

Make Sure UHC Medicare Advantage Has Your Up-to-Date Email Address

Our UnitedHealthcare Medicare Advantage Plan is on a campaign to make sure your emails are up-to-date. Medicare Advantage Members have access to:

- The latest *Renew Magazine*
- Brain games and fitbit community
- Health videos
- Recipes
- Fitness, including on-demand digital class options
- Optum Help Line for emotional support information
- Sanvello on-demand emotional support mobile app



Simply go to UHCRetiree.com or you can call the number on the back of your ID card.

Prostate Health Screenings

By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN, Clinical Nurse Liaison

Screenings and checkups are recommended health measures for both men and women, and while the screenings differ between the two, men are much less likely to get regular checkups. These visits are important because they can help find any irregularities from a previous visit, and, appropriate screenings and testing can take place at these visits to ensure that there are no underlying health concerns.

Prostate cancer: To make a decision about whether to get a prostate cancer screening requires each man to identify his own values about the potential benefits and harms. Men should begin discussions with their doctor about prostate screenings at age 50, but if a man is at high risk or has a strong family history, discussions should begin at age 40.

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Inactivity and the Cycle of Back Pain

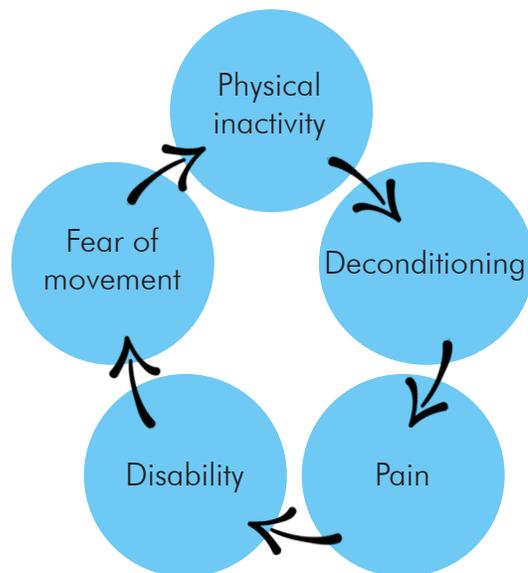
By Amy Hertog, RN, BSN, Clinical Nurse Liaison

Back pain is one of the most common conditions in the US. About 60 to 80% of the adult U.S. population has low back pain, making it the leading cause of disability in Americans under the age of 45. Each year, 13 million people go to the doctor for chronic back pain.

Staying at home the last few months has made us less physically active. Sedentary behavior includes sleeping, lying down, watching television, and other types of screen-based entertainment.

Prolonged inactivity can actually increase back pain as the back becomes stiff, weak, and deconditioned. Other muscles surrounding the back, including hamstrings and hip flexors become really tight, making the stiffness in the back even worse. Sitting too much can also cause other undesirable effects such as weight gain and loss of muscle mass.

As individuals experience back pain, they may become afraid of movement because of anticipation that such movement will cause even more back pain. This creates a cycle:



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Here are some questions you can ask your doctor about prostate cancer screening:

- Am I at a greater risk for prostate cancer?
- At what age should I start to think about screening for prostate cancer?
- If I get my blood test, and it is not normal, what other things could I have besides prostate cancer?
- What is a biopsy, and how is it done?
- What are the side effects or risks of a biopsy?

There are risk factors that both can and cannot be changed. The most common non-modifiable risk factor is **age**. The older a man is, the greater the chance of getting prostate cancer. Other risk factors that cannot be changed include **African-American ethnicity** and **family history** of prostate cancer.

Risk factors that can be changed include the following:

Diet: Men who eat a lot of red meat or high-fat dairy products appear to have a slightly higher chance of getting prostate cancer. These men also tend to eat fewer fruits and vegetables. Doctors aren't sure which of these factors is responsible for raising the risk.

Obesity: While it does not seem to be that obesity causes prostate cancer, some studies have found that obese men may be at greater risk for having more advanced prostate cancer and higher risk of dying.

Smoking: Some research has linked smoking to a possible small increased risk of dying from prostate cancer but not being a direct link to the cancer.

Sexually transmitted infections (STI): Research has not yet been concluded on whether STIs are a direct risk factor of prostate cancer. However, as inflammation may occur with STIs, research in possible links to prostate cancer is ongoing.

Pinellas County Benefits

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employee.benefits@pinellascounty.org

Physical activity does not have to include long, intense workouts. In fact, activities of daily living, such as walking, housework, and gardening activities count!

According to the 2018 *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, 2nd edition, adults need to do two types of physical activity each week to improve their health: **aerobic activity** and **muscle strengthening**.

Even minimal movement is better than nothing. Adults who sit less and do any amount of moderate-to-vigorous intensity physical activity gain some health benefits. Moderate aerobic activity is anything that gets your heart to beat faster. The recommendation is for:

- 150 minutes per week of moderate aerobic activity *OR*
- 75 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity *OR*
- an equivalent mix of both types of aerobic activity

If you haven't been moving much, start with shorter periods of movement to build endurance and confidence, and work your way up.

The good news is that you can spread your activity out during the week, so you don't have to do it all at once. You can even break it up into smaller amounts of time during the day.

Examples moderate aerobic activity include:

- Walking fast
- Taking the stairs
- Doing water aerobics
- Riding a bike on level ground or with few hills
- Pushing a lawn mower

Muscle strengthening activities are recommended to be done on 2 or more days a week that work all major muscle groups (legs, hips, back, abdomen, chest, shoulders, and arms). It is especially important to strengthen core muscles for back health. See [simple exercises here](#).

If you work at a desk and spend a lot of time sitting, whether at the office or teleworking from home, you can assess your work station to ensure proper positioning of chairs, desks, monitors and keyboards. [Watch this short UHC video](#) for guidance.

Fruits and Veggies That May Lower Blood Pressure

1. Bananas: A potassium fruit, bananas can be enjoyed in a multitude of ways and are very portable. Try slicing bananas into cereal or oatmeal, adding to smoothies, or freezing slices (a cooling treat).



2. Berries: Blueberries and strawberries contain antioxidant compounds called anthocyanins. A higher intake of anthocyanins may be linked to a lower risk for high blood pressure. Try adding berries to yogurt, cereal or oatmeal, or in salads.



3. Leafy Greens: Potassium helps your kidneys get rid of more sodium through your urine. This in turn lowers your blood pressure. Try kale, spinach, romaine lettuce, or Swiss chard.



4. Lentils: Containing protein and fiber, lentils are highly versatile and may help to reduce blood pressure. Try using lentils in soups and stews, an addition to a salad, or as a substitute for meat (think taco or sandwich wraps).



5. Pomegranate: Drinking pomegranate juice regularly may help chisel away at your blood pressure numbers. But watch out for the added sugar. Try adding pomegranate juice in a spritzer with club soda.

6. Red Beets: Beets are high in nitric oxide, which can help open your blood vessels and lower blood pressure. Research indicates that the nitrates in beetroot juice lowered research participants' blood pressure within just 24 hours. Try cooked or roasted beets, add to stews, or bake into chips.

7. Watermelon: Watermelon contains an amino acid called citrulline, which may help to manage high blood pressure. Try adding watermelon to salads and smoothies or enjoy a chilled and refreshing watermelon soup.

Easy Peasy!

Moving more doesn't have to be complicated. Check out the article [9 Workouts that You can Absolutely Fit Into Your Day](#) from Rally. They offer a few methods to sneak activity into your day, like:

- Walk during phone calls
- Squat while the coffee brews
- Take the stairs
- Park really, really far away
- Have post-dinner family dance parties

You'll also learn what the "grocery farmer's carry" exercise is.



Alone During COVID

By Jane Grannis, Wellness Manager

Relationships are crucial to both physical and psychological well-being. Through research, we now know that there is a connection between social isolation, loneliness and both physical and mental health.

Individuals lacking in strong relationships, both individual and community, are at a higher risk for developing arthritis, type 2 diabetes, and heart disease, among others. There may also be a connection to cognitive decline, dementia and Alzheimer's.

As we ride out the social distancing requirements that keep us safer during the pandemic, it's exponentially more difficult to interact with others to fulfill a fundamental human need.

Even if normal social activities have been canceled and we can't visit with friends, neighbors and relatives, there are still ways to stay connected and be in a healthier place emotionally if we are open-minded.

Adjust Your Mindset and Expectations

Events are beyond our control. Being away from the people and things we care about is temporary.

- **Virtual chats** and visits are extremely popular. If you own a computer or tablet but are not tech savvy and a little hesitant to try it out, ask a friend or relative to teach you how. Not only is learning new skills a great way to lift your spirits and keep your mind fresh, but you'll open the door to limitless possibilities to connect with people all over the world!

Identify Things to Do

- Connect to your art – draw, paint, sing or listen to music, photograph, crochet or knit, write stories or that novel, and so on.
- If possible, take walks outside.
- Garden.
- [Read advice](#) from experts on fitness.



- Do crossword puzzles and other word games.
- The written word and snail mail are a forgotten art. Dust off the address book and write letters!

Improve Your Feeling of Well-being

- Keep a journal of your emotions. Make note of the things that make you feel happy or accomplished throughout the day.
- Compassion or gratitude towards others – but also towards yourself – can improve your feeling of well-being and happiness.

Planning

- Plan life in the short-term, even just one or two days ahead.
- Build a routine into your day.
- Setting daily management goals to instill a feeling of accomplishment.

Volunteer efforts have popped up across the country to help ease the lingering isolation of the pandemic among older Americans, creating connections and unexpected friendships. Read more in [this article](#).

Let someone make your day! [Mon Ami](#) has big-hearted volunteers who want to meet amazing people and bring them joy. [Request a volunteer](#) for friendly calls from Mon Ami.



Join a Simulation Lab to Help Train 911 Operators

Pinellas County's Regional 911 is seeking volunteers to participate in a simulation lab operation that would create a real-world scenario for telecommunicators to learn from. This position is ideal for individuals who have prior fire or EMS experience and anyone seeking to experience the complex environment of a 911 call center. The application process is easy. [View more details.](#)



REPCO News

In recognition of current local government guidelines / directives for social distancing, masking and no group gatherings, REPCO meetings are cancelled until the guidelines / directives are relaxed to allow group meetings. For questions, contact Rudy Garcia at (813) 855-3466 or rdgarcia@verizon.net.

Retiree Resources

Medicare Health Plan:

- ◇ UnitedHealthcare MAPPO (800) 457-8506 (includes Rx and behavioral health) UHCRetiree.com
- ◇ Davis Vision (800) 999-5431 DavisVision.com

Human Resources
Helping U Succeed

Non-Medicare and Traditional Medicare Health Plan:

- ◇ UnitedHealthcare (888) 478-4752 myuhc.com
- ◇ Express Scripts (866) 544-9221 Express-Scripts.com
- ◇ Davis Vision (800) 999-5431 DavisVision.com

Dental Plans:

- Cigna (800) 244-6224 myCigna.com

Florida Retirement System (FRS): (866) 446-9377

myfrs.com

Pinellas County Retirement Information:

www.pinellascounty.org/hr/retiree



The 2020 Art Show has been postponed until further notice due to public health concerns related to COVID-19.

Registration will remain open.

The Colors of Pinellas Art Show provides an opportunity for employees, retirees, volunteers, and their families to participate in a professional exhibition and compete for cash prizes.

The show is judged by professional artists, and offers Amateur, Intermediate, Professional, Teen, and Youth classifications.

All skill levels are welcome—from youth to professional.

Submit photographs, paintings, drawings, crafts, sculpture, jewelry, ceramics, mixed media, woodcarving—you name it!

For more details including how to register and to stay up-to-date, visit www.pinellascounty.org/hr/artshow.

