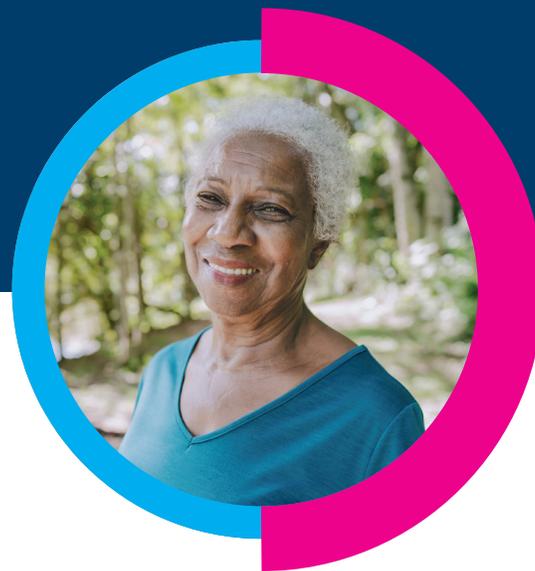


Member News

VNS Health Total (HMO D-SNP)



Take Care of Your Eyes — Especially If You Have Diabetes

Your eyesight naturally gets worse as you get older. But there are things you can do to help protect your vision. **This is especially important if you are living with diabetes.**

Over time, high blood sugar levels weaken the blood vessels in the back of your eye. This can lead to blurry vision and even blindness.

In fact, **diabetes is the leading cause of vision loss** in people 18 to 64 years old. To help prevent this:

- **See an ophthalmologist (an eye doctor) at least once a year.** Getting your eyes checked regularly can catch issues before too much damage is done.
- **Control your blood sugar levels.** The lower your levels, the less damage there will be.
- **Wear sunglasses.** This will prevent exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun that can make diabetic eye diseases worse.

Source: www.diabetes.org

Don't Miss Out on Important Plan Information



To give you the best service possible, we need to have your current mailing and email address and cell phone number. If your contact information has changed, please **call us at 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711).**

Or you can update your information on your personalized online account at **vnshealthplans.org/account.**

In This Issue – Spring 2024

- Smile! It's Now Easier to Get the Dental Care You Need
- Comfort Care When You Need It Most
- Don't Risk Losing Your Medicaid Coverage

Smile! It's Now Easier to Get the Dental Care You Need

VNS Health Total (HMO D-SNP) now covers crowns and root canals in some circumstances so that you can keep more of your teeth.

In addition, replacement dentures and implants will only need a recommendation from your dentist to determine if they are necessary. This will make it easier for you to get these services.

Please call your dentist to schedule these procedures.

If you have dental expenses not covered by your plan, you can use your Flex Card to help pay for them.

If you have questions about your dental benefits, contact our partner **Healthplex** at **1-866-795-6493 (TTY: 711)**, weekdays, 8 am – 6 pm.



Help Us to Serve You Better

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) may have asked you to complete a satisfaction survey. Sent by Press Ganey on behalf of CMS, it is called the **Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Provider & Systems Survey (CAHPS)**.



The survey is anonymous. **Completing the survey does not affect your benefits in any way.**

It's important that you complete the survey if you receive it. CMS will share results with us so that we can identify ways to improve service for all of our members.

You can ask your aide or family member to help you, but the answers must be your own. You can fill out the survey online, by mail, or over the phone. Follow the directions you got from Press Ganey or call the toll-free number listed on the survey cover letter.

Mail Your CDPAS Physician's Order Form

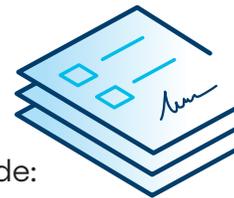
If your home care service is provided by someone you know, we will send you a Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Services (CDPAS) Physician's Order form by mail every year.

You need to have your provider complete it, sign it, and return it to us within **30 days of their appointment** with you.

It is **important** that your provider include:

- their license number
- the date of your exam
- the date they signed the form

If this information is not included or the form is not returned in time, **your services and payment to your assistant(s) may be delayed.**



Comfort Care When You Need It Most

When you are living with a serious illness, sometimes you just want to feel better. That's when you need **palliative care**.

With palliative care, you will:

- keep treating your condition with your regular doctor;
- have extra help coping with pain, nausea, depression or other symptoms.

When no amount of care can cure your condition, you and your family may opt for **hospice care**. Hospice care helps you feel better in body, mind, and spirit.

Palliative and hospice care are available to you at no extra cost as a VNS Health Total member. Visit www.vnshealthplans.org/comfort-care or call us to learn more about these comfort care options.



Don't Risk Losing Your Medicaid Coverage

Your VNS Health Total 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 must respond within 90 days or you will lose your Medicaid benefits and we will be required to disenroll you.

If you need help recertifying, **please call our Medicaid Recertification Team at 1-877-357-8544, Option 4 (TTY: 711)**, weekdays, 9 am – 5 pm.

Join the Member Advisory Council

The VNS Health Medicare Member Advisory Council is your chance to **let us know** how well we're meeting your needs. You may also be able to **earn rewards** for attending meetings through our Member Rewards program. If you are interested in joining, please **contact us** through your online account at vnshealthplans.org/account or at **1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)**.

VNS Health Health Plans complies with Federal civil rights laws. VNS Health Health Plans does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-783-1444 (TTY/TDD: 711). 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-866-783-1444 (TTY/TDD: 711)。

Any questions? Check your online account anytime at vnshealthplans.org/account or call us toll free at **1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)**.

October – March

7 days a week, 8 am – 8 pm

April – September

Weekdays, 8 am – 8 pm

vnshealthplans.org

Health Plans

220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

If Something Seems Wrong, Tell Us

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

Anonymous Reporting

VNS Health Total Compliance Hotline: **1-888-634-1558**.

File an online report: vnshealth.ethicspoint.com.

Learn more: vnshealthplans.org/compliance-program.

24 hours, 7 days a week.



Szechuan Chicken Stir-Fry

Put that Chinese takeout menu back in the drawer. This classic dish is easy to make at home and tastes great.

Directions

1. In a medium skillet coated with cooking spray, toss chicken, cornstarch, soy sauce, ginger, garlic, and red pepper flakes.
2. Cook chicken over medium-high heat for 5 minutes, until no longer pink.
3. Add vegetables and broth to skillet, reduce heat to medium, cover and cook 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
4. Top with peanuts and serve over brown rice.

Source: *American Heart Association*

Ingredients

- Non-stick cooking spray
- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breasts or tenderloins, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- 1 Tbsp low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tsp jarred, minced garlic
- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- 16 oz frozen, packaged stir-fry vegetables
- ¼ cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 Tbsp chopped, unsalted, unroasted peanuts
- 1½ cups brown rice (cooked to package instructions)

Home Visits Help Us Help You

As your health plan, we are committed to helping you feel your best. To do that, we will come to your home several times a year.

These in-person visits are required by New York State. We are happy to do them because they help us serve you better.

Care Management In-Person Visit

Every six months, a member of your Care Team or one of our trusted partners will stop by. They'll chat with you about your health to understand any challenges you may have.



Community Health Assessment

Once a year or any time your health changes a lot, a registered nurse will visit. They'll talk to you to figure out what kind of services you might need.

Supervisory Visit for Paraprofessionals

If you have a home health aide, a nurse will come at least once a year to make sure everything's going well with them.



In addition to the visits listed above, we offer a **Personal Health Visit**.

A licensed health professional will come to your home to give you:

- a basic check-up
- hearing, vision or other tests
- flu, COVID-19 or other vaccines if you need them

Remember, this is not a replacement for regular visits to your primary care provider (PCP).

Together, these visits help us **make sure you're getting the care you need**.

Your Care Team or one of our trusted partners will call you to set up these visits at a time that suits you.

If you have any questions, please contact us at your online account at vnshealthplans.org/account or at the phone number on your member ID card.



NEW APP FOR CAREGIVERS

What makes VNS Health and Helpful a great choice for caregiver support?

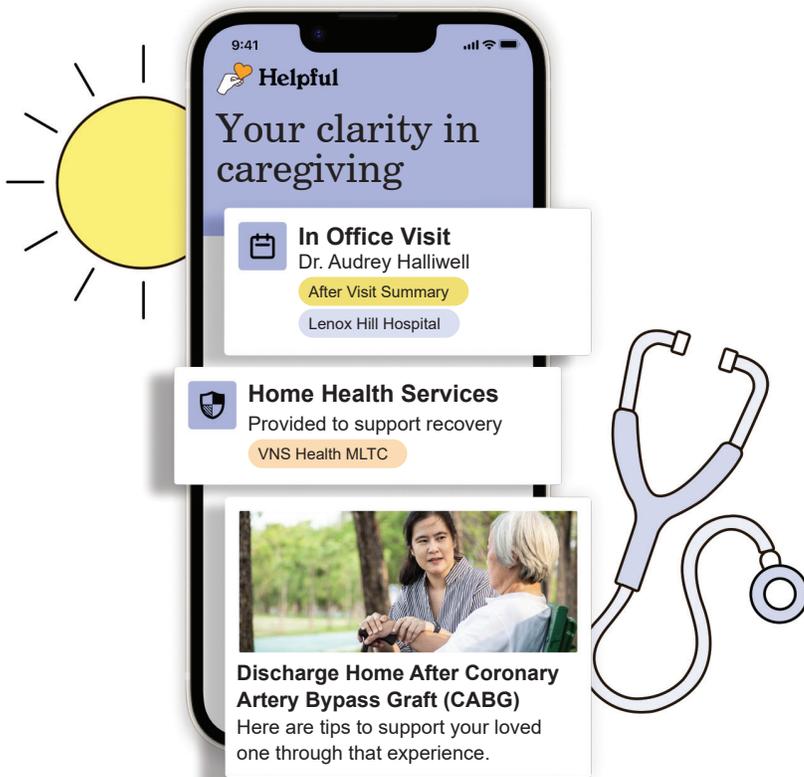
Helpful brings clarity to caregiving

Helpful makes caregiving easier for VNS Health Medicare and VNS Health MLTC members by giving caregivers access to benefits, medical records, and guides.



Helpful is a caregiving app that manages your loved one's health and insurance benefits, including:

- Easily submit **durable medical equipment (DME)** prescriptions through the app
- Explore Helpful's **AI assistant for caregiving questions**
- Medication and allergy information organized in one place
- Guides and content from experienced nurses



[Wearehelpful.com/vnshealth](https://wearehelpful.com/vnshealth)

Join Helpful today and have everything you need for caregiving in one place.

Download Helpful from the App Store or Google Play



“Helpful has definitely made caring for my loved, one easier.”

Helpful Caregiver