

Community
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 pa health
& wellness™

**WHOLE
you**

2023 | Q2 BULLETIN



Welcome to another edition of Whole You, a newsletter from PA Health & Wellness.

As 2023 continues to move along, spring is in the air once again.

We hope this newsletter finds you well. In this issue, we're bringing you plenty of useful and informative articles. As a reminder, don't forget about your Medical Assistance (MA) eligibility renewal. On the next page, learn about the steps you need to take to continue your coverage with PA Health & Wellness.

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
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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).

It's almost time to verify your Medical Assistance eligibility.

Watch your mail for your renewal packet from the PA Department of Human Services (DHS).

To continue your Medical Assistance coverage, you must complete a renewal every year with DHS to see if you still qualify for Medical Assistance.

Take Action!

You will soon get a renewal packet from DHS that explains how to renew your coverage. If you're still eligible for your current level of coverage, you can continue your coverage through PA Health & Wellness.

Follow up.

If you moved within the last three years, update your contact information with DHS online at dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS, use the myCOMPASS mobile app, or contact the Statewide Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 or 215-560-7226 in Philadelphia.

Know your options.

If your eligibility has changed, you may qualify for a 120-day Special Enrollment Period to apply for low-cost or no cost coverage through Pennie®, PA's official health and dental insurance marketplace. If you are no longer eligible for MA, your information will be securely transferred to Pennie, where you can select a qualified health plan (QHP) that best fits your needs.

There, PA Health & Wellness has low-cost or even no cost plans to choose from, and Pennie will connect you with financial savings to help reduce the cost of coverage and care.

Once your information is shared with Pennie, you will be contacted via your preferred communication method to explain how you can access a Pennie account and an estimate of your financial savings that can be applied to a QHP. View options at www.pennie.com and www.medicare.gov.

Get expert help.

If you have any questions or concerns about healthcare eligibility or enrollment, please call the Statewide Customer Service Center at 1-877-395-8930 or 215-560-7226 in Philadelphia. You can also visit dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS or use the myCOMPASS PA app to learn more.

Sincerely,



Justin Davis, Plan President & CEO, PA Health & Wellness

Getting a Beat on What Women Know about Heart Health



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

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States. Get tips on how to keep your heart healthy! You may think heart disease only affects men. This is not true. Heart disease is the leading cause of death for women in the United States. Here are tips to help you make good decisions about your heart health.

1 Eat a heart healthy diet.

Reading food labels can help you make healthy food choices.

- Choose foods that are 'low salt' or 'low sodium.'
- Limit foods that have 'trans fat.' Too much trans fat can cause heart attacks.
- Cut back on sugar. Sugar is also labeled as 'glucose', 'fructose', 'sucrose', and 'corn syrup.'
- Talk to your doctor about your diet.
- Ask your doctor how to safely add exercise to your routine in addition to eating a heart healthy diet.

2 Manage your health conditions.

Common health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol can increase your risk of heart disease. To decrease the risks:

- Take your medicines as directed. Do not stop taking your medicines until your doctor says that it is OK.
- Talk to your doctor about medicines for diabetes or high blood pressure.
- If you have diabetes, check your blood sugar level.
- Talk to your doctor about getting your blood pressure and cholesterol tested.
- Some women may need a device to help their heart work. Talk to your doctor about what device may be best for your heart problem.
- If you are pregnant, ask your doctor how you should manage your health conditions during pregnancy.
- Ask your doctor about testing your blood pressure and cholesterol.

3 When it comes to medications.

- Ask your doctor if generic medications maybe a way to reduce medication costs for you.
- Insurance may only cover the name brand prescriptions
- Talk to your doctor about using medications that are on the PA Medicaid Preferred Drug List.

4 Get the facts about aspirin.

Daily use of aspirin to prevent a heart attack or stroke is not right for everyone.

- Ask your doctor if you should use aspirin.
- If aspirin is right for you, find out:
 - How much you should take
 - How often you should take aspirin
 - How long you should take aspirin
- Some products combine aspirin with other ingredients and are not meant for long-term use.

Tell your doctor about all medicines and supplements you take. Your risk of bleeding may be higher if you use aspirin while also taking certain medicines, vitamins, or herbs.

5 Know the signs of a heart attack.

The signs of a heart attack can be different for women than they are for men.

- Heavy ache in your chest or back between your shoulder blades
- Sharp pain in your upper body
- Shortness of breath
- Breaking out in a cold sweat
- Unusual or unexplained tiredness
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed
- Feeling sick to your stomach

While the most common symptom for both women and men is chest pain, you can have a heart attack without experiencing chest pain or pressure. Women are more likely to have other symptoms such as back pain, jaw pain, shortness of breath, indigestion, and nausea or vomiting.

Call 9-1-1 if you think you are having a heart attack.

Article:

Edited by Dr. Carla Huitt, MD MPH MS- Medical Director for PA Health & Wellness.

When's the Last Time You Learned How Much You Could Earn?

Unsure/Curious about Working	Job Exploration and Job Search	Employed
Get the facts about YOUR specific scenario. Be empowered in making an informed decision about work.	Feel more confident about the job you apply and interview for. In the process of Benefits Counseling, you will feel more confident about negotiating your starting pay.	If you're already working, Benefits Counseling can help you feel more confident about raises, upcoming promotions, or even possibly a job change.

Whether you're already working or curious about working, Benefits Counseling can help YOU find out the facts based on YOUR current individualized benefits.

What should you do to start benefits counseling?

Connect with your Service Coordinator and ask to receive Benefits Counseling.

Your Service Coordinator will help you create an Employment Goal in your plan, which will allow us to help connect you with a Certified Benefits Counselor who will provide you comprehensive support.

Already have a goal connected to employment? Terrific! Your Service Coordinator will be able to update your request for Benefits Counseling.

Read stories of people who experienced success through Benefits Counseling and other employment supports: <https://choosework.ssa.gov/success-stories>.



Have a Healthy Summer

This is a great time of year to make some healthy changes to your daily routine! The weather is getting nicer. Taking walks is a great way to get moving and enjoy the fresh air. Farmers markets have finally opened. Fresh fruits and vegetables are in season! These are very heart healthy snacks. Think about having one day a week where you cut meat out of your menu, and enjoy light meals like a salad or grilled vegetables. Cut back on sugary drinks, like soda. Try a cool glass of iced tea instead.

Stay hydrated on hot, humid days. Make sure you wear sunscreen and a hat when spending time in the sun.

Managing your stress is also important. We all spent a lot of time inside in the last year. Find an activity that you enjoy doing. Meet a friend for a walk in the park. Take in a fireworks show or an outdoor concert. Lastly, cutting back on smoking has a very positive effect on your health. Many health conditions can become worse if you smoke. Talk to your doctor about how to quit smoking.

For more information about having a healthy summer, visit the CDC's website: www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/infographic/healthy-summer.htm.



Preventive Screening Exams

Have you heard the phrases, “what you don’t know can’t hurt you” or “ignorance is bliss?” When it comes to your health, they aren’t true; knowing is better!

Most of us have been focusing over the past two years on the health threat of COVID-19. Unfortunately, many of us during these times have put off scheduling our regular preventive exams and screening tests. By knowing where you stand, your health care provider can treat a condition before it leads to more serious health problems.

Are you up-to-date on these important health screenings?

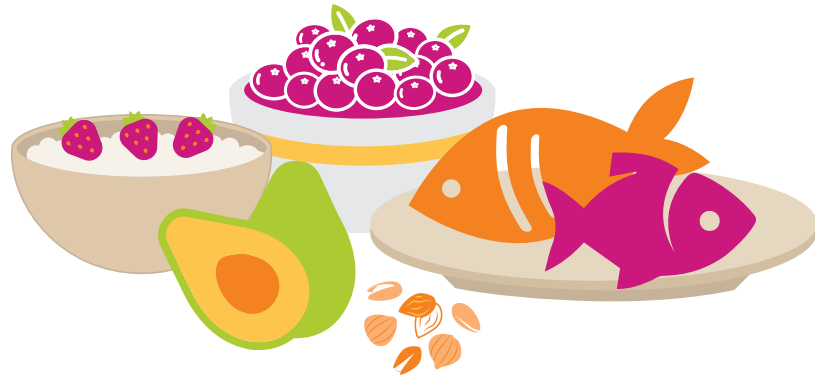
What	Who	How Often*	Why
Preventive care visit	All adults	Yearly	Receiving services and counseling helps to maintain health & manage chronic conditions
Blood pressure check	All adults	At Least Yearly	Identifying high blood pressure (hypertension) early leads to prompt treatment. There are no symptoms of high blood pressure.
Cholesterol blood test	Adults with diabetes or heart disease	Yearly	Managing high cholesterol can decrease risk of heart disease or complications from heart disease
	All other adults	Every 2-4 years	
Hgb A1c blood test	Adults with diabetes	Every 3-6 Months	Knowing average blood sugar levels helps you & your provider manage your diabetes
Retinal or dilated eye exam	Adults with diabetes	Yearly	Detecting eye problems early can provide treatment options before vision loss occurs
Kidney urine test	Adults with diabetes	Yearly	Detecting kidney problems early can provide treatment options before kidney damage occurs
Dental exam	All adults	Twice a year	Maintaining good oral health & discovering problems early can prevent more painful oral conditions
Full-body skin exam	All adults	Yearly	Early detection of skin cancer
Prostate exam	Men aged 55-69	Every 2-3 years	Early detection of enlarged prostate or prostate cancer
Mammogram	Women aged 50-74	Every 2 years	Early detection of breast cancer
Pap smear or HPV test	Women aged 21-64	Every 3 years	Early detection of cervical cancer
Colonoscopy	Adults aged 50-75	Every 10 years	Early detection of colon cancer
Fecal occult blood test	Adults aged 50-75	Yearly	An alternative to colonoscopy for colon cancer screening

*Your health care provider may advise testing more frequently

Fight Stress with these Delicious Superfoods

Many of us carry the impact of stress in our bodies. But did you know certain foods may help put you more at ease? Here are five ways you can use food to beat stress and reduce some of the tension you feel.

- 1 Add Avocado.** Adding B-rich avocados to your diet can improve your mood. Avocados also contain mono-unsaturated fat and potassium — nutrients that can help lower blood pressure. This creamy, delicious fruit also has been shown to ward off hunger. This means you are less likely to grab an unhealthy treat when you start feeling the pressure. Try a tasty turkey sandwich or salad for lunch and top it off with some avocado slices!
- 2 Bring Blueberries.** These tiny berries pack a powerful punch. They contain high levels of phytonutrients and an antioxidant called anthocyanin that has been linked to improved thinking. They're also rich in vitamin C — another natural stress buster. Toss a few in your morning yogurt or pack in your lunch for dessert!
- 3 Nosh on Nuts.** Many nuts like almonds, walnuts and pistachios may boost your immune system. They are rich in vitamin E and zinc. Nuts also contain B-vitamins that help your body combat stress. Spread some almond butter on a piece of whole wheat toast for a morning treat!
- 4 Feed on Fatty Fish.** Are you tense or anxious? A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids helps keep your cortisol and adrenaline levels from rising when you feel this way. Eat fish like salmon, herring and albacore tuna to keep stress at bay. Pair a grilled or baked fillet with your favorite green veggie for a simple, stress-fighting meal.
- 5 Fill up on Oatmeal.** This complex carbohydrate helps your brain produce serotonin. Serotonin is the feel-good chemical that can help you overcome stress. Go with thick-cut instead of instant oatmeal to enjoy more beta-glucan, a soluble fiber that keeps you fuller. When you feel full, you are less likely to crave a sugary treat that could spike your blood sugar. Make a big batch on the weekends, then heat it up during the week for a quick and easy meal or snack.



Reporting Fraud, Waste and Abuse

If you suspect fraud, waste, or abuse in the healthcare system, you must report it to PA Health & Wellness and we'll investigate. Your actions may help to improve the healthcare system and reduce costs for our participants, customers, and business partners. To report suspected fraud, waste, or abuse, you can contact PA Health & Wellness in one of these ways: • PA Health & Wellness anonymous and confidential hotline at 1-866-685-8664 • Pennsylvania Office of Inspector General at 1-855-FRAUD-PA (1-855-372-8372) • Pennsylvania Bureau of Program Integrity at 1-866-379-8477 • Pennsylvania Department of Human Services 1-844-DHS-TIPS (1-844-347-8477) • Mail: Office of Inspector General, 555 Walnut Street, 7th Floor, Harrisburg, PA 17101 • Mail: Department of Human Services, Office of Administration, Bureau of Program Integrity, P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2675. You may remain anonymous if you prefer. All information received or discovered by the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) will be treated as confidential, and the results of investigations will be discussed only with persons having a legitimate reason to receive the information (e.g., state and federal authorities, corporate law department, market medical directors or senior management).

Protect Yourself: Prevent Skin Cancer

Nice, sunny days are meant to be enjoyed. Don't let your fun in the sun be spoiled by harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays and skin damage. When you protect yourself from UV rays, you lower the risk of skin cancer. You also slow early aging!

Practicing smart sun protection in warmer months is a good way to get into habits that you should have all the time. The danger of UV rays is year-round, even on cloudy or cold days — and even when you're inside but near windows! UV rays can also reflect off snow, water and concrete. Put simply, if your skin is exposed and you aren't in a windowless space, you can get exposure to UV rays.



Here are ways you can protect your skin:

Choose sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Apply it at least 15 minutes before sun exposure. Use it on all exposed skin. Reapply it every two hours if you are sweating or swimming.

Wear long sleeves, long pants and longer skirts. Some materials are better than others at protecting you from the sun. An easy way to gauge how well it can protect you is to hold up the material to the sun. The more light that you can see through it, the less it will protect you from harmful UV rays. Also, dark and bright colors will protect you more than lighter colors like whites and pastels.

Put on a hat with a full brim when you spend time outdoors. This will help protect your face, ears and neck. Keep in mind that a hat with a partial brim, like a baseball cap, can shield only part of you. And straw hats aren't as effective for blocking out UV rays.

Sport shades. Sunglasses help guard your eyes from UV rays. They also protect the skin around your eyes from sun exposure. Buy a pair you like and wear them whenever you're outside.

Avoid being outside during the hottest times of the day. Always look for shade during peak daytime hours (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Find a tree or an outdoor umbrella to shield yourself.

If you work outside, play sports or simply like to spend time outdoors, be extra aware of any changes in your skin. A new growth or an uneven patch of skin can be an early sign of an issue. Set up a visit with your primary care provider (PCP) if you see any changes in your skin or have questions about your risks.