

FEATURE STORY

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Staying safe in the sun

Summer is finally here! With warm weather, many people can't wait to get outside and enjoy the activities they love. Make outdoor time safe by protecting yourself from the biggest risk factor for skin cancer: too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) rays. Use these tips to protect yourself and your family:

- Avoid the sun when the rays are strongest, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Use sunscreen every time you go outside—even on cloudy days.
- Wear tightly woven clothes, a wide-brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV-protective lenses.
- Don't use tanning beds or lamps.

If you see any changes to your skin or to your moles, see your doctor or dermatologist. Early detection is crucial for skin cancer. To find a doctor or dermatologist in your plan's network, visit medica.com/members.

Using the right sunscreen

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends selecting a sunscreen with a label that says:

- Broad spectrum: This will protect you from UVA and UVB rays and protects against skin cancer, premature aging and sunburn.
- Sun protection factor (SPF) 30: You should select a sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher.
- Water resistant: This tells you that the sunscreen will stay on your skin even after it gets wet. You will need to reapply this either 40 minutes or 80 minutes after your skin gets wet—depending on the label.

Sources: OptumHealth, Inc., American Academy of Dermatology

Managing your medications

Many of us take medications regularly—from a prescription drug prescribed by a doctor to over-the-counter pain relievers. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), almost half of Americans have used at least one prescription drug in the past month. With our medicine cabinets stocked, it is often hard to keep track of medicines or know which medicines should not be taken with each other. Following these tips can help you better manage your medications.

Use one pharmacy

If you can, use the same pharmacy to fill all of your prescriptions. By doing this, your pharmacist will know all of the medications you are taking and can identify drugs that may not work well together.

Know your medications

Know why each drug is prescribed and understand the condition being treated. Ask questions. Always have your pharmacist explain any new medication to you, including how to take it and any potential side effects.

Store your medication properly

Store your medicine in a dry area away from heat, direct light and humidity.

Keep an up-to-date medication list

This list should include prescriptions (generic and brand name), over-the-counter (non-prescription) medications, herbal supplements, dietary supplements and vitamins. Be sure to include any other medications you have tried in the past that did not work or that caused bad side effects or allergic reactions.

Get rid of expired or unused medication

Check the expiration date and discard medication that is expired, discolored, dried out or crumbling. You should also get rid of medicines you are no longer using from previous illnesses or conditions.

Take medications as directed

Take your medications as directed by your doctor. If you feel a medication is not working, let your doctor or pharmacist know. Don't stop taking a medication without talking with your doctor, and let your doctor know right away if you feel your medicine is making you sick or you are having serious side effects.

Please check your coverage document on [mymedica.com](https://www.mymedica.com) for specific pharmacy benefit information.

Dealing with stress

We hear about stress all the time, but what is it? By definition, stress is a physical, mental or emotional tension or strain. It is a normal part of life and can be both positive and negative. Some examples of positive and negative stress are:

| Positive stress | Negative stress |
|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Work promotion | Money issues |
| Marriage | Work problems |
| New baby | Illness |
| Buying a new home | Death of a family member |

Our reaction to stress and how we manage it can affect our health. Stress can cause many health problems including headaches, back pain, anxiety, depression and heart problems. Because of this, stress management is important to keep you healthy.

| Tips to manage stress | |
|--|---|
| Find support - with a group, your clergy, a doctor or a friend | Exercise regularly |
| Use relaxation techniques | Get plenty of sleep |
| Try breathing exercises | Eat light, nutritious meals |
| Plan ahead | Avoid drugs and alcohol |
| Organize your surroundings | Medications may be prescribed by your clinician |

Sometimes stress can be too much to deal with on your own. If you or someone you know needs help, there are resources available to help manage stress. Talk to your doctor or other health care professional for more information.

Talk to a registered nurse 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Making smart decisions about your health or the health of a family member is not always easy. Maybe you're wondering if you need to see a doctor or if it's best to take care of an illness at home. Or maybe you have questions about a health condition or you're wondering about side effects or symptoms.

A convenient call to the Medica CallLink® nurse line can help you get your health-related questions answered and assist in getting you the care you need.

A CallLink nurse can:

- Discuss symptoms
- Answer questions about conditions
- Offer self-care tips
- Discuss medications
- Prepare questions for doctor visits
- Help you find a physician, hospital or other facility in your plan's network
- Explain treatment options, including when to go to the doctor or emergency room

Talk to a CallLink nurse at 1-800-962-9497.* This service is free and confidential and is available anytime, 24/7. You can also chat live online with a nurse by logging on to mymedica.com.

*TTY users, please call 711 and ask for the number above.

Note: Some employers choose to offer a different benefit for members. Please check your coverage document on mymedica.com for specific benefit information.

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