skills with teens like me, through mock interviews.

Prior to the mock interviews, the peer leaders meet with the doctor in charge of the session to discuss the character(s) we will play. The character does not reflect our personal lives, rather the character has problems that a new doctor might find challenging to discuss with a patient. If one peer leader decides to take on the role of a girl who has unprotected sex, another may choose a character that drinks alcohol on a regular basis or suffers from depression. The peer leaders try to have a range of characters that have different personalities and situations to "mix it up" and give the residents a variety of learning opportunities.

During the interview, the peer leaders who are observing the session take notes and complete an evaluation. The peer leaders and residents then discuss the outcomes. Those who were observing tell the residents what they liked about the interview and offer constructive criticism on how to enhance communication. Even though being "evaluated" sounds like an intimidating process, it's a great way to provide feedback and



help the residents discuss certain topics that can sometimes be uncomfortable or awkward to talk about, especially with teens.

When I first started participating in the Resident Training sessions, I had no idea how important these meetings were, but I've quickly realized how much these interviews mean to both the residents and the peer leaders. As a senior peer leader, my goal is to have a positive impact on the hospital's mission, which includes providing a forum where doctors can refine their interviewing skills and become better clinicians.

## Flu Shot Facts

— By Astrid

Flu season is here but it's not too late to get your flu shot. Don't let common misconceptions about the flu shot stop you from protecting yourself this flu season!

Here are the **FACTS about the Flu Shot:**

### The flu vaccine will NOT give you the flu.

The vaccine is actually an inactive form of the virus and therefore cannot transmit the flu.

### You need to get a flu shot every year.

The virus mutates almost every year, so the previous year's vaccine may not protect you from this year's flu.

### Even if you are healthy now, you still need to get the flu shot.

The flu vaccine will help protect you from certain strains of the flu, and it will also help protect others around you from getting sick.

### Allergic reactions to the flu shot are VERY rare.

These sorts of reactions are super rare. If a person has an allergic

reaction it is usually within minutes to a few hours after receiving it, and there is treatment available.

### Getting the flu is NOT better than having a flu shot.

The flu is a serious illness, especially for children and young adults who have chronic health problems such as asthma, diabetes or heart problems. Getting vaccinated is a safer choice than risking illness to obtain immune protection.

If you haven't received the flu vaccine yet, make an appointment with your primary care provider. It's your best protection! There are other ways you can protect yourself from getting sick. Wash your hands with soap and water. Make sure to cover coughs and sneezes. Avoid touching your nose and mouth and avoid contact with people who are sick.

If you have flu-like symptoms stay home from school and call your doctor. Symptoms may include: a temperature of 100°F or higher, cough or sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, headache and/or body aches, chills, and fatigue. Not everyone who has the flu has a temperature. If your symptoms are not improving, make an appointment with your health care provider.

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