

Community
HealthChoices

 pa health
& wellness™

WHOLE
you

2023 | Q1 BULLETIN



Welcome!

As we once again enter into a new year, we welcome you to another edition of Whole You, a newsletter from PA Health & Wellness.

We hope this newsletter finds you well. We have plenty of helpful tips inside to start the new year strong. We really hope you enjoy this edition and that it helps you take better care of the whole you.

Participant Advisory Committee

You can help PA Health & Wellness with the way our health plan works. We have a Participant Advisory Committee that gives Participants like you a chance to share your thoughts and ideas with PA Health & Wellness. The group meets every 3 months. This gives you a chance to talk about your concerns with a variety of people. You also have a chance to tell us how we are doing. You may ask questions or share any concerns that you have about the delivery of services. Call Participant Services at 1-844-626-6813 (TTY/TDD 711) if you would like to attend.

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 wellcare By
allwell™

For people age 65 and older who are eligible for Medicare and Medicaid, Wellcare by Allwell is our Dual Special Needs Program. Our Wellcare by Allwell plans include comprehensive healthcare coverage with support you can count on.

To learn more, call Participant Services at 1-844-626-6813 (TTY 711).

Breathe Easy



Did you know that it is normal for breathing diseases to get worse over time?

Most people with asthma, COPD or emphysema need small changes to keep them comfortable.

So, when is it time to update your medications?

- Your breathing problems have caused a visit to an emergency department
- You use your rescue inhaler more than a few times per month
- You have more trouble completing regular tasks

If you are experiencing any of these issues, you may need an update to your medications. Your doctor can help you decide if small changes can help you live and move more freely. Reach out to your doctor today and begin living the life you deserve.^{1,2}



¹Barrett, Nora and Fanta, Christopher. An overview of asthma management. In: UpToDate, Post TW (Ed), UpToDate, Waltham, MA. (Accessed on Nov 11, 2022.)

²Stoller, James. COPD exacerbations: Management. In: UpToDate, Post TW (Ed), UpToDate, Waltham, MA. (Accessed on Nov 11, 2022.)

Stay Connected with PA Health & Wellness

Our goal is to stay connected with you!

We use several methods to provide you with information about your health and remind you of important services. We can also help you get the care and services you need.

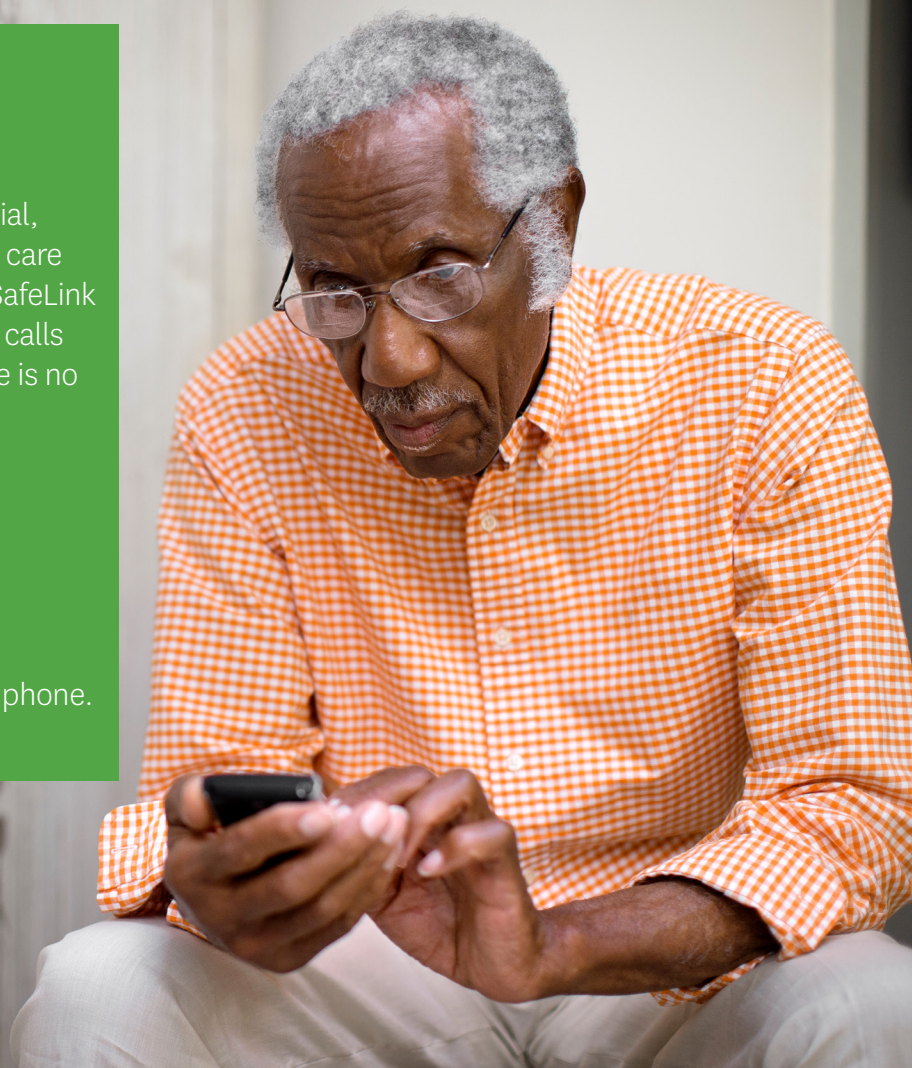
In addition to phone calls and newsletters, PA Health & Wellness may begin sending you health reminders and information by text in 2023. Our texts are for health information only and will usually begin with “PHW Participant.” You’ll have the option to reply “STOP” if you do not want to receive text messages from PA Health & Wellness.

Cell Phone Program - SafeLink Wireless

PA Health & Wellness is proud to be working with SafeLink Wireless to offer you the benefit of a special, federal program. As a participant of our long-term care insurance plan, you get all the same benefits of a SafeLink phone, plus unlimited inbound text messages and calls to PA Health & Wellness Participant Services. There is no added cost for these extras.

Here's how to enroll:

- If you already have a SafeLink phone, call 1-877-631-2550 so you can begin receiving the additional SafeLink benefits.
- Visit <http://www.safelink.com> to apply online.
- Call SafeLink at 1-877-631-2550 to apply over the phone.



What to Do if You Are Admitted to the Hospital or Visit the Emergency Room

When you go to the hospital, the goal for everyone is a discharge home without having to return. These steps make it easier for you or your loved one to go home and have the best possible health outcome.

Before you leave the hospital

1. Ask to speak with a case manager about your plan for discharge.
2. See if an appointment can be scheduled with your primary care provider (PCP) before you go home.
3. Discuss anything that concerns you when you think about going home.
4. Are there transportation problems? Do you have a caregiver to help you? Do you have financial concerns that may prevent you from getting food or medicine? How will you get your medications filled?
5. Notify Participant Services so we can help coordinate your care.

Upon discharge

- Schedule or confirm your PCP appointment as soon as you get home.
- Complete appointment within 1-2 weeks of discharge.
 - It can be done in person, over the phone (telehealth), or by video visit.
- Share any paperwork you received from the hospital with your PCP.
- Bring your medicines with you, including all vitamins and over the counter medications.
- Inform your PCP of any changes or new medicines prescribed in the hospital.
- Ask about any symptoms you should report.
- Go over your test results and discuss next steps in your plan of care.
- Schedule an annual wellness visit if you have not already completed one this year.

Our **Nurse Advice Line** is ready to answer your health questions 24 hours a day – every day of the year. It is staffed with Registered Nurses. Call us at 1-844-626-6813 (TTY: 711).



It's a New Year! Time to Schedule Your Annual Wellness Visit

A yearly visit to your Primary Care Provider (PCP) is important, even if you're not sick. It's a time to focus on staying healthy, now and down the road.

Prepare for your Annual Wellness Visit

- Be sure to ask for a "Well Visit" or "Physical" when you schedule the appointment.
- Bring your full medication list, including any over-the-counter products you use. Use the time to ask questions about your medicines.

What to expect during your Annual Wellness Visit

- You'll be asked about your medical history, your family's health, and other personal questions. This is to see if you are at higher risk for certain conditions.
- Tell your doctor if you have pain or problems performing your day-to-day activities.
- Discuss Advanced Care Planning or Living Wills.
- Remember, the information you share is confidential. This is a good time to ask for alcohol, drug, and smoking treatment.
- A head-to-toe physical exam will be conducted. Tell your PCP if you wish to have someone in the exam room to make you feel more comfortable.
- Lab tests and other tests may be ordered.
- Vaccines will be discussed and offered.
- Be sure to make a follow-up appointment before you leave, if needed.



If you need help finding a PCP or updating the PCP listed on your card, call Participant Services at 1-844-626-6813 (TTY 711). They can help you with transportation and language services also.

We Speak Your Language!

We can help you find a healthcare provider that understands your language. Our providers are trained each year to understand differences in language and cultures. They can also contact an interpreter by telephone. We can also provide interpreters for those who are deaf or hard of hearing. These services are available at no cost.

If you would like to find a provider who understands your needs, call Participant Services at 1-844-626-6813 (TTY: 711). We'll connect you with the interpreter service that speaks your language.

Let's Talk About Heart Disease and High Blood Pressure



with Dr. Carla Huitt, one of several Medical Directors at PA Health & Wellness

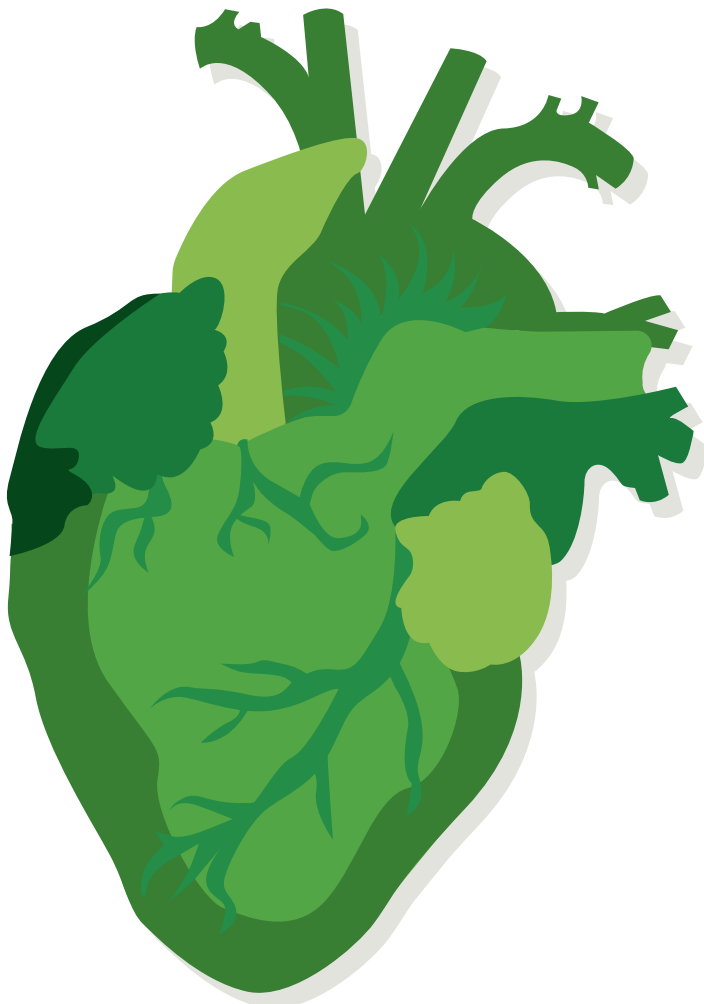
Nearly half of adults in the United States have high blood pressure, but only 1 in 4 adults have their condition under control. Your race and biological sex can play a role with your blood pressure control.*

A few facts about Blood Pressure Control:

- Men tend to have higher or uncontrolled blood pressure*
- High blood pressure is more common in non-Hispanic black adults than in Hispanic, non-Hispanic white or Asian adults.*
- Blood pressure control is highest among non-Hispanic white adults than in non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic Asian, or Hispanic adults.*

Did you know?

In Pennsylvania, Hypertension impacts about 20-42% of Adult Residents.



Some people use folk medicine to help improve their health. However, in folk medicine traditions, references to “High Blood” and “Low Blood” are NOT the same thing as High Blood Pressure. In folk medicine, “High Blood” conditions are treated with eating lots of salt. This is just the opposite of what should be done to treat High Blood Pressure.

Have an honest discussion so that your doctor can develop a plan that works best for you and your beliefs. Be sure to tell your doctor about any herbs and supplements you use. Add these to your medication list.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Hypertension Cascade: Hypertension Prevalence, Treatment and Control Estimates Among U.S. Adults Aged 18 Years and Older Applying the Criteria from the American College of Cardiology and American Heart Association’s 2017 Hypertension Guideline—NHANES 2015–2018. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2021. Accessed March 12, 2021.

Take Control of YOUR Blood Pressure

The goal is to have your blood pressure reading be less than 120/80.

Blood Pressure Categories:

Blood Pressure Category	Systolic mm Hg (upper number)		Diastolic mm Hg (lower number)
Normal	Less than 120	and	Less than 80
Elevated	120-129	and	Less than 80
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 1	130-139	or	80-89
High Blood Pressure (Hypertension) Stage 2	140 or Higher	or	90 or Higher
Hypertensive Crisis (consult your doctor immediately)	Higher than 180	and/or	Higher than 120

Source: American Heart Association, Heart.org/BPLevels

Keys to meeting your blood pressure goals!*

- Know your numbers.
 - See your doctor, use a free blood pressure machine at a local store or pharmacy or ask your doctor or Service Coordinator about a home blood pressure monitor.
- See your PCP regularly.
 - Every 3-6 months if you have hypertension or diabetes.
- Lose extra weight.
- Lower your salt intake.
- Increase exercise and general activity.
 - Start with walking 10 minutes a day.
 - Work up to 20-30 minutes 3-5 times per week
- Limit alcohol.
- Take medications as prescribed. Do not stop or miss doses.
 - Sometimes diet and exercise isn't enough.
 - Talk with your doctor about medications.

Did you know?

The number one reason high blood pressure medications don't work is that people fail to take them or miss doses. If you are concerned about the medication, talk to your doctor or pharmacist before stopping.

If you need help finding a provider, making an appointment, getting medications or have questions about your benefits, contact Participant Services at 1-844-626-6813 (TTY 711).



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