

# CF Connection

Spring 2009

University of Florida Pediatric Pulmonary Center



## Get Ready for Tax Time!

*(Please note that this information should not be taken as legally binding tax advice. If you have questions, please call the IRS at 1-800-829-1040.)*

Did you know that you may be able to use the cost of medical expenses as a tax deduction? You can do this **if the total medical costs paid by your family in a given year exceed 7.5% of your gross adjusted income in that year.** To calculate 7.5% of your gross adjusted income, multiply your income by .075. For example, if your adjusted gross income is \$35,000.00 and your medical expenses are higher than \$2,525.00, you could deduct your medical expenses. *You cannot deduct medical expenses paid by CMS, Medicaid, your insurance company, or those paid by a pre-tax medical savings account.*

If your child is the only person in your family with high medical expenses and if he or she has Medicaid or CMS, it is not likely that you will pay enough medical bills out-of-pocket to benefit from this deduction. This is because CMS and Medicaid generally cover most of the medical expenses of a child with CF. However, if

**Medical expenses are defined as** the costs of diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease, and the costs for treatments affecting any part or function of the body. They include the costs of equipment, supplies, prescription medications, and diagnostic devices needed for these purposes. They also include dental expenses. Medical expenses include the premiums you pay for insurance that covers the expenses of medical care, co-pays, and transportation costs to get medical care.

your child accrued high medical bills early in the year prior to getting on Medicaid/CMS, or if you have other family members with high medical expenses, you may qualify. Families with private insurance with high deductibles and co-pays, and families where one or more individuals has high medical expenses and no insurance are the most likely to qualify. Here are some medical expenses that you may not have considered, but which you can deduct:

*(Continued on page 2)*

### Inside this issue:

Get Ready for Tax Time	2
Super Snacks	3
Just for Teens Part 4	3
Welcome Elizabeth LeFave	3
Family Corner	4

## We Need You!

Please let us know if you have any tips or stories you would like to share. We would love to include them in our Family Corner! Send them to us at the address on page 4 or e-mail them to [hillajb@peds.ufl.edu](mailto:hillajb@peds.ufl.edu).

Thank you to Solvay Pharmaceuticals for funding the printing of this newsletter.

## Get Ready for Tax Time! (cont.)



### Medically-Related

**Transportation:** You can deduct the cost of transportation to medical appointments/hospitalizations in one of two ways. You can either keep track of and deduct mileage or you can keep track of and deduct gas and oil costs. For 2008, you can deduct 19 cents per mile for travel from January through June, and 27 cents per mile for travel from July through December. You can also deduct bus, taxi, train, and/or plane fare.



### Medically-Related Lodging:

You may be able to include in medical expenses the cost of lodging (up to \$50.00 per night, per person) related to medical care. That is, if a parent needs to stay in a motel while his/her child is hospitalized, the motel costs (up to \$50.00 per night) can be deducted. Or, if your child has to be at Shands for appointments or outpatient procedures two days in a row (but will not be hospitalized), you can deduct the cost of your/your child's motel room. You can include the cost of such lodging as long as the main reason for the trip is medical and there is no significant element of personal pleasure, recreation, or vacation in the travel away from home. Please note that meals are **not** covered.



### Medically-Related Nutritional Supplements and Extra Food to Gain Weight:

If nutritional supplements are prescribed by physicians and are prescribed as medical treatments for CF care (for example, Boost, Pediasure,

Scandishakes) you may deduct them. However, you cannot deduct the cost of nutritional supplements, vitamins, herbal supplements, "natural medicines," etc. if they are not recommended by a medical practitioner as treatment for a specific medical condition diagnosed by a physician.

You can deduct the costs of special foods (in the case of CF, this would include high-fat, high-calorie foods) if the need for the food is documented by a physician, the food alleviates or treats an illness, and the food is necessary above and beyond the needs of what would be considered a normal diet. The amount of food-related costs you can include in medical expenses is limited to the amount by which the cost of the special food exceeds the cost of a normal diet.

It is important to remember that you must keep records (receipts and documentation) for all items you are deducting.

Susan Horky, MSW, LCSW

For information about specific deductions and the kinds of records to keep, go to <http://www.irs.gov/publications/p502/ar02.html#d0e232>. You can also call the Internal Revenue Service at 1-800-829-1040.

## Super Snacks

Getting enough calories every day helps people with CF keep lungs healthy! High-calorie snacks can help. Here are some snack ideas that have about 300-400 calories each:

- ✓ Large muffin with 1 tablespoon butter
- ✓ 4 squares graham crackers with 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- ✓ 2 ounces peanuts
- ✓ Bagel with 2 tablespoons cream cheese
- ✓ 1 cup yogurt with ¼ cup granola & ½ cup fruit
- ✓ 1 cup chocolate milk with 2 cookies
- ✓ 1 cup (8 ounces) milkshake
- ✓ 8 saltine crackers with 2 ounces cheese
- ✓ Baked potato with shredded cheese & butter
- ✓ ½ cup chocolate-covered raisins
- ✓ Nachos with cheese, guacamole, & sour cream
- ✓ Large apple with 4 tablespoons caramel topping
- ✓ Small croissant with 2 tablespoons almond butter (or peanut butter)
- ✓ 2 sports (energy) bars
- ✓ 3 ounces chocolate-covered pretzels
- ✓ 2 slices of Texas Toast with cheese
- ✓ Small banana split
- ✓ ½ cup trail mix (nuts, seeds, dried fruit, chocolate candy—buy or mix yourself)

Do you have a favorite high-calorie snack you'd like to share? If so, please send to [hillajb@ped.s.ufl.edu](mailto:hillajb@ped.s.ufl.edu).

## Just for Teens Part 4: The Tech Communication Gap



It has come to my attention that people under 25 use phone technology differently than the "older" generation. I've learned that u guys only actually answer the phone if u recognize the number and wish to talk to the person on the other end; never check voicemail; but usually do check text messages.

It would be easy if ur health care team could just text u, but we can't because we are only provided with landlines...and because, honestly, lots of us don't know how to text anyway.

This is where you come in. You can help us find the middle ground! Tell us how best to get a message to u and together we can figure out how u can get to us most successfully. We (u, us) are all pretty busy people who can't answer every call instantly.

Idk, can we email? Do u check email? Could we agree to voicemail and could u program our number in so u will know it's your friendly CF team calling? We would sure love it if u would help us figure out how to get to u when we need to and if u are going to be taking over your care, it will help u too! ... k?

Cindy Capen, MSN, RN



### Welcome Elizabeth LeFave, ARNP

Elizabeth grew up here in Gainesville and she is an avid Gator fan! Elizabeth was an RN in the PICU at Shands for three years and after graduating from UF, she has worked as an ARNP in a general pediatric clinic for the past two years. She loves to travel and enjoys hitting the great outdoors with her husband. She is looking forward to getting to know you and your family!

# University of Florida Pediatric Pulmonary Center

## Family Corner

### Making the Most of Your Clinic Visit

Last time we talked about planning for your clinic visit. Bringing your meds or the names and dosages of your medications helps the Care Team know exactly what you are taking. Having questions and concerns written down, a list of things to talk about since your previous visit, and a list of prescriptions that need refills all help to provide focus in the visit and make the most of the time available.

Visits to clinic can seem very chaotic. There is never enough time for anything and the minute we leave we think of something we have forgotten to mention or to ask. If possible, discuss your visit with someone who will be able to come to the visit with you. Ask this person to be your 'secretary' and to write down any information, instructions, and advice you learn during the visit.

#### Here are some tips to make the most of your clinic visit:

- ✓ Listen to your Care Team's questions and answer them as accurately and honestly as possible.
- ✓ Keep a health care folder with educational materials, health care information, and appointment information you get at each visit.
- ✓ Review your list of questions with your Care Team. There may not be time for all of them so ask the most important questions first.
- ✓ Ask questions that may arise during the visit.
- ✓ Have written instructions to help you understand your care plan.
- ✓ Ask how you can learn about your healthcare needs.
- ✓ Believe in yourself as a patient or family member. If you feel something is wrong, share your concerns with the team.

#### Before you leave make sure you:

- ✓ understand how and when to take any new prescriptions.
- ✓ have prescriptions for refills or know who will call them in to the pharmacy.
- ✓ have enough medications to last until your next visit.
- ✓ know what tests are scheduled, why, and when they will take place.
- ✓ have a return visit scheduled.

Always remember...you and your family are an important part of your healthcare team! Be an active participant at your visit. If you have any comments about your experiences at our clinics, please let us know.

Angela Miney

Pediatric Pulmonary Center  
University of Florida  
Health Science Center  
P.O. Box 100296  
Gainesville, Florida 32610-0296

**Phone:** 352-273-8380

**Toll Free:** 1-888-4UF-SHANDS

**Fax:** 352-392-4450

#### Medical Staff:

Sarah E. Chesrown, MD,

Interim Division Chief

Mary H. Wagner, MD

Pamela Schuler, MD

Thomas A. Horsman, MD

Sreekala Prabhakaran, MD

Rafael Cilloniz, MD

Elizabeth LeFave, ARNP

#### Pharmacy:

Leslie Hendeles, PharmD

#### Nursing Staff:

Cindy Capen, MSN, RN

Rhoda Reed, SRNS

#### Nutritionists:

Ellen Bowser, MS, RN, RD

Jennifer Hillan, MSH, RD, LD/N

#### Social Worker:

Susan Horky, LCSW

#### Respiratory Care:

Shands/UF Pediatric Respiratory  
Care Team

#### Office Staff:

Brenda Martin

Tina King

Lisa Harvey

Nita Newell

#### Family Consultant:

Angela Miney—[aminey@ufl.edu](mailto:aminey@ufl.edu)