

Summer 2023



# WellBeing



**Get a reward for making healthy choices!**  
If you see this symbol, go to [metroplusrewards.org](https://metroplusrewards.org)  
to learn how you can get member rewards!

## Have you had a colorectal screening?

Many people don't delay scheduling health checks for breast cancer, cervical cancer, or other diseases. But when it comes to screenings for cancer of the colon and rectum, a lot of us procrastinate.

The fact is, this screening isn't as bad as you think. It's not painful, and it's fast. Tests can also find abnormal growths — called polyps — before cancer develops.

There are a few types of **screening tests** for colorectal cancer:

- The fecal immunochemical test (FIT) looks for blood in the stool. This test is given once a year.
- A stool test (gFOBT or iFOBT) looks for blood in the stool. This test is done once a year.
- A virtual colonoscopy uses X-rays to view the inside of the colon and rectum. This test is given every five years.
- A colonoscopy is a procedure that checks the entire colon and rectum with a camera. This test is given every 10 years.

Your doctor may test you more often based on your health history.



### Does your doctor use MyChart?

MyChart is a free online portal that helps you manage your health information. Use the portal to make an appointment or ask for a medication refill. You can also check test results and send a message to your doctor's office. To sign up for MyChart, **click here**.

Visit us at [metroplus.org/medicare](https://metroplus.org/medicare)

Don't miss important information about your coverage. Let us know when you move or change your phone number so that we can stay in touch. Call Member Services at **866.986.0356 (TTY: 711)**.

# Why high blood pressure is a problem

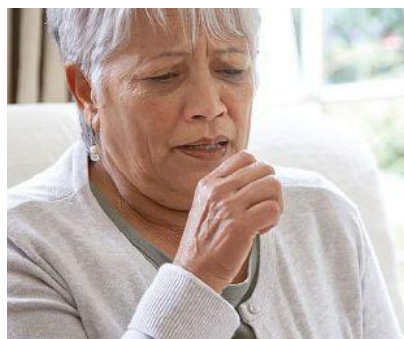
As blood moves through the arteries, it puts pressure on the artery walls. This is your blood pressure. It goes up and down during the day depending on your activities. Your blood pressure is considered high when you consistently have systolic readings of 130mmHg or higher or diastolic readings of 80mmHg or higher.

It's important to keep tabs on your blood pressure. If it's high and you don't know it, or if you don't control it, you may be at greater risk for health problems. Besides a heart attack, high blood pressure can cause heart disease, stroke, and chronic kidney disease.

Blood pressure tends to go up as you get older. People who are overweight or have certain medical problems, such as diabetes, are also at risk.

It's never too late to start making changes that help your blood pressure. Here are some steps you can take to prevent and/or control high blood pressure:

- **Eat a healthy diet.** Choose foods that are low in saturated fat, and include lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Add a fruit or vegetable to every meal. For instance, try fruit in your cereal, spinach on your sandwich, and chopped broccoli in your pasta.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** If you are overweight and would like help managing your weight, talk with your doctor.
- **Watch your salt intake.** Aim for no more than 2,300 milligrams a day, which is about 1 teaspoon of salt.
- **Focus on fitness.** Aim to get 30 minutes of activity most days of the week.
- **Manage your stress levels.** Activities like meditating, listening to music, and exercise can help you relax and lower your blood pressure.
- **Don't smoke.** Talk with your doctor for help with quitting. Also, find information on [nysmokefree.com](http://nysmokefree.com).
- **Limit alcohol.** Consuming too much alcohol can increase your blood pressure and cause weight gain.
- **Take your medication.** If healthy lifestyle changes aren't enough to control high blood pressure, your doctor may suggest medicines.



## Watch out for signs of COPD

You may mistake shortness of breath as a natural part of aging. It's not. It could be a sign of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It's important to find it early so you can begin treatment. If you have shortness of breath, chronic coughing, recurring lung infections, wheezing, or fatigue, talk with your doctor. To learn more about COPD, **watch this video**.

# Your ER discharge checklist

You went to the emergency room (ER), received the care you needed, and now it's time to go home. **What happens next?**

Your priority once you leave is to prevent having to repeat your visit. That's why it's important to follow the instructions you receive when you're discharged from the ER.

Use this handy checklist to stay on track with your recovery:

- **Make your next appointments.** See your doctor within about seven days of coming home. This will give you a chance to talk with your doctor about your hospital stay.
- **Check your symptoms.** Let your doctor know whether you have any new health issues or any symptoms get worse.
- **Fill any new prescriptions.** Take the medication as prescribed. If you have questions or issues taking your medication, talk with your doctor or ask the pharmacist.
- **Take care of yourself.** Follow your doctor's orders for self-care after leaving the ER, such as resting and drinking plenty of fluids.



## Speak up for good health

The better you and your doctor communicate, the more likely you are to feel better and be healthy. Asking questions — and understanding the answers — can lead to a quicker, more accurate diagnosis and the best possible care.

## 5 tips to help you remember your medicine

You're busy — sometimes too busy to remember to take the medicine you may need to get better or stay well. Sound familiar? Then **try these tricks** so that you won't forget your next dose:

1. To help jog your memory, leave a note on your medicine cabinet, fridge, or anywhere else you'll be sure to see it.
2. Store your medications in weekly pillboxes with separate sections for each day or time of day. This helps you know if you missed a dose.
3. Set an alarm on your watch or phone for when it's time to take your medicine.
4. Take your pills around the same time you do other routine activities, such as eating or brushing your teeth.
5. Keep your medicine near a calendar and write down every time you take it.





# Improve Your WellBeing



## 3 ways to ease into exercise

Maybe you're new to exercise. Or maybe you've been away from it for a while. Either way, getting off to a slow start helps prevent soreness and injury.

Talk with your doctor first if you aren't used to being active. But don't be discouraged just because your exercise skills are rusty. Almost everyone can do some type of exercise and get health benefits from it.

Aerobic activity helps you burn off calories and keep your heart and lungs in better shape. Walking is a great choice for many people. These three tips can help you start on the right foot:

1. Start by walking for five to 10 minutes. Aim to gradually work up to walking for 30 minutes at a time.
2. Use your cane or walker, if you have one. It can help keep you steady on your feet and take weight off painful joints.
3. Find the right pace for you. Walk fast enough to feel as if you're working fairly hard, but not too fast to carry on a conversation.

Check with your doctor before starting or resuming exercise. Ask whether there are any activities you should avoid or modify. To take our quiz on senior fitness, [click here](#).

## Do you know your body mass index (BMI)?

This number uses your height and weight to determine your weight category. To calculate your BMI, [click here](#).

## Model of Care Process

MetroPlusHealth has a **Model of Care (MOC)** that describes how we will provide our Dual-Eligible (D-SNP and MAP) members with the special and high-quality care that they need. The first step in the MOC process is filling out your Health Risk Assessment (HRA). The HRA should be filled out when you first join MetroPlusHealth and then every year thereafter, as long as you are a MetroPlusHealth member. Once your HRA is in our system, we will create a plan to maintain and/or improve your health, built just for your needs. This plan will help you stay on track for cancer screenings, diabetes checkups, and important vaccinations.

Last year we completed more HRAs than we did in 2021. Please help us complete even more in 2023! If you think you're due for your annual HRA, please call **212.908.3210 (TTY: 711)**.

## Want to learn more about MOC?

Call our Customer Service team at **866.986.0356 (TTY: 711)**. For general information about MOC, visit the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services website at **CMS.gov**.

Developed by Krames, a WebMD Ignite solution © 2023. The covered entity does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in its health programs and activities. Visit us at [metroplus.org/medicare](https://metroplus.org/medicare). ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 866.986.0356 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 **866.986.0356 (TTY: 711)**。

