

THE CONNECTION

May 2008

To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to the employee and the employer

Strawberry & Spinach Salad



Sweet local strawberries, tender spinach and a snappy dressing make up a fresh,

healthful salad.

1 lb or pkg clean spinach leaves

2 pt cleaned, sliced strawberries

1 clove minced garlic (optional)

½ cup olive oil

¼ cup raspberry vinegar

1 tsp honey

2 Tbsp Dijon mustard

Salt and pepper to taste

Place spinach and strawberries in large bowl. Whisk together remaining ingredients. Drizzle dressing over salad; toss gently.

Adapted from Oregon-berries.com

Allergies or Asthma Getting You Down?

Allergies

With nasal allergies, it's the itch that usually gets you first - in your eyes, nose and throat. Then come the sneezing, watery discharge and congestion. Nasal allergies can affect your sleep, too, making you tired during the day.

Causes

About 20 percent of PEBB members suffer from nasal allergies. Some react to pollen during spring and fall. Others react year-round when exposed to dust, animal dander or mold.

Self Care

Try to avoid your allergy triggers. For example, stay inside more — away from pollen — during spring, or clean your house more often.

Over-the-counter treatments may help. Non-drowsy antihistamines relieve the itching, sneezing and watery eyes. Decongestants help you breathe better. Saltwater drops and inhalers can soothe irritated tissues.

Seeing Your Doctor

If your symptoms or side affects are getting worse, you may want to keep a log for a few days and see your doctor. Use the log in discussing your symptoms, treatments, results and side affects.

(Continued on page 2)

oregon.gov/das/pebb



Upcoming PEBB Meeting Topics

May 13

Operations Subcommittee. Hear member suggestions on 2009 plan designs.

Please see oregon.gov/das/pebb/members.shtml for details and for guidelines on providing comment during meetings.

May 20

Executive session. Review 2009 rate quotes.

Public Meeting. Make preliminary decisions on plan renewals. Hear Operations Subcommittee report.

Connect with your Benefit Board pebb.connect@state.or.us

Voting members: *Chair*, Diane Lovell; *Vice Chair*, Sue Nelson; Peter Callero; Rocky King.; Paul McKenna; Jeanene Smith; Rich Peppers; Bret West.

Advisory members: Rep Tina Kotek; Sen. William Morrisette.

Communication Champions

If you care about benefits and have a knack for plain language, consider becoming a PEBB Communication Champion. Learn more about this volunteer opportunity: oregon.gov/das/pebb/champs.shtml.

Allergies or Asthma Getting you down

(continued from page one)

Your doctor may prescribe a prescription nasal spray. If it's not on your plan's formulary, ask if one that is would work for you, so you pay less. Use it as prescribed to make sure you get the full benefit.

Asthma

Nasal allergies can be a bother, but asthma can be life threatening. It requires daily use of medications to keep it under control.

People with asthma need an action plan developed in coordination with their provider. It helps them identify and avoid their asthma triggers and steps to follow to deal with symptoms.

See a sample asthma plan from the Oregon Asthma Resource Bank at oregon.gov/dhs/ph/asthma/resourcebank/index.shtml.

Help from Your Plan

Your medical plan offers support for chronic condition, including asthma. Check your plan's online resources to learn more about asthma causes, treatments and outcomes. The more you know about it, the better you can control it.

Calling all Opt Outs

If you opt out of medical coverage, your online benefit record may be out of date or incomplete. To make sure you get the latest updates, take these six quick steps:

1. **Log in** at <https://pebb.benefits.oregon.gov/members>.
2. Select **Update My Coordination of Benefits Information**.
3. As needed, update the information; then select **Save and Continue**.
4. Select **Update My Personal Information**.
5. As needed, update your contact information including e-mail; then select **Save and Continue**.
6. **Log out**.

Weight Watching? Share your success story



Have you found a way to keep your weight where you want it?

Share your success with other PEBB members. E-mail mystory.pebb@state.or.us. We may use it in a coming edition of *The Connection*.

Resources

PEBB

www.oregon.gov/das/pebb

Questions? inquiries.pebb@state.or.us
(503) 373-1102, (800) 788-0520

FSA orpebb.asiflex.com

EAP cascadecenters.com (800) 433-2320

Medical Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb

Providence Choice providence.org/pebb

Regence BCBSO or.regence.com/pebb

Samaritan Select samaritanselect.com

VSP (Vision Service Plan) vsp.com

Mail-order Prescriptions

PPS (Postal Prescription Service)

ppsr.com

Walgreens walgreenshealth.com

Dental Plans

Kaiser Permanente my.kp.org/nw/pebb

ODS odscompanies.com/pebb

Willamette Dental willamettedental.com

Optional Plans

Standard Insurance standard.com

UnumProvident unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb

Dependent Coverage

Graduates ready to leave the nest may be full of knowledge, but they may still need guidance on health insurance.

You can continue covering dependents age 19 to 24 in your PEBB plans if they meet conditions set in PEBB rules.

These conditions include the dependent's marital (partner), military, tax, student, residence and financial support status.

Review PEBB rules to see if your dependent meets the conditions.

When the child's coverage ends, PEBB's administrator will send a notice about continuing coverage through COBRA. This federal law allows a dependent who loses coverage through your group plan to enroll in a PEBB plan as an individual. This coverage usually runs for up to 18 months, as long as the premiums are paid.

Review the Notice of Continuing Coverage and COBRA premium rates in your benefits handbook.

Dependents no longer have valid coverage under PEBB plans at the end of the month in which they lose eligibility. Don't leave yourself open to repaying invalid claims. Remove the dependent from coverage by submitting a completed Medical and Dental Update Form (oregon.gov/das/pebb/forms.shtml) to your agency or benefits office within 60 days.

Tobacco Cessation Benefit Update

All PEBB medical plans cover these Free & Clear benefits:

- Free quit guide and unlimited phone counseling
- Free nicotine replacement therapy (patch or gum)
- \$5 bupropion (\$1 in Kaiser) or \$5 Chantix co-pay, when prescribed by your provider.

It's easy to enroll (866) 784-8454, or freeclear.com/webenroll/PEBB. Kaiser Permanente members, call Kaiser first.

