Healthy rewards

You can earn rewards for keeping your health in check. We offer incentive programs that support certain health service areas. Check out these great programs to see if any apply to you!

Pregnancy Care Incentive Program (PCIP)
If you are pregnant, you may earn up to $125 in rewards on your MyBlue® Wellness Card.
1. Earn $50 by visiting www.fepblue.org/bha and completing the online Blue Health Assessment (BHA).
2. Receive a free Pregnancy Care Box.
3. Earn up to $75 by sending us a copy of your provider-signed medical record from your first trimester visit. Go to www.fepblue.org/maternity to see what types of medical records we accept and for other information.

Hypertension Management Program (HMP)
If you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure and are age 18 or older, you may qualify to receive a free blood pressure monitor. Follow these simple steps:
1. Earn $50 by visiting www.fepblue.org/bha and taking the BHA. Check “yes” when asked if you have been diagnosed with high blood pressure.
2. After completing step 1, if eligible, you’ll receive a letter about how to obtain a free blood pressure monitor so you can track your blood pressure at home! It will also explain how to obtain your cuff size from your provider.
3. Schedule a follow-up appointment with your provider to discuss your at-home blood pressure readings. For more information on how to get a free blood pressure monitor, go to www.fepblue.org/highbloodpressure.

Diabetes Management Incentive Program (DMIP)
If you have diabetes, ask your healthcare provider about getting another A1c test. Follow these steps to earn $100 on your MyBlue® Wellness Card.
1. Visit your healthcare or lab services provider to get an A1c test.
2. Log on to your MyBlue® account by visiting www.fepblue.org/myblue and take the BHA. Select “yes” to answer the diabetes question. You’ll earn $50 on your MyBlue® Wellness Card the first time you take the BHA in 2018.
3. If you have an A1c test completed before July 1, 2018, submit your results by December 31, 2018, and you can earn $25. Receive a second A1c test between July 1 and December 31, 2018. Mail, fax or upload your A1c test results from your visit.
4. If your A1c is lower than 8 percent, you’ll get an additional $75 on your MyBlue® Wellness Card.
5. If your A1c is 8 percent or higher, you can still earn up to $75 by going to three nutritional counseling visits. You’ll receive the incentive once we receive the claims from all three visits. For more information, visit www.fepblue.org/diabetes.

Need assistance? Call 1-919-765-2413
When you get sick, know what to do

According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, when most people get sick with a cold or the flu, they don’t need to see their healthcare provider. However, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) says viruses cause colds, flu and most cases of acute bronchitis. If you have the flu, treatment with antiviral medicine is most effective the sooner you start it. You should take it within 48 hours from when your symptoms first begin.

Is it acute bronchitis?
When in doubt, call the 24/7 Nurse Line (888-258-3432) or your provider.

Whether or not you have a lung condition, the NIH says one complication that can occur from the cold virus is called acute bronchitis. With acute bronchitis, tubes in your lungs become infected. They swell and make lots of mucus. This makes it hard to breathe. Some signs of acute bronchitis are:

■ Coughing up clear or yellow- or green-colored mucus
■ Shortness of breath
■ Congestion
■ Wheezing
■ Sore throat, fever, chills, body aches

Acute bronchitis lasts about three to 10 days. Your cough may continue for several weeks. If you have signs of acute bronchitis, visit your provider. This is especially important if you have a medical condition. That’s because you may have a higher risk for developing more serious problems, such as pneumonia or respiratory failure.

Do I need antibiotics?
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warns that antibiotics don’t treat viruses. Only about 10 percent of cases of acute bronchitis are due to bacteria. For those cases, antibiotics may be helpful. It’s important to take antibiotics only when they are needed. If you take them when you should not, you can become resistant. This means that if you get an infection and need antibiotics, there’s a chance your body may not respond to them when it should.

Talk with your provider if you have any questions about avoiding colds or the flu. If you have a chronic health condition, be sure to discuss with your provider the steps you should take if you get sick.

Call the 24/7 Nurse Line at 1-888-258-3432 for advice and guidance as soon as you are sick.
If you’re sick or hurt and need medical care, do you know where to go? Don’t wait — going to the right place means getting the tests and care that you need when you need it. Sometimes it can even save your life.

As the table below shows, place and time can be very different, depending on where you go for your healthcare:

Q. Can my healthcare provider help me when I am sick or hurt?
A. Yes, your nurse or provider is the person you should call first for most health problems. The National Institutes of Health says when you have a minor sickness or injury, your provider can help you treat it. Your provider knows your health history and keeps it on file. This allows him or her to give you the best care for your medical problem. Your provider also helps keep you from getting sick when you visit for regular checkups.

Q. What should I do when my provider’s office is closed?
A. If you are sick or injured, but your life is not in danger, call your Nurse Line or go to an urgent care center. These are helpful places for care when you can’t wait to see your provider, says the American College of Emergency Physicians. You can visit an urgent care center for:

- Flu
- Strep throat
- Ear infections
- Minor cuts and burns
- Animal bites
- Minor bone fractures

Urgent care centers also:
- Usually don’t require appointments
- Are often open longer than normal business hours
- Typically provide faster, more affordable care compared with emergency rooms

Q. When should I go to the emergency room (ER)?
A. Go to the ER when your life is in danger or to treat serious illnesses. The American College of Emergency Physicians says an emergency is a serious injury, terrible pain or a condition that is getting worse fast. An ER is the best place to go when you have a life-threatening health problem. These are examples of illnesses and injuries that require emergency care:
- Chest pain
- Trouble breathing
- Poisoning
- Bleeding or vomiting that won’t stop
- Head injuries with passing out or confusion
- Major burns, cuts or breaks

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**Ask the doctor:**

Is this an emergency?

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Call the 24/7 Nurse Line at 1-888-258-3432 for advice and guidance as soon as you are sick.

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**Care Option:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CARE OPTION</th>
<th>AVERAGE WAIT TIME:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24/7 Nurse Line</td>
<td>14 seconds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telehealth</td>
<td>10 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Healthcare Provider</td>
<td>19 minutes (total visit: 40 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Clinic</td>
<td>30 minutes (total visit: 45 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgent Care Center</td>
<td>30 minutes (total visit: 60 minutes)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergency Room (ER)</td>
<td>30 minutes (total visit: 2 hours, 33 minutes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Start taking care of your diabetes today to boost your energy, improve your body’s ability to heal and prevent future health problems, says the American Diabetes Association (ADA).

Step 1: Learn about diabetes. Call Healthy Endeavors℠ at 1-888-392-3506 to receive educational materials or to learn from a nurse. The materials and nurse coaching are available to you at no additional charge. Also you could join a support group and do online research. Understanding diabetes can help you make better choices for your health on a daily basis.

Step 2: Check your ABCs, the ADA says. A stands for the A1c blood test, which measures your average blood glucose level over the past few months. B stands for blood pressure. Healthy blood pressure helps prevent heart attack, stroke, and kidney and eye damage. C stands for cholesterol. Managing your cholesterol helps prevent heart attack and stroke.

Step 3: Start making changes to your daily life. Work with your nurse or your healthcare provider to develop a healthy meal plan. Ask about the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute’s DASH healthy eating guide. It is low in sodium, cholesterol, and saturated and total fats.

Check your weight, too. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says your Body Mass Index, or BMI, can tell you how much body fat you have based on your weight and height. Your BMI will put you into one of the following categories:

- Underweight
- Normal or healthy weight
- Overweight
- Obese

Talk with your nurse or your provider to find out what you can do to help bring your BMI into a healthy range.

Step 4: Be more active. The CDC recommends 30 to 60 minutes of physical activity most days of the week, including aerobic and strength training activities.

Step 5: Schedule regular checkups and tests. Your A1c should be checked at least twice a year, according to the ADA. In addition, your provider will check your blood pressure, feet and weight. You also need a complete foot exam, dental exam, eye exam, flu shot, cholesterol test and tests to check for kidney problems. It is important to find and treat complications and problems early.
Clinical Pharmacists can help you improve your health. Through Medication Therapy Management (MTM), you can understand your medications, how to take them and why you need them. Understanding your medicines is the key to protecting your health.

Working with you
Think of your pharmacist as your partner in health. He or she knows the most about your medications. An MTM program is your pharmacist’s tool to help you use your medications in the right ways and for the right reasons. When your pharmacist reviews your medications, he or she will check for the following:

■ More than one drug that was prescribed for the same health problem
■ Medications that might cause a bad reaction
■ Ways to help make sure you are taking your medication on the right days and at the right times
■ To make sure that the medication you are prescribed is the right one for your health problem
■ Ways you can save money on high-cost medications

More than just medications to control high blood pressure
The American College of Cardiology and the American Heart Association say that a person’s blood pressure (BP) should be lower than 130/80 mmHg. A lower BP could reduce a person’s chance for heart problems. High blood pressure, or hypertension, can lead to:

■ Heart attack
■ Stroke
■ Aneurysm
■ Heart failure
■ Weakened and narrowed blood vessels in the kidneys
■ Thickened, narrowed or torn blood vessels in the eyes
■ Metabolic syndrome
■ Trouble with memory or understanding

Your pharmacist can also help you control high blood pressure by creating a plan. The plan could include:

■ Getting tips to help you remember to take your medications
■ Talking about why it is important to follow directions
■ Discussing possible BP medication options that could save you money
■ Reviewing all your prescribed and over-the-counter medications to make sure none are causing a higher BP
■ Getting information on medication safety
■ Working with your provider to lower the number of office visits you need
■ Learning how to protect your health and avoid new problems that could need emergency care or a hospital stay

Need assistance? Call your Clinical Pharmacist at 1-919-765-4703.
Common health conditions in women

Your health is important. Protecting it should be one of your top goals. Visiting your healthcare provider regularly can make a big difference. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services says you also need health screenings that help find diseases before you even have symptoms. Be proactive and understand some of the top health problems women may face.

Cervical cancer
Cervical cancer can be prevented with two screening tests, the Pap test and the HPV test. The Pap test finds cells that have changed on the cervix. These are cells that could become cancer if they are not treated. The HPV test looks for the human papillomavirus (HPV). This can cause the cell changes found by the Pap test.

Women should have a Pap test every three years between ages 21 and 65, according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. You may need testing more often or screenings after age 65 based on your personal health history and results from earlier tests. Ask your provider whether you should be tested for HPV and how often.

There are vaccines available to help prevent cervical cancer. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests girls and boys age 11 or 12 get the vaccine before becoming sexually active. Most young women between ages 15 and 26 can get the vaccine if they missed it earlier. Talk with your provider to find out if the vaccine is right for you or your child.

Breast cancer
Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in women. You cannot control things like family history that raise your risk for breast cancer. You might lower your risk if you:

■ Stay at a healthy weight
■ Have one alcoholic drink or less each day
■ Get 150 minutes of exercise, such as brisk walking, each week
■ Do not smoke

Women should be screened for breast cancer every two years starting at age 50, according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. You may need to start sooner or have one more often based on your health history. Talk with your provider about the best timing for you.

Colorectal cancer
Most adults need a colorectal cancer screening starting at age 50. There are many kinds of tests your provider might order. Talk with your provider about which one is best for you and when you need to get your first screening.

You may need to be tested before age 50 if you have certain health conditions that could lead to colorectal cancer. You might also have to start screening sooner if a close family member had colorectal polyps—abnormal growths that can lead to cancer—or colorectal cancer.

Heart disease
About one in four American women will die of heart disease. It is the number one cause of death for both men and women in the United States. Plaque, a waxy substance, can build up inside your arteries. The built-up plaque limits the amount of blood that flows to your heart. This is called heart disease.

You have a higher chance of getting heart disease if you smoke or have high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes. The risk is the same for women and men. Women have an even higher chance if they take birth control pills or are in menopause.

Talk with your provider about your risk factors. Find out what changes you can make to lower your chances of getting heart disease.
Pregnant?
Put these on your to-do list first

If you are pregnant, you need to take care of your health and make healthy choices. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say to put these steps at the top of your pregnancy to-do list:

■ See your healthcare provider as soon as you think you are pregnant. Regular prenatal care lowers health risks for you and your baby.
■ Talk with your provider about all prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines or herbal products you take. While some medicines are OK to take during pregnancy, others may hurt your unborn baby.
■ Add more protein, iron and calcium to your diet now that you are pregnant. You should also take folic acid every day. Talk with your provider about prenatal vitamins that contain folic acid.
■ Skip eating any raw fish, meat that is not fully cooked, cold deli meats and unpasteurized cheese. Ask your provider for more food safety and healthy diet tips.
■ Avoid being near anyone who is smoking. If you smoke, it is time to quit. Ask your provider for help if you need it.
■ Do not drink any alcohol. Your provider can help if you find it hard to stop drinking alcohol.
■ Work with your provider to develop a healthy exercise plan.
■ Ask your provider for a list of cleaning products and other items you need to avoid.
■ Keep stress levels as low as possible.

Did you get your incentive?
You may be eligible for $75 on your MyBlue® Wellness Card if you had a first-trimester prenatal visit in 2017 and gave birth in 2018 or if you have a first-trimester prenatal visit in 2018 with a due date in 2018 or 2019. Go to www.fepblue.org and learn about the Pregnancy Care Incentive Program. See more information about this on page 1, also.

In touch

Leena Mehta
Manager

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Healthy EndeavorsSM1 members who received health coaching will receive this magazine.
Download fepblue today

With the fepblue mobile app, you can keep up with your benefits, call the 24/7 Nurse Line, find a provider and more on the go. Download the app today on the App Store® or Google Play™. Learn more at www.fepblue.org/app.

Rainbow fruit salad

Fruit salad:
1 large mango, peeled and diced
2 bananas, sliced
2 cups seedless grapes
1 kiwi fruit, peeled and sliced
2 cups fresh blueberries
2 cups fresh strawberries, halved
2 nectarines, unpeeled and sliced

Honey-orange sauce:
⅓ cup unsweetened orange juice
2 tbsp. lemon juice
1½ tbsp. honey
¼ tsp. ground ginger
A dash of nutmeg

Directions:
1. Prepare and combine the fruit.
2. Combine all the ingredients for the sauce and mix.
3. Just before serving, pour the sauce over the fruit.

Makes 12 4-ounce servings.

Per serving:
96 calories,
1 g total fat (less than 1 g saturated fat),
0 mg cholesterol,
4 g sodium