

A MEMBERSHIP SERVICE FROM
THE US FAMILY HEALTH PLAN

Spring 2023

healthy Lifestyle



Add Spark Back to
**Your
Workout**

See page 4

Protect Yourself Online

Many of us are spending more time indoors and connected than ever before. It's important we take a moment to remember basic safety steps we should all take to protect ourselves and loved ones online. Here are several simple tips that can keep you safe while online:

1. Make sure all your devices are updated and are set to auto update. Setting all your devices to auto update will save you time and trouble.
2. Make sure all your tablets, smartphones, and computers have anti-virus software on them and are set to auto update.
3. Please make sure you check that your privacy settings are set correctly on all your devices and sites you visit.
4. Make sure you use strong passwords and don't reuse your passwords. It's important to remember that you may have a strong password, but if the site you use doesn't follow proper safety measures, your account details, including your password, may be exposed and used to gain access to your accounts.

5. Enable 2 Factor Authentication everywhere you can. This will help protect your account in case your password is ever leaked or compromised.
6. Be careful with what personal information you share. Once it's posted, it's posted for life and there is no taking it back.
7. One of the best ways to protect your accounts and passwords is to use a password manager.

8. Watch out for phishing emails and avoid clicking on links in any emails you may be suspicious about.
9. Be careful what you download and from where.
10. Be cautious when buying anything from social media sites.

Hopefully these small tips will help you and your loved ones be safer online and have a more enjoyable experience.



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Living Healthier This Spring

Take a peek at these special spring health observances. Learn about health conditions, focus on screenings, and find tips to live healthier.

National Blood Donor Month

While January's National Blood Donor Month has passed, it's never too late to donate blood and save lives. More people need blood this time of year. Find a blood drive near you at redcrossblood.org.

Cervical Health Awareness Month

The National Cervical Cancer Coalition focuses on cervical cancer prevention and education every January. However, it is a yearlong health priority. You can prevent cervical cancer with vaccines and screenings. Learn more at www.nccc-online.org/cervical-health-awareness-month.

American Heart Month

February's American Heart Month was our annual month-long reminder to take our heart health seriously. Kick-start your plan today at heart.org.

National Colon Cancer Awareness Month

National Colon Cancer Awareness Month in March reminds us that colorectal cancer screenings are vital to early detection. Visit cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/resources/features/colorectalawareness/index.htm for more information.

Alcohol Awareness Month

The CDC says more than 140,000 people die from drinking too much alcohol each year. During April's Alcohol Awareness Month, take a moment to visit cdc.gov/alcohol/index.htm. There you will find facts, tools, answers to questions, and help from the CDC.

STD Awareness Week

April hosts STD Awareness Week, formerly known as STI Awareness Month. With about 20 million new STD cases each year, the CDC says we should focus on talking, testing, and treating for a healthier future. Learn more at cdc.gov/std/saw/resources.htm.

Mental Health Awareness Month

May offers us a chance to come together to make mental health better for everyone. To find support or get involved, visit nami.org/Get-Involved/Awareness-Events/Mental-Health-Awareness-Month.



Colorectal Cancer Screening: Key to Early Detection

Screening tests are used to spot colorectal cancer before it causes any symptoms. Usually, the sooner cancer is found, the better the chance that treatment will be more successful. Here are the American Cancer Society's screening recommendations for men and women for colorectal cancer. Talk with your provider to find out the screening schedule and frequency that is best for you. They can also help you choose the best screening method.

Screening Test	How Often
Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT) (stool card)	Every year, beginning at age 45
Fecal immunochemical test (FIT Kit)	Every year, beginning at age 45
Stool DNA test (mt-sDNA) (Cologuard®)	Every 3 years, beginning at age 45
Flexible sigmoidoscopy (FSIG)	Every 5 years, beginning at age 45
Virtual colonoscopy	Every 10 years, beginning at age 45
Colonoscopy	Every 10 years, beginning at age 45

The Hidden Danger in Plastics

Did you know companies use colorless, oily liquids to make plastics more flexible or durable? They are called *phthalates*. They're also common in soaps, shampoos, and cosmetics, where they act as stabilizers. These chemicals may pose health hazards, especially for pregnant women. Government researchers found that pregnant women with more phthalate residue in their urine were more likely to give birth early. They may also be linked to the causes for diseases such as diabetes, childhood asthma, and breast and uterine cancers.

While researchers learn more, it makes sense to use less plastic where you can. To cut back:

- **Don't microwave plastics or store hot foods or drinks in them.** Avoid containers with the figures 3, 6, 7, V, or PVC in the recycling symbol. Try to choose glass, porcelain, or stainless-steel containers.
- **Check labels on personal care products, such as** nail polish, hair spray, aftershave, soap, and shampoo. Avoid any with the word *diethyl phthalate* (DEP)—the most common type of phthalate. Or choose products that specifically say phthalate-free.
- **Wash floors regularly and remove dust from your home.** Phthalates are used in vinyl flooring. Particles can also linger in dust.

Bring the Spark Back to Your Workout

Has your workout routine started to get boring? When there's just no excitement anymore, don't give up on working out for good. Instead, try these tips to bring the spark back.

- **Get out of your comfort zone.** Now's the time to try salsa, Zumba, or tai chi. Check what classes your gym, community center, or recreation association offers. Pick something you've never done and keep trying different activities until you find one you stick with.
- **Stimulate your mind.** Get your brain in on the action. Yoga challenges your body and mind by connecting movement with breath. Start with a beginner's class and let your instructor know if you have any physical limitations.
- **Spice up your steps.** Find a new walking route, like a new park or different neighborhood. Challenge yourself with hilly routes or speeding up your pace for short bursts.
- **Find your groove.** Put on your favorite song and start moving! Dance to a few songs in a row or have mini sessions throughout the day, one song at a time—whatever keeps you grooving.
- **Clean up your act.** Cleaning can cross things off your to-do list while you exercise. Chores like dusting, mopping, vacuuming, and yardwork all count as physical activity.



Blueberry Blender Muffins

Ingredients

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|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 2 cups rolled oats | 3 egg whites |
| 2 tbsp. ground flaxseeds | ¼ cup honey |
| 1 tsp. baking soda | 1 tsp. vanilla extract |
| 1 tsp. baking powder | 1½ cups fresh blueberries |
| 1 cup unsweetened applesauce | 12 cupcake/muffin liners |

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Place oats, flaxseeds, baking soda, and baking powder into a blender. Blend at high speed until ground up like flour, about 30 to 60 seconds. Add applesauce, egg whites, honey, and vanilla extract. Blend until smooth and creamy, or about one to two minutes.
3. Line muffin tin with liners, then pour in equal amounts of batter into each cupcake/muffin liner. Fill each until about ⅓ to ½ full. Divide blueberries among each muffin, pressing them into the batter.
4. Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until baked completely through and lightly browned.

Per Serving Serves 12; serving size is one muffin. Each serving provides: 150 calories, 2.5 g total fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 0 g cholesterol, 160 mg sodium, 29 g total carbohydrate, 4 g dietary fiber, 10 g sugars, and 6 g protein.



Budget-Friendly Pasta Salad Dinner

If you're looking for a quick and simple weeknight dinner option that also costs less, this is the recipe for you!

Ingredients

- 1 lb. whole wheat penne pasta
- 4 large eggs, medium or hard-boiled
- 1 lb. broccoli
- 1 large red bell pepper
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 3 tbsp. Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 15-oz. can low-sodium black beans, rinsed and drained
- ¼ cup chopped green onions



Directions

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Follow the package cooking instructions for your pasta. While the pasta is cooking, chop the following ingredients into small pieces: eggs, broccoli, and red bell pepper. Set them aside. In a separate bowl, prepare dressing by whisking together the mayonnaise, Dijon mustard, salt, black pepper, and red wine vinegar. Once the pasta has finished cooking, drain and rinse with cold water.

In a large bowl, combine the cooked pasta and dressing. Stir until the pasta is fully coated.

Next, add in the eggs, broccoli, red bell pepper, and black beans. Toss everything together to combine.

Top with the chopped green onions, serve, and enjoy.

Per Serving Serves eight; serving size is about 1 cup. Each serving provides: 350 calories, 10 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 95 mg cholesterol, 430 mg sodium, 53 g total carbohydrate, 13 g dietary fiber, 4 g total sugars, and 17 g protein.



A Checklist to Help You Beat the Monday Blues

On Friday afternoon, the possibilities for the weekend seem endless. But just a couple days later, feelings of anxiety and fear may arise.

If you have the “Sunday scaries” or the “Monday blues”—worries about work as the new week begins—you’re not alone.

According to a recent survey by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, one in four people has more trouble sleeping Sunday night than any other evening. Nearly three-quarters of those say it’s due to work stress.

No job is perfect, but that doesn’t mean you’re doomed to dread each Monday. Stop tossing and turning and head into the week happier. Here’s a checklist to help you better prepare for Mondays:

□ Practice relaxation. Try downloading an app with mindfulness or relaxation exercises. Techniques like deep breathing and meditation can ease tension and clear your mind so you truly rest and recharge on your days off.

Don’t reserve these rituals for the weekend, though. Building in wellness breaks early in the week can help keep stress levels in check.

□ Rack up some wins. One reason Mondays may seem scarier? You haven’t yet checked many items off your to-do list. Start your first workday of the week by simplifying your task list. So, get clear on the highest priority. Start there—and celebrate each completed item, large or small.

□ Save heavy lifts for later. Schedule more challenging tasks or meetings later in the week when you can. Knowing you’ll have the weekend to recover after tough or demanding activities can make them feel less daunting.

□ Explore your options. Talk with your supervisor about remote or hybrid work options, flexible scheduling, and other ways to make your job your own. Feeling a sense of control over your work environment helps decrease stress and increase motivation. Also, being able to prioritize a healthy work-life balance leads to greater job satisfaction.

4 Steps on the Path to Good Mental Health

When you're seriously ill, a hospital stay is sometimes just what you need to get the problem under control. That's as true after a mental health crisis as after a heart attack. In the hospital, you can work with professionals to fine-tune your treatment and learn self-care skills.

But what happens after you go home? You need to keep building on the progress you made in the hospital. Otherwise, a mental health issue, such as depression or anxiety, may start to get worse again.

Step #1: Take a step toward lasting recovery.

One of the first things you should do after leaving the hospital is meet with your health care team.

Step #2: Make an appointment with your provider.

Work with your primary care provider or a mental health provider to keep taking your medication and get the right treatment. This helps you feel better now and may also reduce your risk of having another mental health crisis in the future.

Step #3: Schedule a visit with your therapist.

Often, a therapist is part of your support team. Coordinated, continuous treatment may help you get back to life at home and stay on the

road to recovery. Ideally, your first mental health visit should occur within a week after getting home from the hospital.

Step #4: Keep moving in the right direction.

In your first weeks back home, give yourself time to heal. Ease back slowly into your activities. Follow a regular routine for eating and sleeping. If any problems come up, don't hesitate to call your health care team.



988: The New Mental Health Hotline

There's a number for you to call for mental health support—**988**. When you call this new number, it sends your call to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. You can call it for yourself or about another person you're worried about. You will talk with a trained counselor. They will offer you support and resources. You can talk about:

- Thoughts about suicide
- Problems with substance use
- Any other type of mental or emotional worry

The lifeline is free and confidential. It is available 24/7. If you'd rather type, you can even send a text to **988** or chat online at <https://988lifeline.org/chat>.



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Ask Member Services

Q: Why did I receive a bill in the mail?

A: The most common reason for receiving a bill is the biller has the wrong billing information in their system or they have billed Medicare or a different TRICARE contractor in error.

Before calling USFHP Member Services, you can call the customer service phone number on the billing statement to verify the biller has the correct insurance information and they have billed the correct insurer. You can find the billing information for USFHP on the back of your insurance card.



Q: Does USFHP have a member portal?

A: Yes, USFHP has a member portal managed by HealthTrio. You can register your account by visiting pmc.healthtrioconnect.com. Once there, click on "Member Registration." It will ask for your member ID number (from your member ID card) as well as other required information. On the portal, you will be able to:

- Access your Benefits Summary quickly
- View and download claims details
- Connect to the More Benefits Discount Program, an exclusive benefit for USFHP members
- View and track the status of your care referrals
- Print a temporary ID card
- Receive important health maintenance information

Retail Network Pharmacy Fill Limits

Beginning April 1, 2023, USFHP will follow the TRICARE rules for Retail Network Pharmacy Fill Limits.

All beneficiaries, except active-duty service members, must get refills for select brand-name maintenance drugs through MXP (Maxor Mail Order) or one of the PacMed Clinic Pharmacies if you are in the Puget Sound region.

This rule limits ALL military retirees and active-duty family members across the country to only refilling select medications at pharmacies that buy from the Department of Defense (DOD).

Members are allowed to fill select brand-name medications at local retail network pharmacies a maximum of two times before using MXP or a PacMed pharmacy. The third time, you're responsible to pay 100% of the cost. This does not apply to the vast majority of generic medications.

You can check to see if your drug is affected by visiting www.health.mil/selectdruglist.

If you are not using MXP, you can visit www.maxor.com or call **866-408-2459** to get started.

A more detailed letter answering your questions will be mailed soon.