

Living Well



Health Partners Plans

SPRING 2017



You Can Feel Better

Are you finding it harder to do the things you used to do? Many people blame age and existing disabilities when they start having trouble with things like cleaning, shopping and walking. Sometimes that's true, but don't give up just yet!

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Health and wellness or prevention information

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Coping with Allergies

Allergies are no fun for anyone, but they can be dangerous for those with asthma or other health issues. Many people are allergic to things like pet dander, dust or household cleaners. In spring and summer, allergies to plant pollen can make it hard to breathe. Here are some tips to beat allergies:

- Over-the-counter drugs or nasal sprays may help, but ask your doctor or pharmacist before using them. Some may interact with other drugs you take. Others can be dangerous to people with other health issues like diabetes.
- Go to the doctor for an allergy test, so you know what you are most allergic to. Allergy shots can help reduce your reaction.
- Pay attention to the pollen count on the daily weather report. When it's high, limit your time outside.

Many people are allergic to things like pet dander, dust or household cleaners.

- Wear a hat and sunglasses outside to keep dust and pollen out of your eyes and hair.
- Put a sheet over your bed during the day to keep allergens off your blanket and pillows.
- Shower before bed to wash away allergens on your hair and skin.
- Clean or replace filters on air conditioners and vacuums to remove allergens from the air inside your home.



You can feel Better *Continued from page 1*

Tell your doctor about any new problems you're having. He or she can discuss options including medication, surgery and physical therapy. Ask what types of exercise might be right for you and then use your Health Partners Medicare fitness benefit to join a fitness center near you! (Do not begin a new exercise program without consulting your doctor.)

Problems with vision and hearing can also make daily tasks harder. Even if you don't notice a difference in your vision or hearing, get screened regularly.

Keep tabs on your health. Don't ignore new or worsening health problems. The right treatments can help you feel better now and for years to come.



Don't Suffer in Silence!

Depression Can Be Managed

Depression can make you feel sad and hopeless. There are physical signs too. Aches, pains, lack of energy and stomach problems can be signs of depression. People with depression may get sick more often. They may also have more chronic health problems like high blood pressure and heart disease.

Stress from emotionally painful events like a death in the family can lead to depression. But even happy things like retiring or moving to a new house can lead to depression.

The good news is you don't have to suffer. Depression can be managed. Your doctor may prescribe drugs called antidepressants. Keep in mind it might take some trial and error to find the right drug and dose for you. Talking to a therapist or support group can also help. You can learn ways to cope with stress and other bad feelings.

Exercise is another great way to manage depression. When you exercise, your body creates natural mood enhancers called endorphins. You don't even have to go to a gym. Just moving around more is a good start. Try walking around your neighborhood or cleaning the house.

Depression can make life hard. It can also put your health at risk. That's why it's so important to get help. For moderate depression, you may want to start with your primary care physician. If you are thinking about harming yourself, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.

**Aches, pains, lack of energy
and stomach problems can be
signs of depression.**

A Third of Adults Have One of These Conditions — Do You?



One in three American adults has one or more of these chronic conditions. Know the risks and signs. Early treatment leads to better outcomes, so don't put off seeing your doctor.



HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION)

High blood pressure is called the silent killer because you can have it for years with no symptoms. The same way you can pop a balloon by blowing too much air into it, high blood pressure damages organs and blood vessels. It can lead to stroke, kidney failure, heart problems and more. Risk factors for high blood pressure include obesity and family history. Too much salt can make it worse. So can tobacco, alcohol and stress. Have your blood pressure tested every year. Lifestyle changes and medication can bring blood pressure back to normal.



HEART DISEASE

There are several types of heart disease. Most share common risk factors such as smoking, obesity, stress, poor diet and lack of exercise. Each can lead to sudden death, but early symptoms may be mild or nonexistent. That's why regular checkups are so important.

Coronary artery disease is when the arteries in your heart fill up with a waxy substance called plaque. That causes the heart to work harder to push blood through. This can lead to a heart attack or stroke. An early warning can be angina — a squeezing pain in the chest, neck, jaw, throat, stomach or back. Heart attacks can happen with no warnings, however. That's why you should talk to your doctor about your risk.

Congestive heart failure means your heart is not pumping enough blood to meet your body's needs.

There is no cure, so you must do your best to manage it. Symptoms include fatigue, shortness of breath, and swelling in feet, ankles, legs and abdomen.

Arrhythmia is a problem with the rate or rhythm of the heartbeat. These are called palpitations, which can feel like fluttering or thumping.



CHRONIC LUNG CONDITIONS

The major chronic lung conditions, asthma and COPD, make it hard to breathe. That usually means trouble

getting air out rather than taking it in. Signs also include coughing or wheezing. Don't ignore the symptoms!

Asthma often begins in childhood, but adults can develop it too. Asthma causes acute attacks. These can be brought on by stress or irritants like smoke, dust, pollen and chemicals. Attacks can be bad enough to kill, but even mild ones can cause long-term damage. There is no cure for asthma, but it can be managed.

COPD (or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) includes emphysema and chronic bronchitis. It develops with age and worsens over time. Smoking leads to most cases, but even non-smokers can

develop COPD. Other causes are workplace exposure, air pollution and genetics. Early treatment can slow the progression of COPD and manage symptoms.



DIABETES

Your body turns food into a sugar called glucose. It makes insulin to turn glucose into energy. When you have diabetes, you have too much unused glucose in your body. This is called high blood sugar. It can damage every part of the body.

There are two types of diabetes:

Type 1 diabetes is when the body does not make enough insulin to use all that blood sugar. It usually appears in childhood, but adults can get it too. Treatment is with insulin injections and regular blood sugar testing.

Type 2 diabetes is the most common form. It develops over time. The body either doesn't produce enough insulin or the body's cells ignore the insulin (insulin resistance). Risks include obesity and family history. Symptoms include urinating often, feeling very thirsty, hunger despite eating, extreme fatigue, blurry vision and cuts/bruises that are slow to heal. Treatment may include diet and lifestyle changes, medication and regular blood sugar monitoring.

Make Your Voice heard



We want you to have the best health care experience. So do the folks at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS). That's why you may receive a survey from them this spring.

Not every member will get a survey, and some members may get more than one. Current surveys include the Health Outcomes Survey (HOS) and the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®). They will ask you about your health and satisfaction with your care.

Your responses to these surveys will influence how CMS will rate our Medicare Advantage plans and will help us serve you better. If you get a survey in the mail, please complete it. Your feedback helps us better serve you!



Recipe for Health

Green Pea Soup



Nothing says spring like green pea soup. This easy recipe can be made ahead of time and served hot or cold. It packs 10 grams of protein and a quarter of your daily fiber into just 167 calories per serving.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 medium leek (white and green parts only), finely chopped and washed
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 2 1/2 cups unsalted chicken or vegetable broth
- 1/8 tsp. white pepper
- 1 (16-oz.) package thawed frozen peas or 3 cups fresh peas
- 1/4 cup fresh thyme leaves
- 1 tsp. lemon juice
- 1/4 cup plain low-fat yogurt

Equipment:

- 1 saucepan (2 qt.)
- Knife and cutting board
- Countertop blender or immersion blender and large bowl

Directions:

- Add olive oil to a small pot or saucepan.
- Turn heat to medium and add diced leek on medium heat.
- When leek has softened, add garlic, pepper and thyme.
- Stir and continue cooking for about 30 seconds.
- Add stock and peas. Bring to a simmer and lower heat.
- Simmer for 5 minutes until peas are soft but not mushy.
- Allow soup to cool.
- Add lemon juice.
- If using an immersion blender, blend soup in pot until smooth. If using a countertop blender, ladle soup into the carafe until it's 3/4 full, replace carafe lid and blend on low until smooth. Repeat with remaining soup, using a large bowl for the blended soup.
- Serve soup cool or reheat on low heat (add extra stock if soup gets too thick).
- Add a dollop of yogurt on top of each bowl and enjoy.

Nutrition Facts

Servings: 4

Amount Per Serving: 1 cup

Calories: 167, % Daily Value*

Total Fat: 4 g, 7%	Total Carbohydrate: 23 g, 8%
Saturated Fat: 1 g, 4%	Dietary Fiber: 6 g, 23%
Monounsaturated Fat: 3 g	Sugars: 9 g
Polyunsaturated Fat: 1 g	Protein: 10 g, 20%
Trans Fat: 0 g	Vitamin A: 57%
Cholesterol: 1 mg, 0%	Vitamin C: 62%
Sodium: 701 mg, 29%	Calcium: 6%
Potassium: 254 mg, 7%	Iron: 17%

*The Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000-calorie diet, so your values may change depending on your calorie needs. Values were created using the myfitnesspal.com recipe calculator. The values here may not be 100% accurate because the recipe has not been professionally evaluated nor has it been evaluated by the U.S. FDA.

Fight Phone Scammers

Every day, people fall victim to a phone scam. From “you won a free vacation” to “you owe money to the IRS,” most of us have learned by now to just hang up.

It’s important to be careful, but not every call is a scam. Health care companies may need to ask for things like member ID, birthdate or partial Social Security number to make sure they are talking to the right person. If a caller requests these, a good option is to say you’ll talk to them later and do some research. For instance, if someone calls saying they are from Health Partners Plans or working on our behalf, you can call us at 24/7 at 1-888-477-9800 (TTY 711) and find out for sure. Remember, we’re always there for you if you are concerned about safeguarding your personal information.

You can stay one step ahead of scammers by following these tips:

- **Beware of spoofers.** Scammers can use “number spoofing” to make an organization or someone else’s name or phone number show up on your caller ID.
- **Ask, “What’s my name?”** Although being asked for by name is not a guarantee that a caller is legitimate, a caller who doesn’t know your name is almost always a scammer.



- **Never say “yes.”** Some scammers want to record you saying the word “yes” so they can claim you agreed to pay for something you didn’t.
- **Call the main number.** If someone calls saying he or she represents the government or a company you do business with, hang up, find that organization’s number by searching for it online or looking in the phone book and call them.
- **Protect vital information.** It’s not just your Social Security number or birthday anymore. Scammers want to know your birthplace, mailing address and companies you do business with.
- **Report the crime.** If you think you might have been a victim of a phone scam, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at <https://www.ftc.gov/> or call 1-877-382-4357 (TTY: 1-866-653-4261).

Notice: National Coverage Determinations

CMS sometimes changes the coverage rules that apply to an item or service under Medicare. When this happens, CMS issues a national coverage determination (NCD) to explain the change.

NCDs tell you:

- What benefits and services are covered
- What benefits and services are changing
- What Medicare will pay for these items or services

CMS has issued the following NCD:

Screening for Cervical Cancer with Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Effective Date: For services provided on or after July 9, 2015

Medicare covers a screening pelvic examination and Pap test for all female beneficiaries at 12- or 24-month intervals based on specific risk factors.

CMS has determined that the evidence is sufficient to add HPV testing once every five years as an additional preventive service benefit under the Medicare program, together with the Pap smear test for beneficiaries who are 30 to 65 years old and do not have symptoms of the virus. This change applies to services performed on or after July 9, 2015.

Health Partners Medicare will cover this service when the conditions above apply in accordance with the CMS guidance.

Help Fight Fraud, Waste and Abuse

H Health Partners Plans (HPP) prohibits all illegal or unethical conduct by members, employees and providers. Our Special Investigations Unit (SIU) works with other departments at HPP to detect, stop and prevent this type of inappropriate activity. Investigative findings are forwarded to our legal affairs department for appropriate action.

Here are some examples of illegal or unethical conduct:

- Members selling membership cards or ID numbers
- Members selling medications obtained through the program
- Members getting services or equipment not medically necessary for their condition(s)
- Employees selling HPP information

- Employees accepting money or gifts in exchange for manipulating some part of HPP's system
- Providers submitting claims for services they didn't provide or billing for more expensive services than those actually provided
- Providers providing false statements to obtain credentials (e.g., from MediCheck)
- Pharmacists paying providers kickbacks (or bribes) for referrals
- Providers paying members incentives for being their patient

To report a Compliance or Privacy incident, or to report actual or suspected Fraud, Waste, or Abuse:

- Call the HPP Hotline (you may report anonymously) at 1-866-477-4848
- Email Compliance@hppplans.com

Health Partners Medicare Now Available in More Places

Do you like your Health Partners Medicare plan? Tell your friends and family in Northampton, Lehigh and Lancaster counties. We now offer plans in these areas with the same great benefits and service our members in Southeastern Pennsylvania enjoy. While most Medicare participants must wait until October for open enrollment to change plans, people turning 65 or special needs beneficiaries can get started with Health Partners Medicare right away. To learn more, prospective members can visit www.hppmedicare.com or call 1-866-901-8000 (TTY 711).



Health Partners Medicare is an HMO plan with Medicare and Pennsylvania State Medicaid program contracts. Enrollment in Health Partners Medicare depends on contract renewal. This information is not a complete description of benefits. Contact the plan for more information. Limitations, copayments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits, premiums and/or copayments/coinsurance may change on January 1 of each year.



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