Sickle Cell Disease

Tips for Healthy Living
If you have sickle cell disease, you can live a full life and enjoy the things that most other people do. These tips will help you stay as healthy as possible.

**CHECKLIST**

**Good Health Care**
- Work closely with your doctor to develop your own unique care plan
- Having a hematologist and a team of specialists is best when possible

**Healthy Lifestyle**
- Stay active
- Drink 8-10 glasses of water daily
- Eat a well-balanced diet
- Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep a night

**Prevent Infections**
- Children under 5 years old should take penicillin regularly
- Adults and children should get scheduled vaccinations, including flu shots
- Wash hands often

**TOPICS TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR DOCTOR**

**Pain Control**
- How has your pain been since your last visit?
- What do you do to control pain?

**Treatment Options**
- Can hydroxyurea help? Are there side effects to using it?
- Do you need blood transfusions?
- What lifestyle changes can you make to better manage symptoms?

**Emotional and Social Support**
- Are there people you could talk to or groups you could join?
- Discuss any fears, worries, or stresses you may be having

**EMERGENCY GUIDE:**

When to Seek Help
It’s important to have a plan to get help quickly if there is a problem. Make sure the care facility you choose can obtain your health records, or keep a copy that you can bring.

**Call 911 or seek emergency care right away for:**
- Fever above 101°F
- Difficulty breathing
- Chest pain
- Abdominal (belly) swelling
- Any sudden problem with vision
- Severe headache
- Sudden weakness or loss of feeling and movement
- Seizure
- Painful erection of the penis that lasts more than 4 hours
- Pain anywhere in the body that will not go away with treatment at home

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