



Healthy and Connected Member Newsletter - Jan. 21, 2021

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.

COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Coverage

Getting vaccinated to fight coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is one of most important things you can do to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 and help end the pandemic. Vaccines work with your immune system so your body will be ready to fight the virus if you are exposed. Other steps, like wearing a face mask and physical distancing, help reduce your chance of being exposed to the virus or spreading it to others. The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) has put together South Carolina's COVID-19 vaccination plan. This plan includes information on when and where you and your loved ones can receive a vaccine. Learn more at scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-vaccine.



COVID-19 vaccines are covered at no cost to Healthy Connections Medicaid members, including those enrolled in Healthy Connections Prime and the family planning and COVID-19 limited benefit programs.

If you know someone without healthcare coverage, they can apply for SCDHHS' COVID-19 Limited Benefit Program. This program was created last summer and covers the cost of COVID-19 tests and vaccines when given by a provider who is enrolled in Healthy Connections Medicaid. Anyone can visit <http://apply.scdhhs.gov/> to learn more and download an application or [apply online here](#).

For other COVID-19 resources, including more information about the vaccine, visit the DHEC site below.

[DHEC COVID-19 Website](#)

Begin the New Year with a Healthy Start

Are you looking for a new way to reach your goals for 2021? Any time of year is a good time to exercise and eat healthy. Why not start now when you may already be looking for a new, New Year's resolution? A good diet and exercise are great ways to stop or overcome obesity. Obesity is a serious issue that can affect your health in many ways. It is tied to some of the top

causes of death in the United States, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some types of cancer. Obesity has several causes, including family history, but there are easy ways you can fight it on your own or with help.

Tips for Exercise:

Exercise can help you reduce anxiety, lower your risk for obesity and even sleep better. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has [some tips for exercising while social distancing](#). The CDC says adults should get at least two-and-a-half hours of exercise per week. For children ages 6-17, at least one hour of exercise every day is recommended. Children ages 3-5 should also be active during the day for growth and development. No matter your age, some exercise is better than none. Learn more about why it is important to exercise and some tips to help increase your activity from [the CDC's Active People, Healthy Nation website](#).

Tips for Eating Healthy:

DHEC has some great resources to help you find ways to eat a healthier diet. This includes tips on how to introduce young children to fruits and vegetables and shopping tips for preparing healthy and low-cost meals.

In 2015, SCDHHS started a nutrition counseling program for weight management. This member benefit connects eligible members with nutrition experts who can help you make better food choices. Healthy Connections Medicaid members may also be eligible for nutritional counseling visits with doctors and dietitians. Ask your doctor to learn more and click below to see resources from DHEC.

[Learn More about Healthy Eating from DHEC](#)

SCDHHS and Managed Care Plan Mail is Important

It is important to open mail that is related to your Medicaid benefits. Mail with one of the logos below is almost always time sensitive and probably requires a response by an important date. If you have questions about what you get in the mail, you can call the phone number on your managed care membership card or the Healthy Connections Medicaid Member Contact Center. Representatives from the member contact center are available at (888) 549-0820 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Friday.

You've Got Mail!

Please open mail related to your Healthy Connections Medicaid benefits immediately. Mail with one of these logos is usually time sensitive and may require action on your part.

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Ways to Keep Your Heart Healthy

February is American Heart Health Month. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. There is a lot we can do to keep our hearts healthy. Even small changes can make a big difference. To help prevent heart disease, it is important to follow many of the tips for fighting obesity. Exercising more, following a healthy eating plan and finding ways to cut stress, getting better sleep and stopping smoking all lead to a healthier heart.

Smoking, being too heavy, having diabetes, having unhealthy blood cholesterol levels, or having a family history of heart disease increase the chance you will get heart disease. For more information on heart health and ways to keep your heart healthy visit:



[American Heart Association](#)

Your Kidneys are Important: Keep Them Safe and Healthy



March is National Kidney Month. Did you know lowering high blood pressure, eating healthy foods and getting rid of stress can protect your kidneys? The [National Institute Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases](#) says if you have high blood pressure, you are at risk for chronic kidney disease. This can cause stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and death.

The good news is you can help keep your kidneys healthy with these six lifestyle habits from the [National Institute Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases](#).

- 1. Take medications as prescribed.** Your doctor may give you blood pressure-lowering medicines that work in slowing the progress of kidney disease.
- 2. Aim for a healthy weight.** If you are overweight or obese, losing even a small amount of weight can be good for blood pressure readings.
- 3. Select healthy food and drink options.** Focus on fruits and vegetables, lean meat, whole grains, and other heart-healthy foods.
- 4. Try to quit smoking.** If you smoke, take steps to quit.
- 5. Get enough sleep.** Try to get seven to eight hours of sleep per night.
- 6. Manage stress and make physical activity part of your routine.** Think about good stress-reducing activities and get at least 30 minutes or more of physical activity each day.

How Are You Sleeping?

March is also National Sleep Awareness Month. It begins at daylight saving time when most Americans lose an hour of sleep. The change to daylight saving time is a good reminder to make changes to our sleep habits and sleep health.

Did you know most adults feel tired during the day at least three days each week? Good, restful sleep is important. If this sounds like you, it may be time to change your sleep pattern. Sticking to a sleep schedule, even on weekends,



and practicing a calm bedtime routine are good first steps to better sleep. The easiest way to get started is to keep track of how much sleep you are getting.

Learn more tips on how to get restful sleep from the National Institutes of Health below.

[Your Guide to Healthy Sleep](#)

Introducing the Medicaid Member Experience Advisory Committee

We want to hear from you! In 2020, SCDHHS created the Medicaid Member Experience Advisory Committee (MEAC). The MEAC provides a new way for Healthy Connections Medicaid members to provide feedback. This will help us make decisions about the Healthy Connections Medicaid program. The committee will only include Healthy Connections Medicaid members or their authorized representatives.

Learn more about MEAC and how to apply to serve on this exciting new committee below.

[Learn More about MEAC](#)

Non-Emergency Medical Transportation Provider Logisticare is Now ModivCare

Logisticare has changed its name to ModivCare. The phone numbers, processes and ways Healthy Connections Medicaid members, facilities and transportation providers contact ModivCare will not change. Click below for more information.

[Transportation Beneficiary Information](#)

Thank you for reading Healthy and Connected, the next edition is scheduled for April 2021. Follow SCDHHS on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for regular updates. You can also view the Medicaid Member Handbook [here on SCDHHS' website](#) to learn more about what is covered, where to go to ask questions and more.

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