

HEALTH FOCUS

VILLAGE CARE MAX

Member Newsletter - Summer 2016

What is Heart Disease?

Build-up in the arteries can result in a heart disease. This can lead to a heart attack. There are two ways to treat or control heart disease: change your lifestyle and take the right medicine. Know the risk factors for heart disease and work on the ones you can change:

Major Risk Factors You **CAN** Change:

- **Smoking.** If you smoke, quit smoking! Help is available. Call the New York State Smokers' Quitline at 1.866.697.8487. People who smoke are at twice the risk of heart attack than people who've never smoked.
- **High cholesterol.** The risk of heart disease increases when blood cholesterol rises. Cholesterol can be affected by age, sex, family history and diet. Talk with your doctor about getting your cholesterol numbers to where they need to be.
- **High blood pressure.** High blood pressure causes the heart to work too hard. High blood pressure increases your risk of stroke, heart attack, and kidney failure.
- **Physical inactivity.** Regular physical activity helps put a stop to heart disease. Even activities, like walking, are very helpful if you are able to walk regularly.
- **Obesity and overweight.** A lot of body fat (mostly around the waist) can cause people to develop heart disease and stroke even if there are no other risk factors.
- **Diabetes.** Diabetes increases your risk of heart disease and stroke, even when your blood sugar is under control.

VillageCareMAX Can Help You Renew Your Medicaid Benefits

Each year, people who have joined a health plan, such as MLTC or FIDA, must renew their Medicaid benefits. VillageCareMAX can help you with this. We work with a company called FHS Consultants. They can help you renew your Medicaid benefits. Call FHS Consultants at 1-718-951-2200, Monday through Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. **Please Note:** Do not renew your Medicaid benefits through the New York State Health Exchange online. If you do, your current Medicaid benefits may be closed with the Human Resources Administration (HRA). If this happens, you will no longer receive services from your current VillageCareMAX plan.

Tell Us What You Think

As your health plan, we want to know what we are doing well and what we can do better to meet your health care needs. Call or email us anytime. Our email address is:

TellUs@villagecare.org

We look forward to hearing from you. If you have an immediate need for service please call member services at 800-469-6292.

Member Services

VillageCareMAX Member Services reminds members to call with any questions. Our member services team may be reached at 800-469-6292, from 8:30am - 6:00pm Monday-Friday. Our team is committed to meeting your needs and providing you with excellent service. We have English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian speaking representatives on staff, as well as language translation services available. It is always our pleasure to serve you.

Knowing the Facts about HIV/AIDS

HIV is the virus. This virus causes AIDS. The virus attacks the cells in our body's immune system. Our body's immune system is important because it fights diseases and infections. Without the proper treatment, HIV can proceed to AIDS. There is no cure for HIV, but it is controllable. If you have been diagnosed with HIV, make an appointment with an HIV or an Infectious Disease doctor. Your doctor will help you manage your HIV. The doctor will work with you to develop a treatment plan.

How Does HIV/AIDS Spread?

- HIV is mainly spread by having unprotected sex with an HIV-infected person. Condoms work well to prevent HIV. In order to stay safe, use them every time you have sex.
- HIV can also be spread through contact with HIV-infected blood. This can be spread through needle sharing, ear and body piercing, tattooing, and drug needles.
- Pregnant women infected with HIV can spread the virus to their infants during pregnancy or delivery, or by breastfeeding.

What are the Symptoms of AIDS?

People infected with the HIV virus may have flu-like symptoms. Those symptoms develop within a month or two of getting infection. Call your doctor if you think you have come in contact with HIV. It is important to get tested for HIV/AIDS early. Doing so may stop HIV from turning into AIDS. Please note, by law, HIV test results and other related information are kept private. If you are treated wrongly because you have HIV, you can get help. **Contact the New York State HIV/AIDS information line at 1-800-541-AIDS. The TTY number is 1-800-369- 2437. For more information about HIV/AIDS, call 1-800-TALK-HIV.**

Preventive Services: Vision and Hearing Screenings

One of the best ways to stay healthy is to be aware of health issues before they become serious. No matter your age or health, yearly eye and hearing screenings are important.

For many people, vision loss interferes with their quality of life and ability to function. Vision loss is linked to diabetes, stroke and a decline in mental function. A vision test can help identify early signs of disease. Talk to your doctor if you notice any changes in your eyesight.

Hearing loss may affect older adults. This can make it hard to talk to your family or friends. You may feel upset when you cannot understand what someone is saying. A hearing test helps to see if you have hearing loss. Talk to your doctor if you have any trouble hearing. And even if you feel fine, everyone should have a hearing exam, at least every two years. Changes to your hearing can be minor at first and you may not even notice the change.

Diabetes and Smoking – A Reason to Quit

Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do. For people with diabetes, it's even more important. Smoking can raise your blood sugar levels. If you have diabetes, smoking could make your diabetes harder to control. It increases your chances of nerve damage, kidney disease and cardiovascular related problems.

If you have tried to quit smoking, but have not been able to, do not give up!

Here are a few tips that can help you:

- Set a quit smoking date.
- Tell your family and friends that you plan to quit. They can offer you support and help.
- Ask family and friends who are smokers to please not smoke around you.



Preventive Care Member Rewards Program

When you make choices that are good for you, it's nice to get a reward.

VillageCareMAX offers a Preventive Care Member Rewards Program to our MLTC members. Getting a reward is easy! You just need to see your doctor for one or more of these services. When you do, you will receive one reward for each service.

- Annual wellness exam or physical exam (once per year)
 - \$30 reward
- Flu vaccine - Once per year - \$15 reward
- Pneumonia vaccine - Once per lifetime - \$15 reward
- Dental exam - Once per year - \$15 reward
- Eye exam - Once per year - \$15 reward
- Hearing exam - Once every two years - \$15 reward
- Mammogram (Female members age 50 – 74) Once every two years - \$15 reward



As your reward, we will send you a gift card. With this gift card you can buy products that support a healthy life. If you have any questions or need the Rewards form, please call **Member Services at 1-800-469-6292**. Our hours are Monday through Friday, from 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM.

Transportation Services

VillageCareMAX works with National MedTrans (NMT) to get you to your doctor visits. There is no cost to you to use this transportation benefit. Call NMT at 1-877-916-7999 to arrange for your transportation. Please call at least 48 hours before your visit. Remember to bring a copy of the doctor's address, your insurance card and Medicaid ID with you.

VILLAGE CARE MAX

LIVE THE LIFE YOU WANT

Our Members Are Our #1 Priority.

VillageCareMAX is a
Medicaid Managed Long-Term Care (MLTC) plan
established by VillageCare,
a trusted health care provider for over 35 years.

For more information

800-469-6292 TTY 711

7 days a week, 8:00 am to 8:00 pm

www.villagecaremax.org



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