Enjoy Sunshine Safely: Protect Your Skin

Your skin needs protection from the sun every day no matter where you are.

**Apply sunscreen.** Use sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher when spending time outside. It should also block the sun’s harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Don’t forget to apply it on your ears, nose, lips, tops of feet and head if your hair is very short. Remember to reapply after swimming or sweating.

**Seek shade.** Rest under an umbrella or shady tree. Indoor activities are best during midday hours when the sun is the strongest.

**Get a hat.** A hat with a wide brim can protect your face, ears and neck. Make sure to put sunscreen on those body parts even if your hat provides coverage to those areas.

**Wear sunglasses.** Look for sunglasses that wrap around and block most of the sun’s harmful UV rays.

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This information is not a complete description of benefits. Contact the plan for more information. Limitations, copays and restrictions may apply. Benefits, premiums and/or copayments/coinsurance may change on January 1 each year. The pharmacy and/or provider network may change at any time. You will receive notice when necessary.
Boost Your Nutrition with Farm Fresh Food

Summertime is a great opportunity to enjoy a bounty of fresh produce. Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, fiber and other nutrients important for good health. If you eat a diet high in vegetables and fruit, you are likely to have a reduced risk of many chronic diseases and health problems, such as stroke, diabetes, some types of cancer, heart disease and high blood pressure.

Featuring fresh produce in your diet is easier than you think. Choose recipes with vegetables or fruits as the main ingredient — such as vegetable stir fry, or fresh fruit mixed into salads. For some healthy recipes, visit emblemhealth.com/recipes. Farmers markets are a great source for fresh, locally-grown fruit and vegetables. To locate a farmers market near you, visit Harvest Home Farmers’ Market at harvesthomefm.org or GrowNYC at grownyc.org.

Managing Your Diabetes

If you have diabetes you should have at least one doctor visit per year. Ask your doctor which tests you should have and when to have them. Recommended tests include:

- **Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c) test** every 3 to 6 months.
- **Urine test** to check kidney function annually.
- **Retinal or dilated eye exam** annually by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.
- **Blood pressure check** at every visit.

It’s also important to keep your feet healthy. Wash your feet every day and wear shoes and socks at all times. Protect your feet from high heat and cold and stay active in order to keep blood flowing to your feet. Get a complete foot exam at least once a year — if possible from a podiatrist — and ask about other things you can do for proper foot care.

To join our free Diabetes Care PATH program, please call 1-866-447-8080, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 7:30 pm; Saturday, 9 am to 7:30 pm.

If your member ID has a Montefiore logo, please call 1-866-996-6683.
Take a Deep Breath

Asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are conditions that affect your lungs and may cause shortness of breath and a cough. Although they appear to be alike, the care needed for each is very different. Your doctor may have you take a spirometry test, which measures how much air you breathe in and out and how fast you can breathe out.

Stay healthy by treating your condition and taking medicines as needed.

- **For asthma**, you’ll need to use a long-term controller medicine and a quick-relief rescue medicine.
  - Long-term controller medicines are used each day to prevent an asthma attack.
  - Quick-relief rescue medicines provide fast relief at the first signs of an asthma attack. This type of medicine will not prevent an attack.

- **For COPD**, you may need to use a bronchodilator. It will help to relax the muscles around your airway. You may also need an inhaled corticosteroid to get rid of inflammation and avoid flare-ups.

When you start taking controller medicines, you may not notice a difference right away. It may take a few weeks before the inflammation in your airways is reduced. **Do not stop taking your controller medicine unless your doctor says it’s okay.**

**Have an action plan.** Visit emblemhealth.com/asthma to download and print an Asthma Action Plan. Bring it to your next doctor’s appointment and fill it out together.

To join our free Better Breathing PATH program, please call 1-866-447-8080, Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 7:30 pm; Saturday, 9 am to 7:30 pm.

If your member ID has a Montefiore logo, please call 1-866-996-6683.

**Need Help to Quit Smoking?**

Quitting smoking is not easy, but we can help you through our Tobacco-Free PATH program, available to you at no cost. You’ll get unlimited one-on-one telephone support, full coverage of nicotine replacement therapy (gum, patch, lozenge) and a personalized plan to quit.

**JOIN TODAY.** Call 1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487), Monday to Friday, 8 am to 9 pm; Saturday, 9 am to 7 pm; and Sunday 9 am to 5 pm; TTY/TDD: 711.

For a step-by-step quit guide, visit smokefree.gov.
Don’t Wait to Seek Treatment

Getting treatment early and ongoing support are key factors in staying well. This is especially true if you have been in the hospital for a behavioral health condition or newly diagnosed with a substance use disorder. Don’t wait to seek follow up treatment.

- **Visit your doctor or therapist within seven days of leaving the hospital** to address concerns right away so you can stay well. Your doctor wants to answer your questions and make sure your medication is right for you. Ask if you qualify for additional resources, such as case management services.

- **See a doctor or therapist within 14 days of being diagnosed** with a substance use disorder to ensure you are connected to the best care possible. Discuss any stressors immediately, before they get worse. If you have any concerns about treatment, they can help you work through them and provide you with ongoing support.

Improve Your Mental Health and Well-Being

Are you feeling lonely, sad, or irritable? Do your day to day activities feel overwhelming? Is life getting you down? Have you had changes in your sleeping patterns, eating habits, or energy level? Has there been an increase in your substance use?

If so, these could be the early signs of a common and treatable mental health condition. You are not alone.

**Tips to Help You Take Care of Yourself**

- Develop healthy relationships and get involved in your community
- Take a walk each day
- Get enough sleep
- Drink plenty of water and add one piece of fruit to your daily diet
- Limit alcohol consumption and stop smoking
- Manage your stress by asking for help when needed

Getting screened early and receiving follow-up care for common mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, or a substance abuse disorder can reduce the effects they may have on your health and well-being.

Take Your Medicine

Always follow your doctor’s orders when it comes to taking any prescription medication. Don’t stop taking it without getting your doctor’s okay first. If you don’t take your medicine the right way, it can cause extra doctor visits, emergency room visits, hospital stays and your health can worsen. The pharmacist can help you take medicine safely, too. Tell your doctor and pharmacist about your health issues and all the medicines you take, including vitamins and over-the-counter drugs. For extra convenience, have your medications delivered to you at no cost. Use the home delivery pharmacy, Express Scripts (express-scripts.com).

We Are Here to Support You

If you need help making an appointment for yourself or a family member, call Emblem Behavioral Health Services at 1-888-447-2526. If your member ID has a Montefiore logo, please call 1-800-401-4822. You can also use our Find a Doctor tool at emblemhealth.com/findadoctor.
Prevent Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis causes bones to become thin and weak and increases your risk of a fracture.

There are no symptoms in the early stages of osteoporosis. Many times, people will have a fracture before learning they have osteoporosis. If you are over age 65 and have recently had a fracture, ask your doctor if you should have a bone mineral density (BMD) test. It’s a quick and painless test. Most professionals recommend women get tested beginning at age 65 and men at age 70.

**You could be at increased risk of osteoporosis if you have:**
- A broken bone caused by normal activities
- Chronic rheumatoid arthritis or kidney disease
- Early menopause
- A history of hormone treatment, prostate cancer or breast cancer
- A family history of osteoporosis

**Keep your bones strong:**
- Take calcium and vitamin D
- Do weight-bearing exercises such as walking, dancing and playing tennis
- Give up unhealthy habits like smoking and drinking alcohol

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We Want to Hear from You!

We want to make sure you get the most out of your plan benefits. Fill out a brief health risk survey to help us better understand your health care needs. Your answers allow us to give you specific information about staying healthy, getting well and living better. You’ll also learn about important services available to you, including programs to manage diabetes, heart disease and other chronic conditions and to coordinate transportation or home health needs.

Access the survey online at [surveygroup.com/ehmedicaresurvey/?site=login](http://surveygroup.com/ehmedicaresurvey/?site=login) or scan this QR code using your smart phone.

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Tips to Improve Your Physical Health

- Go to your doctor at least once a year and get all recommended screenings.
- Review medications with your doctor, including over-the-counter medicine and vitamins.
- Ask questions about how to relieve pain, like back pain and stiff and painful joints.
- Tell your doctor about any problems, like climbing stairs, bathing, eating or shopping for groceries.
- Ask your doctor for help with urinary incontinence if you’re having trouble.

Listen to your doctor’s advice about needed tests, recommendations for changes in diet and physical activity and taking all medications as prescribed. Your doctor can provide guidance specifically for you.
Protect Yourself

You have the power to stop Medicare fraud and identity theft. Protect yourself against both by following these tips and sharing them with your friends:

• **Protect your private health information.** Don’t let anyone use your member ID, and never give your personal, medical or financial information to anyone you don’t know and trust.

• **Always check your statements.** Review your health plan statement to make sure you received all the services listed and that services were only billed once. Billing for services not received and for the same service twice are common types of Medicare fraud.

• **Free means free.** Don’t give your member ID when getting free health services. It’s not required.

If you suspect fraud, call us at **1-888-4KO-Fraud** (1-888-456-3728).

Manage Your Rheumatoid Arthritis

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA) is a chronic disease that typically affects the small joints in hands and feet first, then spreads throughout the arms and legs, causing painful swelling. Early diagnosis and proper medical therapy can reduce symptoms and poor function.

• Schedule an appointment with a rheumatologist for a proper diagnosis and learn your best treatment options.

• Begin treatment with disease-modifying anti-rheumatic drugs (DMARDs). They not only relieve symptoms but also slow progression of the disease.

• Visit your doctor frequently to track your disease and check for any medication side effects. With the right medications, many patients can achieve “remission” (no signs of active disease).
Get Appointments in Good Time

Get the care you need, when you need it. EmblemHealth sets the following guidelines requiring our network doctors to schedule appointments within the given time frames:

- **Urgent care:** within 24 hours of calling your doctor
- **Nonurgent sick visits:** within 48 to 72 hours of calling your doctor
- **Routine mental health care or drug abuse concerns:** within 10 business days of your request
- **Routine care and specialty care:** within 4 weeks of calling your doctor

Want help finding a doctor? Visit [emblemhealth.com/findadoctor](http://emblemhealth.com/findadoctor) or call Customer Service at the phone number on the back of your member ID card.

We Speak Your Language

Our language translation service offers free phone interpretation in more than 100 languages, including but not limited to Spanish, Russian, Chinese, French, Japanese and Korean. If you need help, please call the Customer Service phone number on the back of your member ID card. Your relationship with your provider is important. When selecting a provider, consider exploring the languages spoken in the office and by your provider.

Stay Healthy and Live Better

Visit [emblemhealth.com/healthandwellness](http://emblemhealth.com/healthandwellness) to explore health and wellness programs, tools and resources to help you stay fit and enhance your quality of life. You also have access to Healthy Discounts programs, such as acupuncture, massage therapy, nutrition counseling, weight loss services and more, at no additional cost to you.

Reminder About Lab Services

…To ensure coverage and keep your costs low, all samples should be submitted to Quest Diagnostics laboratories. It’s a good idea to remind the technician who performs the lab services.

Seeking Care?

Your primary care physician’s (PCP’s) office is the best place to visit for nonemergency care such as checkups, flu, sore throats and sprains. When your PCP is not available, you can get quick and convenient health care at a Retail Health Clinic and there’s no appointment required.

Community Health Centers also offer services after normal business hours, on weekend or holidays, and with walk-in options — no referral required.

Use our Find a Doctor tool at [emblemhealth.com/findadoctor](http://emblemhealth.com/findadoctor) to locate an in-network provider, retail health clinic or community health center near you.

This information is available for free in other languages. Please call the customer service number on the back of this newsletter, daily from 8 am to 8 pm. Esta información está disponible gratuita en otros idiomas. Por favor llame a nuestro número de servicios de atención al cliente, localizado en la parte posterior de este boletín, diariamente entre las 8 am y las 8 pm.
HEALTH AND WELLNESS OR PREVENTION INFORMATION

Understand Your Health Care Costs

Our Treatment Cost Calculator is an easy-to-use tool that can estimate your out-of-pocket costs for covered services and procedures before you visit your doctor. It’s a great way to start a discussion with your doctor on what option may work best for you. Try it today!

Log in to emblemhealth.com. Go to the Manage Your Health section and select Treatment Cost Calculator.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Customer Service
PPO: 1-866-557-7300
HMO: 1-877-344-7364
Ask to speak with someone in your preferred language. Daily, 8 am to 8 pm

Tobacco-Free PATH Program
New York State residents
1-866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)

Lab Services — Quest Diagnostics
1-888-277-8772 (appointments)
1-866-697-8378 (customer service)

Mental Health and Substance Abuse
Emblem Behavioral Health Services Program (EBHSP) for HMO members:
1-888-447-2526
BeaconOptions for PPO members:
1-866-318-7595

PATH Program
1-866-447-8080

Report Insurance Fraud
1-888-4KO-Fraud (1-888-456-3728)

For TDD assistance, any of the above numbers can be reached by calling NYS Relay Services at 711.

Web Resources
emblemhealth.com/medicare
(mail-order pharmacy)
questdiagnostics.com
(lab services)
beaconhealthoptions.com
(behavioral health services)
emblemhealth.com/familycaregiver

HIP Health Plan of New York (HIP) is an HMO plan and Group Health Incorporated (GHI) is a PPO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in HIP and GHI depends on contract renewal. HIP and GHI are EmblemHealth companies.