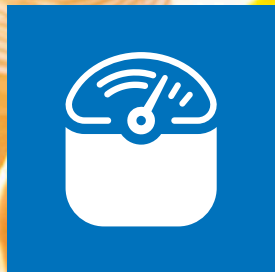


Healthy hints to make
this your best year yet!

2018



Take a
HINT

January



Set a
DATE!

Smoking: make quitting a resolution.

Tips to ditch the cigs for good

One of the keys to succeed in quitting smoking is to prepare. Use these tips to get started.

1. **Set a quit date.** Take out the calendar and choose a quit date. Make it official and write a quit date contract. Sign it and include the signature of a supportive friend or family member as a witness.
2. **Be ready when cravings hit.** Make a list of things to do for those times when cravings are strong. Try things like playing with your children or pets or taking a walk instead of smoking. Keep the list handy so you can take it out when the cravings creep up on you.

Healthy hint: There are instant benefits from quitting cigarettes. Your body starts to heal itself as soon as you stop. For instance, within 12 hours, the level of carbon monoxide in your blood returns to normal.*

*American Cancer Society website: *Benefits of Quitting Smoking over Time* (accessed December 2016); cancer.org.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	16	17	18	19	20
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December, 2017

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February



know
your
numbers

Heart health

Heart disease risk factors you can control

While you can't control your gender, age or family history, you can control and change these risk factors:

- 1. Your weight.** Try to squeeze in at least 30 minutes of exercise five times a week. Plus, fill your plate with healthy choices to help lower your heart disease risk factors and stay at a healthy weight.
- 2. Your numbers.** If you have high cholesterol and high blood pressure, you're also at a higher risk for heart disease. You can help lower both by eating foods rich in whole grains, fruits and veggies, as well as low-fat dairy products. Talk to your doctor to see what will work best for you.
- 3. Smoking.** If you smoke, kick the habit. Within one year of quitting smoking, your risk for heart disease is reduced by half.*

*American Cancer Society website: When smokers quit – what are the benefits over time? (Accessed December 2016): cancer.org.

Healthy hint: Eating healthy doesn't mean you can't enjoy your favorite foods. With just a few changes, you can make many recipes heart-healthy without losing flavor. For example, instead of sour cream and mayonnaise, try plain low-fat Greek yogurt, low-fat cottage cheese or low-fat sour cream.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Groundhog Day	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14 Valentine's Day	15	16	17
18	19 Presidents' Day	20	21	22	23	24
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January

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March



Nutrition

Put your best fork forward in March. Here's how.

Celebrate National Nutrition Month by making small changes that can make a big difference to your health. Start with these tips:

- 1. Log what you eat.** Keep a food diary. When you write down what you eat, it's easier to pay attention to what goes in your mouth throughout the day. You'll also be able to spot the triggers for emotional and mindless eating so you can address issues in healthier ways.
- 2. Veg out.** Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies. The more colorful your plate, the more likely you'll get the good eats you need to be healthy.
- 3. Cut portions.** Use smaller plates to control your portion sizes. Don't feel like you need to be a member of the "clean plate club." It's OK to save leftovers for your next meal.

Healthy hint: Buying healthy food doesn't have to hurt your wallet. You can make smart choices for less by trying canned or frozen fruits and veggies, buying store brands, and preparing and freezing veggie soups in advance.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Daylight Savings Time begins	12	13	14	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25 Palm Sunday	26	27	28	29	30 Good Friday Passover begins	31

February

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April



Ahhhhh
... choo!

Allergies

Imagine spring without allergies or asthma . . . Ahhhhh

As the seasons change, we're looking forward to budding trees, blooming flowers and the smell of fresh grass. But if you have asthma, allergies or both (as about 50% of people with asthma do*), the pollen that comes with the season can take a toll.

Here are some tips to help you avoid your triggers this spring:

- **Keep an eye on pollen and mold counts.** Check weather reports on television and newspapers, which often include this information during allergy seasons.
- **Know which pollens set off your allergies.** To avoid pollen, be aware of which pollens trigger your allergies. During tree and grass pollen season (spring and summer), you'll find pollen levels are highest in the evening. During ragweed pollen season (later summer and early fall), you'll find pollen levels are highest in the morning.
- **Wash away the day.** After gardening, working and playing outdoors, jump in the shower. Wash your hair and change your clothes.

*WebMD website: *Putting Allergies Out of Work* (accessed August 2017): webmd.com.

Healthy hint: Remember, if you need to take medicine for your allergies, you've got options. Talk to your doctor about alternatives that can save you time and money, like a generic or over-the-counter (OTC) version.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Easter Sunday	2	3	4	5	6	7 Passover ends
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
15	16 Tax Day	17	18	19	20	21
22 Earth Day	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

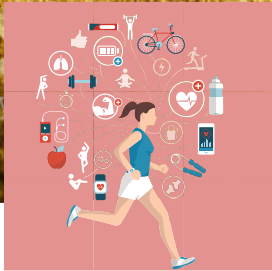
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May



**EAT
HEALTHY!**

Women's health

Time out for women's health

Now's a good time to encourage the women in your life to take time for themselves. Share these steps to help the women you care about live a happier and healthier life:

1. Visit a doctor or nurse for a well-woman visit (checkup) and preventive screenings.
2. Get active and enjoy the spring and summer weather.
3. Enjoy healthy foods.
4. Prioritize mental health, including getting enough sleep and managing stress.

Healthy hint: For better health, add sleep to the to-do list. And, feel free to hit the snooze button, especially if you're a woman. Women are at a higher risk for conditions like type 2 diabetes and heart disease due to sleep loss.* That's why it's so important that women get enough zzzzs.

*Sound Sleep Institute website: *Sleep Deprivation Impacts Women More Than Men* (April 2, 2015): soundsleepinstitute.com.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5 Cinco de Mayo
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Mother's Day	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 Memorial Day	29	30	31		



Administered by



April

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June



Men's health

Why do men avoid doctor appointments?

Excuses. Excuses. Here are four of the most popular ones.

Plus, ways to rethink them and get yourself or the men in your life to go see a doctor:

1. **“I don't want to spend the cash.”** Look at it this way. If you think a visit to a doctor's office costs too much, take a look at what a hospital stay would run you. Yearly preventive care checkups and screenings are worth it to catch issues early. And, all SHBP BCBSGa health plan options cover preventive care at 100%.
2. **“There's probably nothing wrong.”** Sure – that may be true. Just know that a lot of diseases like high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes don't have clear symptoms. But they can have serious effects on your body. For instance, high blood pressure can cause a stroke and heart attack.
3. **“I don't have a doctor.”** The first step is to use the resources available to you to find a doctor you can trust. You can use the Find a Doctor tool at bcbsga.com/shbp to find one near you. It's also a good idea to ask your family and friends to recommend one for you. Building a relationship with your doctor will help you feel much more comfortable over time.
4. **“I don't have time.”** Did you know there are 8,766 hours in a year? And out of those 8,766 hours, you only need to use about two of them to visit the doctor. In the big picture, two hours are worth it, especially if it can save your life.

Healthy hint: What can you do to stay healthy and avoid getting sick? You can get certain preventive care, take medicines and practice healthy behaviors. When you go to your next checkup, talk to your doctor or nurse about how you can stay healthy, no matter what your age.

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17 Fathers' Day	18	19	20	21	22	23
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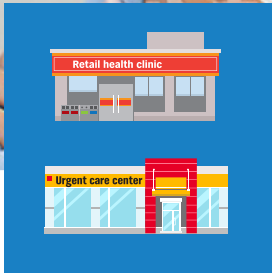
May

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July



Consider
ALL
options!

ER alternatives

How to avoid ER waiting rooms and their high costs

When you need health care right away, your first thought might be, “Go to the nearest emergency room (ER).” But not all situations are true emergencies. And do you really want to sit in an emergency room for hours and pay hundreds of dollars if you don’t have to? Next time, consider these options that cost less and have much shorter wait times: your primary care doctor, retail health clinic or urgent care center. These places are often open after hours, seven days a week. Plus, all SHBP BCBSGa health plan options cover online doctor visits.

Healthy hint: Be proactive; find your closest urgent care center or retail clinic that's included in your plan before you get sick or hurt. The more you're prepared, the faster you can get help when you need it.

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1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6	7
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August



Fitness

Sitting is the new smoking

Did you know research has linked sitting for long periods of time with a number of health concerns, like obesity?¹ In fact, one study compared adults who spent less than two hours a day in front of the TV with those who logged more than four hours of time in front of the tube.

Those with greater screen time had:

- A nearly 50% increased risk of death from any cause¹
- A nearly 125% increased risk of events linked to heart disease, such as heart attack¹

Fitting fitness into your daily routine

Staying active doesn't mean you have to join a gym and work out every day. Instead, the key is upping your heart rate often during your daily routine. Here are some suggestions:²

- Walk or bike to work. If you drive, park far away from the door.
- Take the stairs.
- Take the family, and dog, for a walk.
- Go swimming at a local rec center.
- Do yard work. It counts! Rake, weed or mow.

¹ Mayo Clinic website: *What are the risks of sitting too much?* (accessed August 2, 2017): mayoclinic.org.

² President's Council on Fitness, Sports & Nutrition website: *Ways To Be Active* (accessed December 2015): fitness.gov/be-active/ways-to-be-active/.

Healthy hint: Have to work through lunch? Try taking three 10-minute walks throughout the day instead. Raining outside when you want to jog? Find an indoor track or power walk in the mall. And if you hate the idea of “exercise,” make what you love work for you. You can garden, dance, do yoga or play running games with your kids and pets.

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September



wash
your
hands!

Children's health

Help your kids leave the germs at school

Be prepared this school year to fend off illnesses. To start off on the right foot, you and your family can follow these three helpful tips:

- 1. Boost your immune system.** When our bodies are in tip-top shape, they can help fight off bad organisms even before the bug hits. Make sure you and your family are eating the good stuff, getting enough rest and avoiding stress.
- 2. Keep your hands clean.** Soap and water should be your best friends. Washing your hands is the best way to keep the flu, viruses and colds away. Wash your hands before meals and after:
 - Blowing your nose.
 - Using the bathroom.
 - Touching trash.
 - Petting animals.
- 3. Stay on top of vaccinations.** Vaccinations or shots aren't just for kids anymore. Use back-to-school time to think about the shots that are right for you as well. Ask your doctor to suggest a program that works for you and your family to prevent infectious diseases.

Healthy hint: Remember, all SHBP BCBSGa health plan options cover preventive care services – like shots and screening tests – at no extra cost to you.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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2	3 Labor Day	4	5	6	7	8
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August

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28	29	30	31			

October



Don't
forget
to **stretch!**

Bone and joint health

What to do when your get-up-and-go . . . got up and went

At some point, most of us will suffer from muscle and joint pain. Doing the same motion day after day, working in the same posture or sitting still for prolonged periods isn't healthy.

To avoid problems you should change your position often throughout the day in the following ways:

- Make small adjustments to your chair or backrest.
- Stretch your fingers, hands, arms and torso.
- Stand up and walk around for a few minutes every once in a while.

Healthy hint: Keeping your muscles strong not only helps you stay active, but also helps protect you from injury, disability and the effects of aging. One way to change that is calisthenics. This form of exercise focuses on your major muscles groups. For best results, do push-ups, sit-ups, squats and lunges at least two days a week.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
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28	29	30	31 Halloween			

September

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November



**EAT
right!**

Diabetes

Lower your risk for diabetes

A few pounds can make a big difference when it comes to diabetes.

If you're living with diabetes, your body either has trouble making enough of a hormone called insulin or can't make any at all. Insulin helps break down the food your cells use for energy. When your body can't break down this energy, you end up with high levels of sugar in your blood. Studies show that people at high risk for Type 2 diabetes can prevent or delay the disease if they lose as little as 10 to 14 pounds.* Taking small steps, such as moving more, can go a long way!

*National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases website: Get Real! You Don't Have to Knock Yourself Out to Prevent Diabetes (accessed August 2017): niddk.nih.gov/health-information/health-communication-programs/ndep/ndep-health-topics/get-real-prevent-diabetes/Pages/publicationdetail.aspx.

Healthy hint: Move more. Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity, five days a week. Walk during your lunch break. Making healthy food choices can also help you shed unwanted pounds. Limit your portion sizes and eat a variety of colorful fruits and veggies.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 Daylight Savings Time ends	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Veterans Day	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22 Thanksgiving Day	23	24
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October

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December



Take a
BREATH

Mental health

Managing the holiday ho-hums

The holiday season can take its toll on your emotional health. And it's no surprise. The holidays can put many demands on you – parties, shopping, entertaining to name a few. You can reduce the stress that comes along with the season with just a few simple changes.

1. **Accept your feelings.** It's OK to take time to express your feelings. Don't try to force yourself to be happy just because of the holidays.
2. **Reach out.** If you're feeling lonely, try to involve yourself in community or social events.
3. **Be realistic.** The holidays don't have to be perfect.
4. **Don't abandon healthy habits.** Overindulgence only adds stress and guilt.
5. **Take a breather.** Make time for yourself. Find something that reduces anxiety by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring your inner calm.

Healthy hint: No matter who you are, stress is most likely a part of your life. The key is learning how to identify it and manage it. One technique is imagining a peaceful place in your mind and, then, thinking of all the sights, sounds and smells of that place.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Hanukkah begins	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10 Hanukkah ends	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Kwanzaa begins	27	28	30
30	31 New Year's Eve					

November

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January 2019

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**Wishing you a happy
and healthy 2019!**



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**BlueCross BlueShield
of Georgia**

State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) Quick Reference Guide

<p>BCBSGa Dedicated Member Services Line</p>	<p>Phone number: 855-641-4862 Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, Monday – Friday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about your medical benefits • Find out your HRA or MIA credit balance
<p>BCBSGa 24/7 NurseLine</p>	<p>Phone number: 866-787-6361 Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week</p>	<p>Registered nurses can answer your health questions any time of the day or night.</p>
<p>BCBSGa Future Moms Maternity Program</p>	<p>Phone number: 866-901-0746, option 2 Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, Monday - Friday</p>	<p>A Personal Health Coach Maternity Nurse during pregnancy and after delivery.</p>
<p>BCBSGa Personal Health Coach Support Programs</p>	<p>Phone number: 866-901-0746, option 3 Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, Monday - Friday</p>	<p>Enroll for programs to help manage certain chronic conditions.</p>
<p>BCBSGa Pharmacy Co-Pay/Co-Insurance Waiver Program</p>	<p>Phone number: 866-901-0746, option 3 Hours: 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. ET, Monday - Friday</p>	<p>This program waives your pharmacy co-pay/co-insurance for certain prescription drugs that help with your asthma, diabetes or CAD. Call today to see if you're eligible.</p>
<p>BCBSGa Behavioral Health Resource Center</p>	<p>Phone number: 855-679-5722, option 4 Hours: 24 hours a day/7 days a week</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Bipolar Disorder • Alcohol/Drug Abuse • Anxiety Disorder • Eating Disorders
<p>Be Well SHBP well-being program, administered by Sharecare (formerly known as Healthways®)</p>	<p>Phone number: 888-616-6411 Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, Monday – Friday; 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, Saturday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tobacco Cessation • Stress Management • Exercise • Earn well-being incentive credits • Healthy Eating and Weight Management • Depression Prevention
<p>CVS Caremark</p>	<p>Phone number: 844-345-3241 Hours: 24 hours/7 days a week www.caremark.com/SHBP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pharmacy Benefits – Retail & Mail • Check Your Order Status • Request Prescription Refills • Generic Alternatives • Set Up Prescription Home Delivery • Step Therapy • Quantity Level Limits • Pharmacy Prior Authorization • Specialty Medications Serviced by Accredo
<p>Medicare Advantage First Impressions Welcome Team</p>	<p>Phone Number: 855-322-7060 Hours: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, Monday - Friday</p>	<p>BCBSGa Medicare Advatage member services</p>
<p>SHBP Member Services</p>	<p>Phone number: 800-610-1863 Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET, Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET, Saturday</p>	<p>Questions about eligibility</p>

Don't forget to visit bcbsga.com/shbp and register today!





Here's to a healthier you this year!

Go to bcbsga.com/shbp for more tips and tools on how to get and stay healthy.



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of Georgia