

Member News

VNS Health MLTC

Start Moving Again — One Small Step at a Time

My name is Gloria*, and I want to share my story. Last year, I could barely walk to the corner. After my knee surgery, I felt weak and was afraid to move too much. I worried that any exercise would make my pain worse.

My provider shared gentle movements to try at home. I started with slow, easy chair exercises that felt safe for me. I could stop anytime and move in a way that worked for my body.

After a few weeks, I felt stronger. Standing up became easier, and I had more energy. Moving a little each day helped me feel less stiff and more steady in my steps.

Now I try to move when I can. Some days I take a slow walk outside. Other days I stretch or move my arms and legs while sitting. I still move slowly, but I feel more confident now. Gentle movement helped me take small steps toward better health.

**If you want to get started too, talk with your provider.
Ask about simple movements you can do safely at home.
Your provider can help you choose what is best for you.**

**Model used, not actual member. No personal health information is depicted.*



Did you know?

Drinking enough water can help you move more easily and stay active. Keep a water bottle near you. Add lemon or cucumber for flavor. Take a few sips with each meal. You can also set small reminders during the day. Simple habits can help you feel your best. **Set a daily water goal.** Try to drink about 11–15 cups a day. The amount you need may change with your health, activity, or the weather.



Source: [WebMD](#), [MayoClinic](#)

In This Issue – Spring 2026

- 3 Foods to Support Healthy Blood Pressure

- Choosing the Right Care: PCP, Urgent Care, ER
- Get Care at Home

3 Foods to Support Healthy Blood Pressure

High blood pressure affects almost half of U.S. adults, according to the CDC. When your blood pressure is high, your heart has to work harder. This can raise your risk of heart disease and stroke. Small changes to what you eat can help support your heart and keep your blood pressure in a healthier range.



1. Oats

Oats are a whole grain with fiber that is good for your heart. They may help support healthy blood pressure. You can eat oats as oatmeal, mix them into yogurt, or blend them into a smoothie.

2. Lentils

Lentils have potassium, a mineral that helps balance sodium in your body. This balance is important for healthy blood pressure. Add lentils to soups, rice dishes, or salads.

3. Tomatoes

Fresh or canned tomatoes and tomato sauces have nutrients like potassium and lycopene. These support heart health. Add tomatoes to pasta, sandwiches, soups, or salads.

Try adding one of these foods to your meals this week to support your heart.

Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

Link: www.cdc.gov/high-blood-pressure/data-research/facts-stats/index.html

Ease the Ache and Find Arthritis Relief

Making small changes can help you feel better with arthritis. Here are some common types and ways to manage them:

Osteoarthritis (OA): When the cushion between bones wears away, causing pain and stiffness.

- Light activities like stretching can help. Heat or cold packs can ease pain.
- Pain relievers or physical therapy might be recommended.

Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA): When your immune system attacks your joints, causing swelling and pain.

- Rest when needed and use warm towels to soothe sore joints.
- Medications can reduce swelling and pain. Range of motion exercises may also be advised.

Psoriatic Arthritis (PsA): Affects people with psoriasis, a chronic skin condition characterized by red, scaly patches, causing joint pain and swelling.

- Try low-impact movement and keep your skin moisturized.
- Medications can help control skin and joint symptoms.

Eating fish, nuts, fruits, and veggies can support joint health. Talk to your doctor before starting any new treatment or exercise.

Source: *Mayo Clinic*



Get Care at Home

You don't always need to go out to see a doctor. With in-home services, health care comes to you.

Our trusted partners offer:

- Check-ups at home with a health coach
- Dental, vision, and hearing screenings at home with a technician
- Flu vaccines (Downstate region only)

These services are safe, private, and may feel easier than going out. They help you stay healthy and save time.

- No extra cost to you
- All providers are licensed professionals



Ready to get started?

Our trusted partners may call you to offer a visit, so you know the call is expected. If you ever have questions about a call you receive, you can always reach your Care Team at 1-888-867-6555 (TTY: 711). We're here to help.

Choosing the Right Care: PCP, Urgent Care, ER

Not all health concerns 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 provider. 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 Room or Call 911 for:

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

Go Online:

- Search the Provider Directory for providers or urgent care centers near you:
vnshealthplans.org/find-a-doctor/

Source: *Mayo Clinic*



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

Monday – Friday, 9 am – 5 pm

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:

1-888-634-1558 (TTY: 711).

File an online report at: vnshealth.ethicspoint.com.

Learn more: vnshealthplans.org/compliance-program.

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Fruit Salad: A Simple, Healthy Treat



This fruit salad is a fresh, healthy snack that gives you vitamins and fiber to feel healthy.

Ingredients:

- 3 kiwis
- 1 pound of strawberries
- 1 mango
- 1 apple (any kind; Granny Smith works very well)
- Half a lemon or lime

Instructions:

- Rinse all the fruit with water and pat dry.
- Cut the apple into small pieces (you can keep the peel on or remove it).
- Cut the mango into small cubes. To do this, slice off the two large sides (“cheeks”), then cut the flesh into cubes while it is still in the peel and scoop it out.
- Peel the kiwis and cut them into small chunks or thin round slices.
- Remove the green tops from the strawberries and cut them into small pieces.
- Place all the cut fruit into a medium-sized mixing bowl. (Each fruit should give you about 1–1.5 cups.)
- Squeeze the lemon or lime over the fruit—use as much or as little as you like. About 2 teaspoons works well.
- Stir gently to combine. *Enjoy!*