One out of every eight births is preterm
Prematurity is the leading cause of perinatal morbidity and mortality in the United States.

The greatest health risk is for infants born at the earliest gestational ages. However, infants born nearer to term represent the greatest number of preterm infants and experience more complications than infants born at term.

What is Washington's preterm birth rate?
Washington State's preterm birth rate is 10.6%, among the lowest in the country, but that only earns our state a grade of C in the March of Dimes premature birth report card. The national goal for preterm birth is 7.6% of live births by 2010.

Who is most at risk for preterm birth?
Preterm birth is a complex problem with overlapping factors of influence including: individual behavioral and psychosocial factors, medical conditions, biological factors, and genetics.

Providers have no way of knowing which women will experience preterm labor or deliver their babies preterm. Identifiable factors that place a woman at higher risk for preterm labor or birth include:

- Previous preterm birth
- Shortened cervix
- Infections, such as bacterial vaginosis and trichomoniasis
- Elevated blood pressure
- Substance abuse

Many of these factors occur in combination, particularly in women who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or are members of racial and ethnic minority groups. Preterm birth is the leading cause of perinatal mortality among African Americans.

Can preterm birth be prevented?
Progesterone treatment, also known as 17 alpha-hydroxyprogesterone caproate or 17-P, when started early, has been shown to prevent or delay preterm labor and premature birth by 33% in women who are most at risk – those with a history of preterm birth (Meis, et al., 2003; da Fonseca, et al., 2003).

Will Molina Healthcare cover 17-P?
Molina Healthcare members who are currently 16-21 weeks pregnant with a single baby and a history of spontaneous singleton birth prior to 37 weeks gestation are eligible for 17-P. In certain situations, 17-P may be covered up to 28 weeks.

How do I learn more?
Our clinical staff is here to help you. To speak to a Molina Healthcare Case Manager or learn if your Molina Healthcare patient is eligible for 17-P call (425) 424-1134 or (800) 869-7175 Ext. 141134. Fax requests for prior authorization to: (800) 767-7188.