



Health Awareness

Family Health Information: Get Organized and Be Informed

(NAPSA)—Many American adults are so busy managing their daily lives that conducting important health-related tasks are often overlooked. A recent survey commissioned by Merck & Co., Inc. and conducted by Harris Interactive® found that 63 percent of surveyed U.S. adults and 75 percent of those adults living with children say day-to-day responsibilities often take priority over organizing their family's health histories and records, or learning about health conditions. In fact, the survey results indicate that just more than one third (36 percent) of all respondents feel they have the time or take the time necessary to conduct these important health-related tasks.

“Taking time now can certainly help in the long run, whether in an emergency or as preparation or follow-up to a routine physical,” said Marie Savard, M.D., internist, author and patient advocate based in Philadelphia. “When patients better understand and manage their health conditions and histories, it can help healthcare providers deliver more accurate diagnoses, ensure the best management strategies and empower patients to achieve better health and wellness.”

Dr. Savard says her most important tip is to use the Internet to find Web sites that contain health information from sources that doctors trust and that offer tools to

TIPS TO GET STARTED

1. **Take responsibility** for both your own and your family's health care by playing a more active role, forming a positive partnership with your doctor and becoming a healthcare advocate for yourself and your family.
2. Make it a priority to **know** and **understand** the **health status** and **risk factors** for you and your family using health calculators and risk assessment tools.
3. Make time to **collect, organize** and **maintain** your family's health history, immunization records, preventive test results and medications and supplements—use forms and records to help gather the right information.
4. Make time to **prepare for office visits**. Preparing questions or using prepared lists of questions to ask the doctor may help you or your family member feel more confident and informed, and help in articulating symptoms or posing health questions.
5. Take the initiative to **learn more about health**, including conditions, diseases or disorders using available Condition Guides, Health Centers or other medical references available on MerckSource.com.

* Source: Based on The Savard Health Record (Marie Savard, M.D.), some elements of which are available at www.MerckSource.com/myhealth.



help organize health records. “People often say: How can I add one more thing to my list of to-dos?” said Dr. Savard. “Today, trusted online resources, like MerckSource.com, are available to provide the organizational tools and information needed by the busy mother, father—family manager.”

MerckSource.com offers easy-to-use online medical information and provides visitors with a variety of unbiased, credible health resources and tools, including health calculators, risk assessments and health trackers, as well as printable forms to help visitors

log health records and chart family health histories. The award-winning site also features Spanish language content, 3-D images of the human body, easy access to “The Merck Manual—Home Edition” (the best-selling medical reference written in plain language by health experts for consumers) and a comprehensive overview of many medical conditions specifically relevant to men, women, children and seniors.

To access health information and tools for organizing health records and information, go to www.mercksource.com/myhealth.