

# Renew

Healthier. Happier. You.

Summer 2015



## Assign the leader of your health care team

There are two people who are key to the success of your health care: you and your primary care provider (PCP). It's a good idea to find one PCP to help coordinate all aspects of your health care. This is especially important if you have chronic health conditions. Then, learn as much as you can about your own well-being so you can help control your health care decisions.

“You need one person up front and central” to be the coach, says geriatrician Cynthia Boyd, M.D., associate professor at Johns Hopkins University Medical School. This can be a medical doctor, nurse practitioner or physician assistant. This key health care professional will help you deal with chronic conditions and send you to specialists as needed.

“Your providers should be thinking about the whole picture, not just certain conditions,” Boyd says. “Treating all your conditions as separate, with a different doctor for each one, can be a problem

because both the conditions and treatments can affect each other.”

Your PCP should keep a complete record of all your medications, tests, vaccines and treatments — including when you get medical care at another clinic. No matter what, Boyd says, “ask questions.”

Working side by side with your PCP can help determine the care that is right for you. And remember, Dr. You knows more about you than anyone on your health care team.



### Meet Dr. You

Look for this symbol to find simple tips on becoming your own health advocate and helping to improve your quality of life.

# Your Circle of Care

In a perfect world, everyone on your health care team would know what the others are doing. But sometimes that doesn't happen. And when doctors don't share information, mistakes may happen.

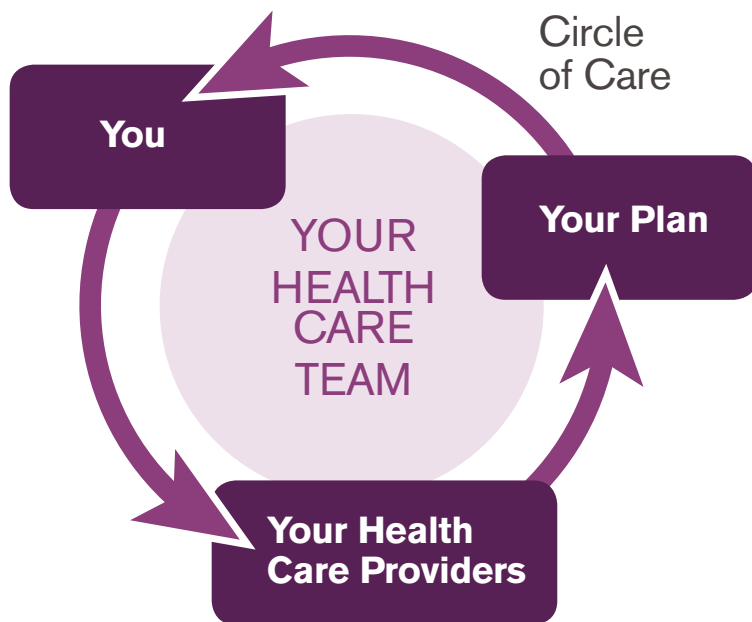
You have an important job as a patient — and we, as your health care plan, share this role with you. Your job is to help everyone on your health care team stay on the same page. When you, your health care providers and your plan work together to form a strong circle of care, it may help you get better health results and may save money on medical costs.

## Your Job

Do you have a good primary care provider (PCP)? They are the captain of your health care team. They can also help you choose network specialists and hospitals, and help coordinate your care.

To strengthen your circle of care:

- **Make a list of your doctors** (with contact information) and why you see them.
- **Talk with your doctors about all of the medications you take.** If you're not taking prescribed medications because of side effects or cost, it's important to talk to your doctor about that, too.
- **Ask your doctors to talk with each other.**
- **Ask for written care plans** with goals and a time frame. Give a copy to everyone on your team.
- **Ask your doctors if they use electronic medical records** to help reduce errors and help improve coordination of care.
- **Consider signing a HIPAA release form** so your doctors can share your health information with each other.



## Our Job

As part of your health care team, we work to:

- **Help you get access to care** from a network of health care providers including doctors, specialists, clinics and hospitals.
- **Offer programs and resources** to help you manage medical conditions like diabetes.
- **Help you plan your care** with coverage for preventive services like an annual wellness visit and annual physical.
- **Provide online resources and tools** to help you live a healthier life.

UnitedHealthcare is dedicated to helping you and your health care providers successfully coordinate your care every step of the way.



### Get the most out of every visit.

- Do you come prepared with questions?
- Do you take notes?
- Do you follow your health care team's advice?

Playing an active role can help your health care team determine the care that is right for you.

# Get Started on Your Annual Care

There are a few steps you can take each year to help you be as healthy as possible, and it starts with your annual physical and your annual wellness visit. Both are covered at no additional cost to you.

The annual wellness visit is a great chance to meet with your doctor, discuss your health goals and create a plan for prevention. It includes checking your height, weight and blood pressure. The annual physical includes a complete head-to-toe exam. These yearly visits are both covered at a \$0 co-pay.\*

To make it more convenient for you, ask your doctor to combine these two visits into one. Call your primary care provider to schedule an appointment today.

After you complete your annual wellness visit or your annual physical you may be eligible for one \$15 gift card. Call **1-855-621-1311** to redeem your reward.

Your doctor will also talk with you about any questions or concerns you may have. This is a great chance to talk with your doctor about:

- All medications you're taking
- How well you complete daily activities
- Any pain you may have
- Difficulty with bladder control
- What you do for physical activity
- Your emotional and mental health

\*A co-pay or co-insurance may apply if your doctor includes added screenings or tests, and/or you see an out-of-network doctor.



## More Tools That May Help Your Health

**Individualized Care Plan:** We are committed to helping connect you to the care you may need to live a healthier life. As a plan member, you may have answered some health and wellness questions by phone or mail. Based on your answers, you should have received an Individualized Care Plan. Discuss this information with your doctor to help determine the care that is right for you.

**Nurse Care Management Programs:** If you would like more help with your health needs, we have several nurse care management programs you may qualify for. A health team member may call you about these programs. You can also learn more by calling the Customer Service number on the back of your member ID card.

# 8 Habits to Boost Happiness


You might think about changing your hair, eating habits or workout plan. But have you thought about trying to boost your overall happiness?


“Aiming to be happy isn’t silly or selfish,” says Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ph.D., author of *The Myths of Happiness* (Penguin Press HC, 2013). “Happiness has a lot of perks beyond feeling good. Happy people tend to be healthier, more giving and have more social support.”

**HERE ARE 8 STEPS (IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER) YOU CAN TAKE TOWARD LIVING A HAPPIER LIFE:**




**1** Practice small acts of kindness.

**2** Jot down things you are thankful for in a journal. 

**3** Find simple ways to keep calm. 



**4** Connect with others regularly.

**5** Keep a list of fun distractions you can turn to when worry sets in. 



**6** Set small goals that give you something to look forward to.

**7** Repeat a positive phrase. Anything works, as long as you believe it, such as: “I am strong.” “All is well.”

**8** Relax: There are lots of relaxation poses that you can do almost anywhere.

# Diabetes 101

Diabetes can affect your body from head to toe. You may not feel sick when your blood sugar is high, but over time uncontrolled diabetes can lead to blindness, kidney failure and foot amputations. But there's good news. You can help avoid problems by controlling your blood sugar and getting regular medical exams and tests.

## WHY IS BLOOD SUGAR SELF-TESTING IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES?

You can self-test your blood sugar at any time with a blood sugar meter and a small drop of blood. Self-tests are usually done before meals, after meals and at bedtime. People who take insulin may need to test more often.

Self-testing is important because it can show you when your blood sugar is too high or too low. When you self-test regularly, it helps you and your doctor learn what can affect your blood sugar. You may know that eating and exercise can change your blood sugar levels. But stress and taking some medications can change it as well. It's important to keep track of your results and share them with your doctor.

## HOW TO BEGIN

To get started with regular self-testing, talk to your doctor. Ask about the supplies you need and how to use them correctly. Your plan covers some blood sugar meters and test strips. For more information about the supplies that are covered by your plan, call Customer Service at the number on the back of your member ID card. If you use a brand of supplies that is not covered by your plan, talk to your doctor. Ask about getting a new prescription for a covered brand.



Between exams, remember to check your feet every day. Tell your doctor if you have tingling, burning or pain; loss of feeling; changes in foot shape, color or temperature; dry, cracked skin; thick, yellow toenails; blisters, corns or ingrown toenails; or sores.



## Diabetes To-Do List

Get tested regularly. This may help find problems sooner, before they may become more serious. Here are the tests the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends for anyone with diabetes.

### Every doctor visit

- Blood pressure check

### At least twice a year

- Blood sugar test (HbA1C)
- Dental exam

### At least once a year

- Comprehensive eye exam with dilated retinal screening
- Kidney urine test for protein
- Diabetic foot exam
- Cholesterol (LDL) blood test

Need help scheduling these tests? Talk to your doctor or call the number on the back of your member ID card.

## From hospital to home

If you've been in the hospital recently, the last thing you want is to go back. Follow these tips that may help you stay healthy and stay at home:

- Set up an appointment to see your doctor within a week after getting home from the hospital.
- Ask your doctor if you'll need special supplies or equipment at home to help you get well. If yes, it's best to have those items waiting for you when you get home. If needed, ask for help getting them delivered and set up.
- Is your house safe for you in your condition? Does furniture need to be moved or rugs put away so you can get around? If you don't know, ask your doctor.
- Talk to your doctor about the reason that led to you being in the hospital. What can you do to avoid going back?
- Go over all your medications with your doctor. What should you take, and when? What should you not take? Ask for written directions to help make it easier. When you get home, call your doctor's office if you have questions.

## How to Get Connected



### ARE YOU LOOKING FOR SERVICES AND RESOURCES IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging might be a great place to start. The group's mission is to help older adults and people with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities for as long as possible.

For help finding local, state and community based organizations that serve older adults and their families in your area, visit [Eldercare.gov](http://Eldercare.gov). You can start your search by selecting ZIP code, city/state or topic.

### ARE YOU LOOKING FOR WAYS TO GIVE BACK TO YOUR COMMUNITY?

Whatever your interests and abilities, you can give back to your community by volunteering. Here are some ways to start:

- **TAKE AN INVENTORY.**  
Think about the skills and talents you already have that you'd like to share. Also think about training or activities that you've never done and might like to try.
- **DO YOUR RESEARCH.**  
What's your passion? Chances are there's a group working on your issue. Search for matches at [DoGoodLiveWell.org](http://DoGoodLiveWell.org), [1-800-volunteer.org](http://1-800-volunteer.org) and [VolunteerMatch.org](http://VolunteerMatch.org).
- **START OUT SMALL.**  
Start slowly and try a one-time event before making a commitment. That can help you be sure you've found a good fit and prevent burnout.





# Heart Health Tune-Up

**DID YOU KNOW?** According to the American Heart Association, healthy hearts beat about 100,000 times and pump 2,000 gallons of blood daily. Your body has other vital numbers and information you need to know to help protect your heart health.

## KNOW YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE AND CHOLESTEROL

- LDL cholesterol: This is also known as “bad” cholesterol.
- HDL cholesterol: This “good” cholesterol helps remove excess cholesterol from arteries.
- Triglycerides: This is another type of fat in your blood that can cause cardiovascular disease.

## KNOW YOUR MEDICATIONS

- What are the names of your medications?
- What are they designed to help?
- How often should you be taking them?
- Are you informing all of your health care providers about your entire list of prescriptions?

Knowing the answers to these questions is essential. Medications can make a world of difference, but they can’t work properly if you don’t take them properly.



### Not sure what your numbers are?

Ask your doctor at your next visit and be a smart, powerful booster of your own heart health.



Plans are insured through UnitedHealthcare Insurance Company or one of its affiliated companies, a Medicare Advantage organization with a Medicare contract and a contract with the State Medicaid Program. Enrollment in the plan depends on the plan’s contract renewal with Medicare.

The benefit information provided is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. For more information, contact the plan. Limitations, co-payments, and restrictions may apply. Benefits, formulary, pharmacy network, provider network, premium and/or co-payments/co-insurance may change on January 1 of each year.

## Healthy Help Is Just a Phone Call Away

Your happiness and satisfaction with your plan are very important to us. We want to make sure you get the information you need. Feel free to reach out to us directly if you ever have questions or need help with your plan. Just call the number on the back of your member ID card to speak with one of our friendly UnitedHealthcare® Customer Service representatives.

This publication is for informational purposes only and does not replace the care or advice of a doctor.

Always talk with a doctor before beginning any exercise program, therapy or medication.

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Health and wellness or prevention information.

**UHCCommunityPlan.com**

# How to Garden in Small Spaces

**Want to enjoy farm-fresh food that you grew yourself?**

With some sun and just a tiny bit of space, you can start gardening at home.

## IDEAS FOR INDOORS

If you have a warm and sunny window, think about growing herbs there. Try planting basil, oregano, parsley, rosemary, sage or thyme. It's important for the herbs to get enough water, but not so much that their roots stay wet. So first make sure your containers have good drainage. Then water the plants whenever the top of the soil feels dry.

## OUTDOOR OPTIONS

If you have an outdoor balcony or patio, try growing vegetables. Instead of using heavy, costly pots, try cloth grocery or tote bags. They are big enough to grow vegetables that need deep soil.

To make the most of your space, plant vegetables that grow longwise instead of sideways. (Think carrots instead of pumpkins.) Plant the vegetables that will grow tallest in the back, with shorter plants in front.

## Know and Grow

To learn more about gardening in small spaces, visit your local library or garden center. You can also check out online gardening tutorials.