



Healthy and Connected Member Newsletter - April 28, 2023

Healthy and Connected is the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' (SCDHHS) member e-newsletter. Healthy and Connected features tips and tools to help you and your loved ones connect to resources and live healthier lives.

Annual Reviews Restarted April 1

Annual reviews restarted for Healthy Connections Medicaid members April 1, 2023. We will contact members by mail and text message (for members who have given us a mobile phone number) when their time is up for review. The texts will come from (803) 879-4184.

We will first try to renew members' eligibility with info we have. If we can renew this way, you will receive a "continuation of benefits" notice. If we cannot confirm your continued eligibility, we will mail you an annual review form. You will need to fill it out then return it within about 30 days. The return date will be listed on the form. If you do not, you will receive a notice with the date your coverage will end.

Members can complete their annual review online by visiting apply.scdhhs.gov and clicking "Submit Annual Review." You may also submit your completed paper review form in the ways listed below:

- Mail: SCDHHS Central Mail, PO Box 100101, Columbia, SC 29202
- In-person: Click here for a list of local eligibility offices
- Email: 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov
- Fax: (888) 820-1204
- Online: Upload it online using the [document upload tool](#)

Even though the process started April 1, it will likely take about 12 months to complete all annual reviews. This means some members will not receive their notice or review form until March 2024. We will let you know when it is time for your review.

If you have given SCDHHS a cell phone number, we will send text messages to let you know when your annual review form has been mailed and reminders about returning it.

[Learn More](#)

Watching for Spots: Skin Cancer Self-exam



The warm spring months in South Carolina make it easy to enjoy the outdoors. Although there are lots of fun activities we can do outside, remember to keep your skin protected from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Too much ultraviolet radiation can increase your risk of skin cancer. April is Melanoma and Skin Cancer Awareness Month. Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in America but it's also one of the most preventable.

Self-exams are an easy way we can check our skin for anything new, changing or unusual. The Skin Cancer Foundation suggests you look at your skin monthly for these types of visuals:

- A growth that is getting bigger in size and looks pearly, transparent, tan, brown, black or multi-colored.
- A mole, birthmark or brown spot that gets bigger in size, thickness, changes color or texture or is bigger than a pencil eraser.
- A spot or sore that keeps itching, hurting, crusting, scabbing or bleeding.
- An open sore that doesn't heal within three weeks.

Be sure to document what you find by writing it down or use your phone to take pictures. When caught and treated early, skin cancers are highly curable. Learn more about early skin cancer detection and review a step-by-step self-exam at TheBigSee.org.

Knowing the Signs of Autism

Autism is a broad range of conditions that can cause social, communication and behavioral challenges. About one in every 36 children is diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD). There are different things that can cause autism.

Identifying autism in babies and young kids takes careful tracking of the child's development. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are certain things parents can watch for in their babies that could be a sign of an ASD:

- Avoids or doesn't keep eye contact
- Doesn't respond to their name by nine months old
- Doesn't show facial expressions (happy, sad, angry, etc.) by nine months old
- Doesn't play simple interactive games by 12 months old
- Uses few or no gestures by 12 months old
- Doesn't share interests with others by 15 months old
- Doesn't point to show you something by 18 months old
- Doesn't see when others are hurt or upset by two years old
- Doesn't notice other kids and join them in playing by three years old
- Doesn't pretend to be something/someone else (like a teacher, superhero, etc.) during play by four years old
- Doesn't sing, dance or act for you by five years old

ASD services are a covered benefit for Healthy Connections Medicaid members. You can learn more about how to get an ASD diagnosis on SCDHHS' [website here](#). All babies in the [BabyNet program](#) are screened for an ASD from 18 through 24 months, or any time there are concerns about autism.

World Autism Month in April doesn't have to be the only time we learn about ASD. Find out more about signs and symptoms from the CDC's [website](#).

Making Exercise Fun for the Family

It can be hard to get your kids excited about exercise. June 10 is Family Health and Fitness Day. This is the perfect time to show them getting active can also be fun. One of the best ways for your kids to learn about exercise is to lead by example. Set aside

time to participate in physical activity with your children to make it enjoyable for the whole family.

Indoor options:

1. Jumping jacks
2. Dancing to music
3. Playing hide-and-seek
4. Learning how to bear crawl or crab walk
5. Playing Simon Says



Outdoor options:

1. Playing tag or freeze tag
2. Taking a walk at a park
3. Learning how to jump rope
4. Playing hopscotch
5. Running through a sprinkler
6. Playing a game of catch
7. Skipping up and down the sidewalk or driveway

Planning time at least once a week to exercise with your children can become a fun family activity everyone enjoys. Check out these indoor and outdoor relay races the family can try together:

[15 Indoor and Outdoor Relay Races](#)

Men's Health Month

Men, are you keeping your health top-of-mind? It might be easy to tell yourself there's nothing unusual about how you feel every day, but there's more to staying healthy than just "feeling fine." June is Men's Health Month, which can serve as a

reminder to men that it's time to check on yourself! Here are some ways to make sure you're doing what you can to stay healthy:

1. Even though it can be easy to avoid the doctor's office, check-ups with your doctor are the most reliable way to know where you stand with your health. Healthy Connections Medicaid members are covered for one physical exam every two years with their primary doctor. Children are covered for one check-up a year from age 3 to 21.
2. Include healthy foods into your meals like fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, lean cuts of meat and poultry (skinless chicken breasts and lean ground beef), whole-grain products like brown rice and fiber-rich foods like beans. Packaged and processed foods can be full of sugar, salt and unhealthy fats.
3. Regular exercise is one of the best ways to prevent heart disease, the leading cause of death among American men. So, get moving! Try to get at least 150 minutes of exercise each week.
4. Break unhealthy habits like smoking, drinking too much alcohol and using illegal drugs. Your doctor can help you make a plan to quit. Healthy Connections Medicaid benefits cover medications that can help you quit smoking. Members also have access to counseling through the [South Carolina Tobacco Quitline](#).
5. After skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common cancer diagnosis among American men. If you have trouble or pain while urinating or notice blood in your urine, it could be a sign of prostate problems. Make an appointment with your doctor.
6. [Colorectal cancer](#) is the second-leading cause of cancer deaths in the U.S., out of the cancers affecting both men and women. It's important to get a colorectal cancer screening around 45-50 years old.

Read more health tips for men from [Healthline](#).

Community Health Workers are Here for You



Have you ever heard of a community health worker (CHW)? It's a trusted person in or near your town who can connect you to health care systems and other local resources. They help others learn more about programs and services available to improve their overall health. CHWs have a deep understanding of the communities in which they serve and come from a similar cultural background.

CHWs can help others with traditional healthcare options like finding a doctor, dentist and specialty care provider. But there are other ways they can help too. A CHW may assist in helping you find mental health resources, a food bank, housing assistance and more. They teach people what kinds of resources are available to them, be a support person and an advocate.

There are CHWs located across South Carolina with services available in all 46 counties. Their assistance is free.

Learn more about the role of a CHW [here](#). If you're interested in using a CHW, ask your doctor or visit an organization in your county that provides help from CHWs. View the CHW partner groups in each county [here](#).

Healthy Connections Medicaid members can not only receive help from CHWs but can also serve as CHWs. If you would like to learn more about working as a CHW, read the frequently asked questions on the Center for Community Health Alignment [website](#).

Learning About Alzheimer's

The thought of not being able to remember something important can be scary to imagine. But that is one of the symptoms about six million people in the nation age 65 and older experience due to Alzheimer's disease. Alzheimer's is a brain disorder that slowly destroys memory and thinking skills. Over time, it eventually keeps the person from being able to carry out simple tasks. June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month. One of the biggest risk factors for the disease is aging.

According to the [National Institute on Aging](#), having memory problems is usually one of the first signs of Alzheimer's. People with Alzheimer's have trouble doing everyday tasks like driving, cooking or paying bills. They could also lose things or place things in odd places, ask the same questions more than once or get lost easily.

There is no cure yet for Alzheimer's, but there are medications to help manage symptoms. Healthy Connections Medicaid members with Alzheimer's and dementia diagnoses may qualify for the Community Choices Waiver (CCW). The services are aimed to give participants support so they can live at home. Services include options like personal care, adult day health care, ramps, pest control and more. For an overview of the CCW, view the [waiver summary chart](#). Read more about Community Choices.

[Community Long Term Care Brochure](#)

Managing Stress Can Better Your Health

Life can get hectic, leading to many reasons you could be feeling stressed. Stress is the strain and/or worry we feel caused by something that happens to us. Stress can affect your body, mental health, feelings and behavior. Physically, you might be getting headaches or an upset stomach. Emotionally, you may feel anxiety, restlessness, anger, sadness or even depression. You may have noticed yourself feeling withdrawn, exercising less often or having angry outbursts. It can affect our health without us even realizing it.



April is National Stress Awareness Month, the perfect time to assess your stress levels. The good news is there are ways to manage it that can benefit your health.

According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), including these small steps into your life can help better-manage your stress:

- Get in your exercise
- Try doing something relaxing like deep breathing, meditation, stretching or yoga
- Keep a sense of humor
- Spend time with your family and friends
- Set aside time for a hobby like reading a book, listening to music or making art.

Adults aren't the only ones who can feel the symptoms of stress. Children have faced many new, stressful situations in the past few years brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. They may have had adjustments in their school and activities, family changes or even the loss of a loved one. Kids may express stress in different ways than adults. Teaching your kids calming strategies and managing your own mental health can help better the stress levels in your children. Learn more about signs of stress in children and coping strategies [here](#).

Thank you for reading Healthy and Connected. Follow SCDHHS on our Facebook and Twitter pages for regular updates. You can also [view the Medicaid Member Handbook](#) on SCDHHS' website to learn more about what is covered, where to go to ask questions and more.