

# Member News

VNS Health MLTC



## Healthy Habits Help with Three Common Diseases

Heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes are among the most common health problems in the US.

Luckily these healthy habits can help you prevent or live better with all three:

- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fish, lean meats, and poultry.
- Be physically active for 30 minutes, 5 days a week.
- Stay at a healthy weight.
- Don't smoke. Ask your primary care provider (PCP) if you need help quitting.
- See your PCP for check-ups and take medications if they tell you to.

### **In addition, it's important to know your numbers!**

If you have high blood pressure, your PCP may ask you to check your blood pressure at home.

If you have diabetes, they may ask you to check your blood sugar and/or your A1C (a measure of your average blood sugar levels over the past few months).

Follow your PCP's directions on when to test. Write down your results in a notebook or on your phone so that you can share them.

This information can help you understand how to best treat your disease.

*Sources: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov); [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org); [health.clevelandclinic.org](http://health.clevelandclinic.org)*

### **Get Your Flu Shot!**

If you haven't already, it's not too late to schedule your annual flu shot with your primary care provider or pharmacy. Flu season lasts through February. The vaccine is free, safe, and available.

*Source: [cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinations.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinations.htm)*

### **In This Issue – Winter 2023**

- What to Do After a Fall

- Tips for Caregivers: Take Time for Yourself
- Check Out Your Online Account

## What to Do After a Fall

There are steps you can take to prevent falls:

- See your primary care provider (PCP) if you sometimes feel dizzy or off-balance.
- Get your eyes and ears checked regularly.
- Ask your Care Team to help you schedule a home safety assessment.

But even if you've done all these things, you may still fall. What do you do then?

- Don't panic.
- Notice if you have any new or unusual pain.
- If you feel ok, get up slowly and safely.
- If you're hurt, don't try to get up. Call for help using your phone or Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) if you have one.



- Stay warm while you wait for help—cover yourself with a blanket if you can and move any parts of your body that are not hurt.

Following these directions may help you avoid making any injuries worse. Call your PCP if you have any concerns after a fall.

Sources: [nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/preventing-falls](https://nhsinform.scot/healthy-living/preventing-falls); [cdc.gov/falls](https://cdc.gov/falls)

## Getting a Mammogram Could Save Your Life



Breast cancers found during routine screening are more likely to be smaller and less likely to have spread outside the breast. This makes them easier to treat and improves the chance of being cured.

Low-dose X-rays of the breast called mammograms are the most common screening exams. The American Cancer Society recommends that women ages 55 and older get a mammogram every two years.

If you haven't already, **ask your primary care provider (PCP) about scheduling a mammogram.**

Source: [cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer](https://cancer.org/cancer/types/breast-cancer)

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## Don't Risk Losing Your Medicaid Coverage

Your VNS Health MLTC benefits depend on keeping your Medicaid coverage active.

Sixty days before it is time for you to recertify, you will get a letter with instructions. You may already have received this letter.

**Respond within 90 days** or you will lose your Medicaid benefits and VNS Health MLTC will be required to disenroll you. If you need help recertifying, call your Care Team at 1-888-867-6555 (TTY: 711).

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## Tips for Caregivers: Take Time for Yourself

Caring for a loved one who can no longer care for themselves can get exhausting and frustrating. If you're a caregiver, make sure you take a break when you need one. If you're the one who needs care, reassure your caregiver that it's ok to step away sometimes.

Here are some **simple ways to recharge**:

- Take a walk.
- Practice deep breathing.
- Meditate.
- Call a friend.
- Spend time on a hobby you enjoy.

Also, see the enclosed flyer for information about the **Helpful app** for caregivers.



Source: [nia.nih.gov/health/taking-care-yourself-tips-caregivers](https://nia.nih.gov/health/taking-care-yourself-tips-caregivers)



### Check Out Your Online Account

If you haven't already, **sign up for your personalized online account**, where you can check authorizations and medical supply orders, message your Care Team, and more. It's easy, secure, and available anytime. See the enclosed flyer for more information.

## Nationwide Shortages of Nutrition Supplements

If your doctor has prescribed a liquid nutrition supplement (such as Ensure, Glucerna, or Nestle Boost), be aware that the companies making these drinks are having inventory problems.

This means that even if your health plan has approved your doctor's request for you to get a supplement, the specific drink your doctor prescribed may not be in stock. If that happens, we will let your doctor know so that they can suggest a different product.

You can also **ask your doctor to check what nutrition supplements are available** when they submit your prescription.



Any questions? Check your online account anytime at [vnshealthplans.org/account](https://vnshealthplans.org/account) or call us toll free at: 1-888-867-6555 (TTY: 711)

Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm

[vnshealthplans.org](https://vnshealthplans.org)

Health Plans  
220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

### Transportation Reminder

To schedule transportation, call 1-877-718-4219 (TTY: 711) at least 48 hours in advance from 8 am to 8 pm, Monday – Friday.

### If Something Seems Wrong, Tell Us.

VNS Health MLTC is committed to finding and stopping fraud, waste, or abuse in our health care plans.

### Anonymous Reporting

VNS Health MLTC Compliance Hotline: **1-888-634-1558**.  
File an online report: [vnshealth.ethicsspoint.com](https://vnshealth.ethicsspoint.com).  
Learn more: [vnshealthplans.org/compliance-program](https://vnshealthplans.org/compliance-program)  
24 hours, 7 days a week.



## Apple-Pear Crisp

This warm dessert is perfect to make during the fall season when the air is crisp.

### Ingredients

#### For topping:

- ¼ cup uncooked oats
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp trans-fat-free tub margarine, chilled in freezer for 15 min
- 1 tbsp unsweetened applesauce
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tbsp stevia sugar blend or ½ tsp honey

#### For crisp:

- 1 large apple, peeled and diced
- 1 large pear, peeled and diced
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- ½ tsp stevia sweetener or ½ teaspoon honey
- ⅛ tsp ground ginger or ground cinnamon
- ⅛ tsp ground cloves (optional)
- ⅛ tsp ground cardamom (optional)

### Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together the crisp ingredients. Spoon ½ cup of the apple-pear mixture into four 6-ounce ovenproof cups.
3. In a small bowl, stir together the topping ingredients until well blended. Sprinkle the topping over the fruit mixture in each cup.
4. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the fruit mixture is bubbly and the topping is golden brown.

Source: American Heart Association





## Your plan comes with a secure, easy-to-use online account!

It is a helpful way to stay up to date with your coverage.

### Here's some of what you can do:

- Check your latest health plan details
- View your Care Team
- Update your contact information
- Review medical supply orders
- Download a temporary ID card or request a new one
- Check authorizations
- And more!



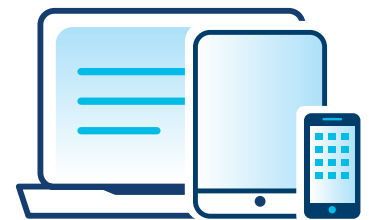
### Have a question about your health plan?

Use the messaging system on your online account. It's just like using email. Send us a message anytime you have a question.

Your messages and our replies will be saved in your online account. They will be available when you need them.



Use your online account anytime with a computer, smartphone, or tablet.



**If you haven't already, sign up for your personalized online account today!**

Go to [vnshealthplans.org/account](https://vnshealthplans.org/account)

Or scan the QR code with your smartphone and choose **Register**.





# Bringing clarity to caregiving

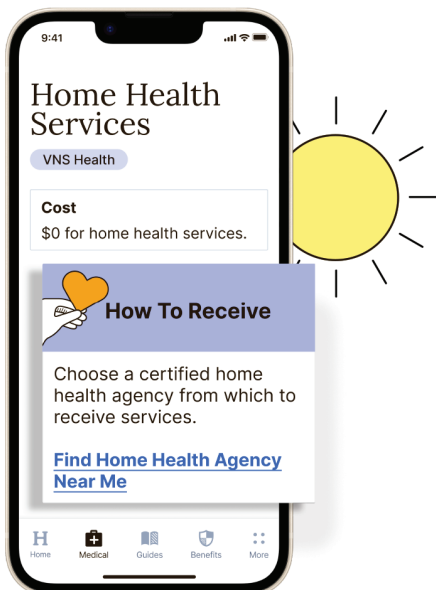
Helpful simplifies family caregiving for VNS Health Medicare and MLTC members. It combines your loved one's benefits and medical records into one user-friendly platform while enhancing your caregiving skills.

[wearehelpful.com/vnshealth](http://wearehelpful.com/vnshealth)

## Everything a caregiver needs in one place

Caring for a loved one can be challenging and overwhelming at times. Fortunately, Helpful is here to support you and your loved one.

**Helpful is a personalized caregiving tool that helps you keep track of your loved one's health benefits, doctors' visits, prescriptions and more.**



### Benefits

Understand your loved one's insurance benefits and easily access them all in one place.

### Medical Care

Organize your loved one's medications and care plans.

### Learn

Review your loved one's after visit summaries and caregiving guides.



Scan the QR code to learn more