

# Member News

VNS Health Medicare (HMO)



## 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)

## 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.

## In This Issue – Winter 2023

- What to Do After a Fall
- Getting a Mammogram Could Save Your Life
- Manage Your Medications

## 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)

## Manage Your Medications



Take advantage of **Birdi Mail-Order Pharmacy** from our partner MedImpact. This convenient service delivers your prescriptions right to your door and you can get up to a 90-day supply. To register, visit [medimpact.com](https://medimpact.com) or call **1-855-873-8739 (TTY: 711)** Monday–Friday, 8 am–8 pm and Saturday, 9 am–5 pm.

In addition, some members qualify for **Medication Therapy Management**, run by MedWatchers. This program offers a comprehensive medication review to:

- check if the drugs you are taking are working well;
- identify any risks you may have for side effects;
- answer any questions you may have about your medications.

MedWatchers will send you a letter if you qualify. Visit [vnshealthplans.org/mtm](https://vnshealthplans.org/mtm) for more information.

### 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://cdc.gov/flu/prevent/vaccinations.htm)

## 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.**



**Remember that you may be able to earn a reward for completing a mammogram through your 2023 Member Rewards program!**

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

## Our Health Partners Are On Your Side

At VNS Health Medicare, it's our responsibility to help you stay healthy and safe in your home and in your community.

We use several trusted health partners to help us make sure you are getting the care you need in an easy and convenient way.

Depending on your needs, you may qualify for one or more personal health visits.

If you do, you'll get a phone call or letter from VNS Health or a trusted partner of VNS Health to schedule a visit.

During these visits, a licensed clinician will come to your home to talk to you about your health. They may also conduct certain tests, such as an eye exam.

We will share results of these visits with you and your primary care provider (PCP). We recommend that you schedule a follow-up appointment with your PCP to discuss your results and next steps.

Ask your Care Team if you have any questions about these visits.



## Get Support After You Leave the Hospital

If you've been hospitalized because of your mental health, it's important to get support after you've been discharged.

**Make an appointment within 7 days** with your primary care provider (PCP) or with a mental health specialist at our partner, Carelon. Your visit can be in person, on the telephone, or via video.

Call your Care Team at 1-866-783-1444 or Carelon at 1-855-735-6098 if you need help scheduling an appointment.

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](https://vnshealthplans.org/account) or call us toll free at: 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)

October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024

7 days a week, 8 am – 8 pm

April 1, 2024 – September 1, 2024

Weekdays, 8 am – 8 pm

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

Health Plans

220 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017

## If Something Seems Wrong, Tell Us.

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

## Anonymous Reporting

VNS Health Medicare 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



## Take charge of your health

Take this checklist to your next doctor's appointment and discuss which preventive exams, screenings, and vaccinations are right for you. Note: You can earn rewards for completing some of these activities. See the other side for information on our Member Rewards program.

Required exams/screenings/vaccinations	Description / Timing	Completion Date(s)
<b>Annual Wellness Visit</b>	All adults, <b>yearly</b> .	
<b>Flu Shot</b>	All adults 65 and over, <b>yearly</b> .	
<b>COVID-19 Vaccine</b> (including booster shots)	<b>As recommended by your doctor.</b>	
<b>Pneumonia Vaccine</b>	Adults 65 and over should receive <b>one pneumococcal shot</b> . Vaccination must be within five years, if received before age 65.	
<b>Blood Sugar Test (Hemoglobin A1c Test)</b>	<b>Every 3 months</b> or more often if you have diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, or are overweight.	
<b>Dental Exam</b>	Oral exam and cleaning, <b>twice a year</b> .	
<b>Vision Exam</b>	Exam by an optometrist or ophthalmologist (eye doctor), <b>every year</b> .	
<b>Hearing Exam</b>	After age 50, hearing screenings <b>every 2 years</b> .	
<b>Colonoscopy or Other Exams</b> to check for colon cancer	Starting at age 45, <b>as recommended by your doctor</b> .	
<b>Mammogram</b>	Women 55 and over, <b>every 2 years</b> .	
<b>Bone Density Exam</b> to check for osteoporosis	Women 65 or over, <b>every year</b> and recommended within 6 months of fracture from a fall.	



Be sure to schedule your preventive screenings if you have not completed them already. Call us if you need help scheduling your appointments or have questions. We're here to help!

**VNS Health Medicare (HMO) 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)**

## Earn Rewards for Taking Care of Your Health



As a member of a VNS Health Medicare (HMO) plan, you are automatically enrolled in our Member Rewards Program. Earn gift cards for completing any of the health activities in the chart below by December 31, 2023. (Note that qualifying activities and amounts may change in 2024.)

 <b>Health Activity</b>	 <b>Value</b>
Annual Wellness Visit	\$30
Flu Shot	\$25
COVID-19 Vaccine (including booster shots)	\$25
Medication Therapy Management	\$25
Mammogram	\$25
Colon Cancer Screening	\$25
Statin Therapy for Patients with Cardiovascular Disease Received Therapy	\$25
Hemoglobin A1c for Diabetes Reward will be based on the final reading of the year.	\$25
Retinal Eye Exam for Diabetes	\$25
Blood Pressure Reading for Hypertension Reward will be based on the final reading of the year.	\$25



See [vnshealthplans.org](https://vnshealthplans.org) for more information.

**Questions?** Check your online account anytime at [vnshealthplans.org/account](https://vnshealthplans.org/account) or call your Care Team at the number below.

**Call 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)**

October 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024, 7 days a week, 8 am – 8 pm  
 April 1, 2024 – September 30, 2024, Weekdays, 8 am - 8 pm



## 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!



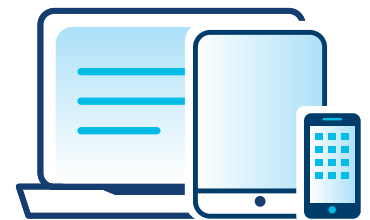
### Have a question about your health plan?

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

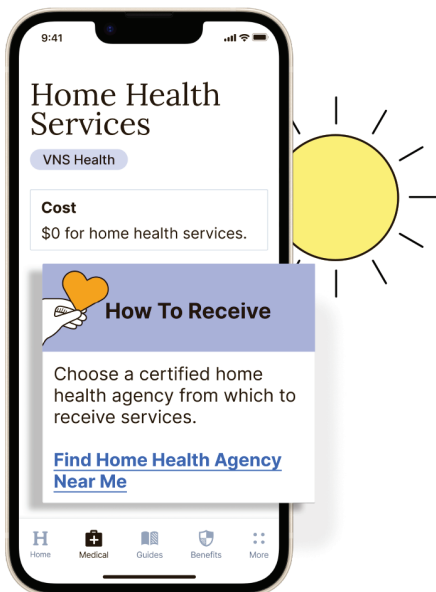
Helpful simplifies family caregiving for VNS Health Medicare and MLTC members. It combines your loved one's benefits and medical records into one user-friendly platform while enhancing your caregiving skills.

[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