

Fall 2024

WellBeing



When you see this symbol, go to metroplusrewards.org to learn how you can earn a member reward.

Get your flu shot to stay healthy

It's flu shot season again. The flu vaccine is especially important for people at high risk. Older adults and people with chronic medical issues face a higher risk for flu-related problems, such as pneumonia and bronchitis. The flu can also lead to a hospital stay.

Get your flu shot when it becomes available this fall. To find a flu vaccination site near you, click [here](#). A high-dose flu vaccine is available for people ages 65 and older. It can help boost protection an extra 24%. Also, ask your doctor when you should get a pneumonia shot.

If you get the flu, there are some things you can do to feel better. Get plenty of rest until your symptoms are better. Make sure to drink hot liquids to help with nasal congestion. If your symptoms get worse or you have new symptoms, let your provider know. For more tips on treating a cold and the flu, click [here](#).

Protect against RSV

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) can cause more than annoying coughs and sneezes. Infants, young children, and older adults are more likely to become seriously ill. A vaccine is available for people ages 60 and older. Ask your doctor about the RSV vaccine.



Earn a \$10 reward



You can earn a \$10 reward for getting your flu shot. Also, get all COVID-19 shots and boosters if you haven't already. To register for member rewards, click [here](#).

Visit us at 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)**.

Improve balance to reduce fall risk

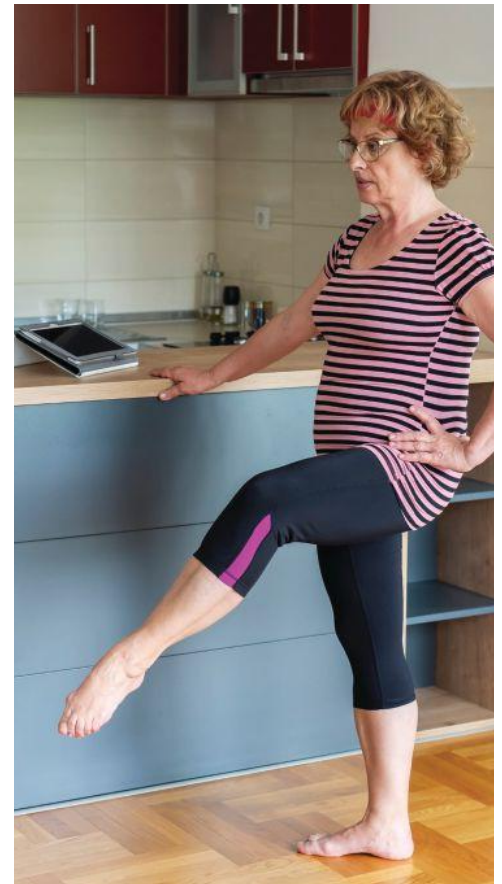
One out of four adults ages 65 and older suffers a fall each year — and more than 3 million end up in emergency rooms with fall-related injuries. Poor balance plays a role in many of these falls.

Exercise is one of the best measures against falls. The weaker your muscles are, the greater your risk of falling. Exercise helps build and maintain strength as well as improve balance. Almost anyone can exercise, regardless of age and health. Walking or swimming for 30 minutes most days of the week may be a good way to start. Or consider taking a class in tai chi to improve balance and coordination.

Try this balance exercise:

Single leg balance

1. Stand close to a chair, wall, or table for balance.
2. Bend your right knee and lift your right foot off the ground while you balance on the opposite leg. Hold for 10 seconds.
3. Repeat 10 to 15 times. Repeat 10 to 15 more times with your left foot.



Prevent falls in your home

Look for any hazards that can make you trip. Also, consider installing handrails and grab bars. For more tips, click [here](#).



Mammograms help find breast cancer early

Have you had a mammogram recently? You might be due for this screening. A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast that checks for breast cancer. It can help find cancer early, before you have symptoms. When you find cancer early, it is less likely to have spread. Finding cancer early also means you can get treatment sooner.

If you are at average risk, experts recommend getting a mammogram every two years for women ages 40 through 74. If you are unsure about how often to get a mammogram, talk with your doctor.

Earn a reward

Get your mammogram to earn a reward. To report your mammogram, click [here](#).



When to go to urgent care or the emergency room

Where should you go if it's after hours or you have an emergency? Thinking ahead can help you make better choices.

Urgent care

When your need is pressing — but not an emergency — an urgent care center or clinic can often help when your doctor's office is not an option. (Weekends and many holidays, for example.) Doctors here can treat problems like:

- Fevers
- Sore throats
- Bladder infections
- Ear or eye infections

Some centers may do X-rays and lab tests on-site. You can get a medicine prescription, if needed.

Know what's an emergency

ERs save lives, but they're costly — and your wait can seem endless if your problem isn't urgent. Reserve the ER for true emergencies. Examples include chest pain, weakness in an arm or leg, trouble breathing, major broken bones, severe allergic reactions, seizures, uncontrolled bleeding, and severe burns.



Are you eating a meal's worth of snacks?

According to a new study, snacks account for one-quarter of most adults' daily energy intake — equal to the amount of energy in a meal.

To keep your noshing under control, choose filling snacks rich in nutrients. Some smart choices include low-fat yogurt and fruit and apple slices or rice cakes with nut butter.

Keep healthier options in sight and within reach. And aim to snack at the table, not in front of a screen. That way, you'll stay tuned to hunger and fullness cues rather than mindlessly munching.



Improve Your WellBeing



How you cook is as important as what you cook

It's baking season! And as long as your repertoire extends beyond cookies, that's good news for your health. Baking, roasting, or broiling your food is better for you than frying it. (You'll cut calories and fat, especially when you replace deep frying.) You should be able to adapt most recipes for the oven. Want to try a new recipe this fall? Click [here](#).



Shorter days making you blue?

Has your mood changed with the seasons? A type of depression called seasonal affective disorder (SAD) often starts in the late fall or early winter and lasts until spring or summer. Along with symptoms of major depression, people with SAD may withdraw from social activities and overeat carbohydrate-rich foods. Talk with your doctor if you have concerns. Treatments are available. Learn more at samhsa.gov/mental-health.

High cholesterol: More than a feeling

You can't feel high cholesterol. But you can improve it — once you know you have it. Go for a cholesterol test every five years, unless your doctor recommends a different schedule. Over time, a high level of low-density lipoprotein (LDL), or "bad," cholesterol raises your risk for heart attack. To take a quick cholesterol quiz, click [here](#).

All types of smoking are bad for your health

There's no safe way to use tobacco. Even tobacco- or nicotine-free versions emit tar and carbon monoxide that can harm your health. Certain types were found to increase a person's risk for stroke, heart disease, and diabetes.

Learn about our [tobacco-cessation program](#). You can also visit smokefree.gov or nysmokefree.com for support. For free nicotine patches or lozenges, call [866.697.8487](tel:866.697.8487).

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