

# Member News

VNS Health MLTC



## Stay Cool with Hot Weather Tips

As temperatures rise, it's important to stay comfortable and well-hydrated. Here are some tips for coping with the heat.

**Stay hydrated:** Drink plenty of water throughout the day. Foods like watermelon, strawberries, and cucumbers can also help keep you hydrated.

**Dress for the weather:** Wear loose, lightweight, and light-colored clothing to stay cool.

**Go outside when temps drop:** If you need to be outside, try early mornings or late evenings when it's not as hot.

**Use fans and AC:** If you don't have air conditioning, consider visiting an air-conditioned space like community centers or cooling centers.

**Cool down:** Take cool showers, baths, or sponge baths if you feel warm. In a hurry? Use wet washcloths or towels with cold water on your wrists, ankles, and neck.

**Know the signs:** Watch for symptoms like heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, or nausea. Seek medical help if you experience these signs.

Source: *American Geriatrics Society's Health in Aging Foundation*

## Keep Moving for Better Health

Being active is good for you. Regular movement can help prevent or manage health problems like heart disease, certain cancers (such as breast and colorectal), diabetes, and high blood pressure. Moving more can also help make your muscles, joints, and bones strong. This can lower the chance of physical injuries.

Moving gently but regularly can help keep your muscles flexible. This is good for your overall health. Consider adding simple movements to your day to lift your spirits, move easier, and give you more energy.

Here are some examples that can work for different abilities:

- If you can walk, try walking indoors.
- If you can use your arms, try lifting household items like soup cans to build strength.
- You can stretch while watching TV, if it's comfortable for you.
- If moving is hard, try breathing exercises or meditation.

Source: *Stanford University*

## In This Issue – Summer/Fall 2024

- Dig In: Explore the Benefits of Indoor Gardening

- Understanding Depression: Know the Signs and Get Support
- Choosing the Right Care: PCP, Urgent Care, ER

## Dig In: Explore the Benefits of Indoor Gardening

Indoor gardening can help you feel calm and stay healthy at home. Whether you grow herbs in your kitchen or care for colorful blooms in your living room, it can be a helpful way to stay healthy indoors. Grab your watering can, and let's start growing!

**One benefit is stress relief.** Taking care of indoor plants creates a calming space that can help you relax.

**Indoor gardening also keeps you moving.** Planting, watering, and looking after your plants are ways to get some exercise. It can help you get stronger and improve your balance.

**Watching your plants grow can be enjoyable.** Whether they're on your kitchen windowsill or brightening up your living room, indoor gardening lets you enjoy nature's beauty right at home.

Source: *Cleveland Clinic*



## Transportation Scheduling Reminder

### How to Schedule Non-Emergency Transportation:

- **Contact MAS:** Call Medical Answering Services (MAS) to arrange transportation.
- **Online:** <https://www.medanswering.com/>

### Phone:

- **For NYC, Long Island, Westchester, and Putnam:** 844-666-6270
- **For upstate:** 866-932-7740

Standard business hours are Monday–Friday, 7am–6pm

### Advance Notice:

Contact MAS at least three days before your appointment with:

- Appointment details (date, time, address)
- Medicaid ID number
- Provider's name
- Any special needs (e.g., wheelchair use)

If you require non-emergency transportation by ambulance because of a medical condition, please call **Modivcare** at **1-877-718-4220 (TTY: 711)**, 7 days a week, 8 am–8 pm.

**Emergency Reminder:** For medical emergencies requiring an ambulance, dial 911.



## Join the Member Advisory Council

The VNS Health Medicare Member Advisory Council is your chance to help us make our plan better. Plus, you can earn rewards for going to meetings with our Member Rewards program. Want to join? Contact your Care Team through your online account at [vnshealthplans.org/account](https://vnshealthplans.org/account) or call us at **1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)**.

## Understanding Depression: Know the Signs and Get Support

Depression is a common mood disorder that can affect anyone. It can change how you feel, think, and handle everyday activities. If this sounds familiar, know that help is available. Here's how to get support.

### Talk openly with your Provider:

Share how you're feeling with your primary care provider (PCP). They can help find the right treatment for you.

### More tips to feel better:

- Talk to a professional who can help you understand your feelings.
- Doing exercises or 30 minutes of movement can improve your mood.
- Spend time with friends, family, or groups who support you to feel less lonely.

### Emergency Help:

If you're in crisis, call the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988. For TTY, dial 711 then 988. More information is available at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org)

Source: *National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH)*



## Choosing the Right Care: PCP, Urgent Care, ER

Not all health problems need a visit to the hospital's emergency room. Many issues can be handled at urgent care clinics. Other times, it might be best to see your primary care physician. Consider your symptoms before deciding where to go for help. This way, you can get the right care at the right place.

### Call your Primary Care Physician (PCP) for:

- Sore throat, earache, runny nose, cold
- Mild pain
- Medication refills, annual exams, screenings

### Go to Urgent Care for:

- Burns, broken bones, sprains, strains, minor injuries
- Fever, flu-like symptoms
- Cannot reach your primary care provider



### Go to Emergency Department or Call 911 for:

- Severe pain, serious injury
- Chest pain, difficulty breathing
- Sudden loss of vision, blurred vision

Source: *Mayo Clinic*



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)

### 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: **1-888-867-6555**.  
File an online report at: [vnshealth.ethicsspoint.com](https://vnshealth.ethicsspoint.com).  
Learn more: [vnshealthplans.org/compliance-program](https://vnshealthplans.org/compliance-program).

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## Asian Coleslaw



Put a spin on traditional coleslaw and enjoy a vegetable serving with your meal.

Servings: 6 | Serving Size: ½ cup

### Ingredients

#### Cole Slaw:

- 12 ounces packaged, shredded cabbage
- 1 medium cucumber, sliced
- 1 medium bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 5 medium green onions, sliced
- 1 tsp dried basil

#### Dressing:

- ¼ tsp red pepper flakes
- ½ tsp minced garlic
- 3 Tbsp white or cider vinegar
- ½ tsp sugar
- 1 Tbsp low sodium soy sauce
- 1 tsp olive oil

### Directions:

Toss together the cabbage, cucumber, bell pepper, green onions, and basil. Mix the dressing ingredients, then pour over the slaw and mix well.

Source: *American Heart Association*