

HEALTH letter®

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Find MetroPlusHealth on

MEN

 MetroPlus
Health Plan
160 Water St., 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10038
Phone: 1-800-303-9626
www.metroplus.org

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REMINDERS

- ▶ If you move or change phone numbers, tell us. Call **1-800-303-9626**.
- ▶ If you have trouble hearing, use our TTY/TDD number. It's **1-800-881-2812**.
- ▶ Are you turning 65 soon? You may be able to change from your current health insurance to MetroPlus Medicare very easily. Call **1-866-986-0356** to learn more.

Healthcare Fraud

MetroPlus is dedicated to helping stop healthcare fraud. We look into all possible cases of fraud, waste or abuse. Fraud includes member fraud, provider fraud, employee fraud and vendor fraud. Call MetroPlus if you think you notice fraud.

Contact us privately: **Call** our hotline at **1-888-245-7247**.

Write to MetroPlus Special Investigation Unit, 160 Water St. 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10038.

Your Feedback is Important to Us

Have you gotten a survey from The Myers Group on behalf of MetroPlus? If you have already returned your survey, thank you!

If you have not done the survey, please fill it in as soon as possible. Then follow the instructions for returning it to The Myers Group. You may get a phone call from The Myers Group to finish it over the phone.

We want to know what you think of MetroPlus. It will help us serve you better.

3 Ways to Improve Your Health

Enjoy the weather and feel your best!

- 1 Get walking.** Now is a great time to start a regular walking routine. Start small. Try to take a 10-minute walk most days. Then set bigger goals.

- 2 Drink water.** A cold drink on a warm day tastes great. And water is the best choice. Water hydrates better than drinks that have sugar in them. Drinking water helps you digest food and can improve your blood pressure.

- 3 Eat seasonally.** A lot of healthy fruits and veggies are in season in spring. Take a walk to your local farmer's market or bodega and see what inspires you.

Looking for an idea for dinner? Learn how to choose and cook fresh fish at www.metroplus.org/whatsmyplan.

CONNECT WITH US

- ▶ Talk to Customer Services: **1-800-303-9626** (Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.).
- ▶ Visit our website: www.metroplus.org.
- ▶ Get the latest news on Facebook: www.facebook.com/MetroPlusHealth.
- ▶ Join our Member Advisory Committee (MAC) and share feedback about your care! Call Customer Services for more information.



Taking Care of Your Smile

If you don't take care of your teeth, you can get cavities or develop bad breath. You can also get infections like gingivitis.

Here are tips for keeping your teeth clean and your mouth healthy:

- Brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day. Brush your molars in a back-and-forth motion. Brush the rest of your teeth either up-and-down or in small circles.
 - Floss once a day. Flossing removes plaque and food particles from between your teeth.
 - Brush your tongue to remove bacteria.
 - Replace your toothbrush every 3 months or whenever the bristles are frayed.
- Use a fluoride toothpaste.
 - See your dentist at least once a year for a cleaning and checkup.
 - Smoking can cause damage to teeth, and even permanently change their color. Quitting smoking can help you improve your overall oral health.



Stop the Urge to Smoke

It's hard to quit smoking, even though you know it can increase your risk for cancer and other diseases. It's easy to be tempted. Here are ways to beat your cravings:

- Call a friend.
- Tell yourself you'll light up 5 minutes from now. If you can delay smoking, the urge could pass.
- Think about why you are quitting.
- Consider medication. It can increase your chances of quitting.

If you do smoke, do not give up on quitting. Think about what went wrong

and make a new plan to fight cravings.

Learn more and get help from the New York State Smoker's Quit Line (**1-866-697-8487**). Or check out **www.becomeanex.org** and **www.nycsmokefree.org/resources**.

MetroPlus can help you fight against smoking. You can get 6 counseling sessions a year to help quit smoking. And MetroPlus members may be able to get medication that can help you quit. Call MetroPlus to find out more about your benefits!



How to Get Ready for Your Mammogram

Regular mammograms are important for women. They are a way to look for early signs of breast cancer. Finding breast cancer early means it's easier to treat.

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. Women between 40 and 74 should get one every year.

Prepare for your mammogram: Try not to schedule your x-ray during or the week before your period. Do not wear deodorant, perfume or powder on the day of your appointment. These can sometimes look like a spot on the X-ray.



YOUR PLAN FOR DIABETES

Have you have been diagnosed with diabetes? Then you and your doctor will make a plan to manage your condition.

You will need to test your insulin throughout the day and give yourself insulin. Work with your doctor to figure out which kind of insulin to use and when to use it.

Regular exercise and healthy meals can help keep your blood glucose level stable. It is good to watch how food and activity affect you. For

example: If you know your blood glucose level gets low when you jog, drink juice before.

Routine tests and checkups are another way to help you and your doctor watch your diabetes.

Remember your medication! Your doctor may prescribe medicine to help you manage your condition. Ask your doctor when to take your medication. Never stop taking it without checking with your doctor first.

USE THIS CHART TO TRACK YOUR TEST RESULTS.

	DATE(S)	RESULTS AND NOTES
DIABETES EXAM		
A check-up with your diabetes doctor <i>Every 3 to 6 months</i>		
EYE EXAM		
A check-up with an eye doctor who takes care of people with diabetes <i>Once a year (your doctor may schedule more often)</i>		
FOOT EXAM		
Your doctor checks your reflexes and the blood pulse in your feet <i>Once a year (or every 3 to 6 months if you've had foot ulcers)</i>		
HEMOGLOBIN A1C TEST		
A lab test that shows how well you're controlling your blood glucose level <i>Every 3 months</i>		
CHOLESTEROL TEST		
A lab test that measures the cholesterol and triglycerides in your blood. <i>Once a year, or more often if your cholesterol is high</i>		
KIDNEY TEST		
A blood test and a urine test for a protein that can indicate kidney damage <i>Once a year</i>		

Learn the Signs of Kidney Disease

Diabetes is a leading cause of kidney disease. People with diabetes should talk to their doctor if these symptoms appear.

- Nausea and vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Fatigue and weakness
- Sleep problems
- Changes in urine output
- Decreased mental sharpness
- Muscle twitches and cramps
- Hiccups
- Swelling of feet and ankles
- Persistent itching
- High blood pressure that's difficult to control
- Chest pain and shortness of breath

Healthy Mom, **Healthy Baby**

You can help make sure that you and your baby are as healthy as possible. These simple steps make a big difference:

Talk with your doctor

Your doctor can help guide you through a healthy pregnancy. Not sure what questions to ask? Start here:

- Discuss your health conditions. For example, you might have diabetes, depression or asthma. Find out if being pregnant means you need to change your treatment.
- Tell your doctor about any medicines you take. Make sure you mention natural or over-the-counter medicines as well as prescription medicines. Some medications aren't safe to take while you're pregnant.

Take your vitamins

- Take 400 micrograms of folic acid a day. Folic acid can help prevent birth defects. A supplement is a good option.
- Make sure you get 1,000 milligrams of calcium a day. You can take a supplement or eat extra low-fat dairy and leafy greens.

Be good to your body

- A low-fat, high-fiber diet is best. Eat many small meals through the day to avoid feeling sick when you're pregnant.
- Avoid raw fish or shellfish, unpasteurized cheese and undercooked meat.
- Do not smoke, drink alcohol or do drugs. It can harm your baby before he or she is born. Check out "Stop the Urge to Smoke" on page 3 for tips on how to quit smoking.
- Stay away from kitty litter. If you must change the litter, wear gloves.
- Use seat belts correctly. Place the lap strap under your belly. The chest strap should be off to the side of your belly (not over it) and between your breasts.
- Stay active to improve your circulation, mood and energy level.

→ WE WANT TO HELP MOMS

We can help you find a doctor for you and your kids. You can also join our MetroMom program for free. MetroMom can give you educational resources and help you through your pregnancy. Call Customer Services to learn more. Call **1-800-303-9626**.



HEALTHY WAYS

to Deal with Depression



Everyone feels sad or anxious sometimes. Depression is a condition that causes these feelings to overwhelm you.

Take action if you notice these signs of depression:

- Feeling sad for many weeks
- Avoiding things you usually enjoy
- Sleeping too much or having trouble sleeping
- Swings in weight or appetite
- Having problems with concentration, memory or making decisions
- Feeling hopeless or guilty
- Thoughts of suicide

Avoid these unhealthy ways to handle sadness:

- Isolating yourself
- Blaming yourself for being unable to “snap out of it”
- Using drugs or alcohol to feel better

There are many positive options that can help you feel better. The first step is to talk with your doctor. You can decide together what treatment is right for you.

Healthy options for treating depression include:

- **Talk therapy.** Therapy can help you

change thought patterns that are part of depression. And having someone to listen to your worries can feel like a relief.

- **Medicine.** You can work with a doctor to find an antidepressant that’s right for you. The right medicine can be used with other treatment to help you feel more stable.
- **A healthy sleep schedule.** People with depression often sleep too much or too little. Getting 8 hours of sleep every night can help.
- **Eating well and exercising.** Studies have shown that exercise and an improved diet can be effective tools for relieving depression. Even a half-hour walk every day can help.
- **Connecting with others.** Isolation can make depression worse. Reach out to friends and family for support.

Beacon Health Strategies manages all Behavioral Health Services for MetroPlus Health Plan. Visit our website for more information.

REMEMBER: Depression can make it seem like you won’t ever feel better. But treatment can help you feel like yourself again.

What Is CHF?

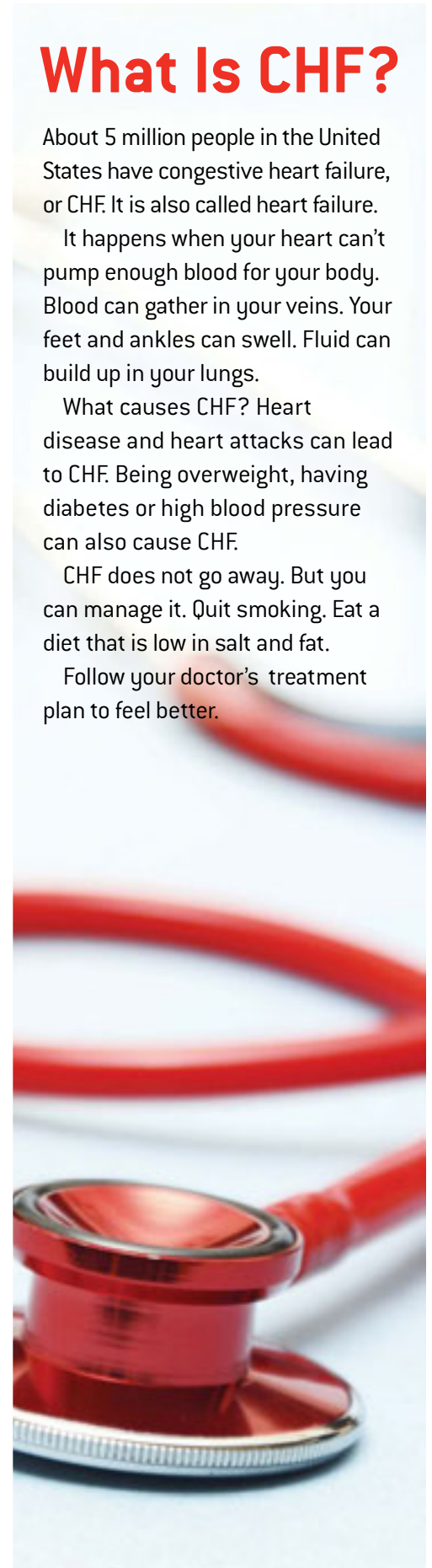
About 5 million people in the United States have congestive heart failure, or CHF. It is also called heart failure.

It happens when your heart can’t pump enough blood for your body. Blood can gather in your veins. Your feet and ankles can swell. Fluid can build up in your lungs.

What causes CHF? Heart disease and heart attacks can lead to CHF. Being overweight, having diabetes or high blood pressure can also cause CHF.

CHF does not go away. But you can manage it. Quit smoking. Eat a diet that is low in salt and fat.

Follow your doctor’s treatment plan to feel better.



MetroPlus Health Plan Privacy Notice

MetroPlus respects your privacy rights. This notice describes how we treat the nonpublic personal financial and health information (“Information”) we receive about you and what we do to keep it confidential and secure as required by New York State Insurance Law (Regulation 169).

CATEGORIES OF INFORMATION WE COLLECT AND MAY DISCLOSE

MetroPlus collects Information about you from the following sources:

- Information you give us on application and other forms or that you tell us; and
- Information about your dealings with us, the health care providers we work with, and others.

WHAT WE DO WITH YOUR INFORMATION

We do not disclose Information about our members and former members to anyone, except as permitted by law. We do use Information as permitted by law for health plan purposes, such as the following:

- To provide the health care benefits you receive as a member of MetroPlus Health Plan; for example, to arrange for treatment that you need and to pay for services you receive;
- To communicate with you about programs and services that are available to you as a MetroPlus member; and
- To manage our business and comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

HOW WE PROTECT YOUR PRIVACY

- We limit access to your Information to employees and other persons who need it to conduct MetroPlus business or comply with legal and regulatory requirements.
- Employees are subject to discipline, and may be fired, if they violate our privacy policies and procedures.
- We also use physical, electronic and procedural safeguards to keep Information confidential and secure in accordance with state and federal regulations.

FORMER MEMBERS

- If your membership with MetroPlus ends, your Information will remain protected in accordance with our policies and procedures for current members.

YOU CAN CONTACT METROPLUS AT THE ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER BELOW TO:

- Request more information about our privacy policies and practices,
- File a privacy-related complaint with us, or
- Request (in writing) to review Information about you in our records.

Customer Services – MetroPlus Health Plan

160 Water Street, 3rd Floor

New York, NY 10038

Phone: 1-800-303-9626

TTY: 1-800-881-2812 or 711

Customer Service Hours:

Monday to Saturday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.



You Ask, We Answer

We give you answers about refilling your medications.

Q. Why do I need to fill in a health profile when I order my medicine for home delivery?

A. The pharmacist wants to make sure your medicine is safe for you. When you fill in a health profile, he or she can check for problems or allergies.

You will need to update your health profile and insurance information when you order online. Your pharmacy may also ask for this information

Q. My doctor just prescribed a new medication. What do I need to do?

A. Make sure you understand why and how long you are taking the medication. If you have questions, ask your doctor or your pharmacist. Take notes about your medicine. Learn what each pill looks like.

Keep pill bottles in a cool, dry dark location in your home. Keep them out of reach of kids. Never share medication with a friend or family member.

Q. Can I get medicine refills delivered to my home?

A. Yes! First, set up an online account at CVS.com. When you sign in, click Pharmacy.

If you are signed up for Prescription Manager, you can order your prescriptions right there. Check the box next to the name of the medicine. Then click the Selected Prescriptions button. Or click the Refill Prescriptions button on the left. Then follow the steps. You can choose to have your refills delivered. Or you can pick them up at a CVS pharmacy.



Do you have high blood pressure? Here is how to take care of yourself:

1. Know your numbers. What was your blood pressure at your last appointment? For most people, the goal is to keep blood pressure at or below 130/80 mmHg.

2. Take your medication as you're told to. The only way medication can work is if you take it the right way.

3. Eat a healthy diet. Avoid fat and salt. Fill up on whole grains, vegetables and fruits.

4. Stay active. Find an exercise that works for you. Maybe you can walk for 10 minutes every day. Or you would enjoy swimming at a local club. Is jogging your thing? Just make sure you do a little every day.

Tips for Living With COPD

COPD stands for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. It is a long-term (chronic) disease that affects your lungs (pulmonary system).

It makes it very hard to breathe. You cannot cure COPD. But you can find ways to cope with it.

QUIT SMOKING. This is the best way to feel better. You'll start breathing better as soon as you quit. Turn to page 3 for tips to stop your cravings.

PRACTICE BREATHING

EXERCISES. Your doctor can connect you to people who can teach you good exercises.

KNOW YOUR TREATMENT PLAN.

Your doctor may suggest oxygen therapy. You might get inhalers. Surgery is also an option for a few people. No matter what your treatment is, be sure to follow it. Work with your doctor.

PLAN YOUR DAYS. Plan your activities for when you feel your best. Rest when you need to. And make everyday chores easier on yourself. For example: Keep a chair in the kitchen and sit when you need a rest. Take baths instead of showers.