



# Tips for Managing Chronic Conditions



# Experience HealthTeam Advantage!

## **We're local, based right here in North Carolina.**

We know the same doctors and hospitals who'll provide your care. We're also doctor-guided, so we understand your healthcare needs.

**We're accessible.** When you become a HealthTeam Advantage member you'll be assigned your own Healthcare Concierge who will answer your questions, explain plan benefits, help you find a network doctor, schedule appointments, and more.

**We're reliable.** We work hard to earn the trust of our members (your friends and neighbors), who give us high marks for satisfaction year after year.

## **We're committed.**

Our mission is to improve the health and well-being of our communities through a commitment to personalized service, quality, and enhanced care experiences.



## Managing Your Medications

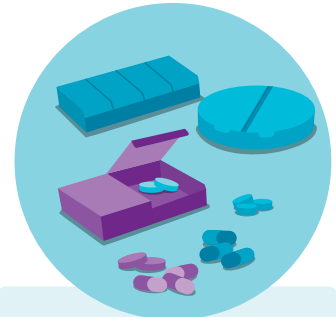
If you have a chronic condition, you may have several daily medications to take — and it's important to take them exactly as prescribed. Try these tips to help you stay on track:



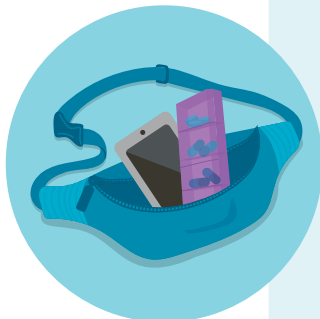
**Set a reminder** on your phone or use an alarm clock.



**Use an app** for medication management on your smartphone or tablet, such as Medisafe.



**Use a pillbox.** There are lots of varieties available.



If you leave the house frequently, **keep an extra day of medications with you**, just in case.



If your schedule makes it hard to take your medications on time, **talk to your provider.** There might be another medication or doses that would be better for you.

### Important Reminders

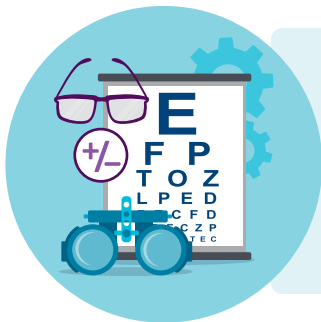
- ◆ Make sure all your providers (and pharmacies, if you use more than one) know about all the medications you take. Keep a list that includes any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and supplements.
- ◆ Understand how to take your medications properly and know what side effects to look for. If you're not sure, ask!
- ◆ Always talk to your provider before stopping a prescribed medication.

## 5 Tips for Managing Diabetes



**Get your A1c** checked at least once yearly, and preferably several times per year. This is a 3-month average of all your blood sugars. The higher the average, the more you're at risk of damage to your heart, brain, eyes, and kidneys.

**Check your feet** every day. Diabetes tends to attack the small nerve endings in the feet and legs over time. This decreases sensation, and it's very common to develop a wound on the bottom of the foot and not realize it.



Get an **annual eye exam**. There are several eye diseases related to diabetes. The most common is diabetic retinopathy, caused by damage to blood vessels in the eye. Diabetic retinopathy has no symptoms in the early stages, so regular eye exams are crucial.

Have an **annual urine screening** for microalbuminuria, a condition where small amounts of protein called albumin leak into the urine. This signals early damage to the kidneys, and without proper treatment, kidney damage can lead to complete kidney failure.



**Talk with your provider** about statins, a class of medications recommended for diabetics (unless you have a condition that would prevent you from taking statins safely, such as severe liver disease). Statins greatly reduce the risk of a heart attack or a stroke in diabetics.

## 5 Tips for Managing Chronic Heart Failure (CHF)



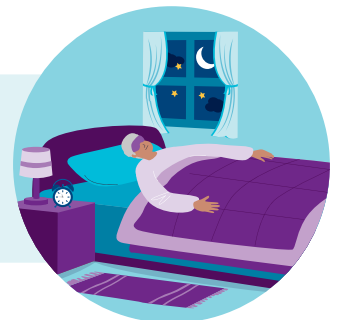
**Reduce salt in your diet.** Too much sodium can make fluid buildup worse, so find ways to reduce your intake. For example, choose fresh foods over processed foods and season with herbs and spices instead of salt.

**Be physically active.** Talk with your provider about how much physical activity is right for you. Your provider might suggest outpatient cardiac rehabilitation to get you started. Always check with your provider before starting an exercise program!



**Manage stress.** It's no secret that chronic stress can take a toll on your health, particularly if you have CHF. Meditation, exercise, and even talking with a counselor can help you reduce stress.

**Get enough sleep.** Let your provider know if you have trouble sleeping. Treating disorders such as sleep apnea may improve CHF symptoms.



**Take medications as prescribed.** If you're taking medications for CHF, it's important to take them exactly as directed. Ask your provider if you're not sure. (See page 1 for tips on managing your medications.)

# Daily Weight Checks: Quick Tips

Stepping on the scale each morning—right after waking up and before eating breakfast—is an essential part of heart care.



## Why daily weight checks matter

When you have heart failure, your body struggles to get rid of excess salt and water (this is why it's called congestive heart failure).

- ◆ A gallon of water weighs about 9 pounds (4 kg).
- ◆ Your body can retain up to half a gallon of fluid in your belly or legs without obvious swelling.
- ◆ Sudden weight gain can be a warning sign that fluid is building up in your body.

## Tracking your weight daily helps you:

- ◆ Manage your chronic heart condition
- ◆ Know if your treatment plan is working
- ◆ Stay out of the hospital



## Track your weight daily

Use the Heart Health Tracker on the next page to record your daily weight.

**TIP:** Weigh yourself using the same scale, at the same time each day, and wearing similar clothing for the most accurate results.

## IMPORTANT: Know when to call your doctor:

Contact your doctor immediately if you:

- ◆ Gain 3 pounds or more in 24 hours
- ◆ Gain more than 5 pounds in a week

# My Heart Health Tracker

Log daily important numbers related to your heart health.

<b>Weight</b>	Date						
	Result						
<b>Blood Pressure</b> ♥ Less than 120/80 mm Hg	Date						
	Result						
<b>Weight</b>	Date						
	Result						
<b>Blood Pressure</b> ♥ Less than 120/80 mm Hg	Date						
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	Result						
<b>Weight</b>	Date						
	Result						
<b>Blood Pressure</b> ♥ Less than 120/80 mm Hg	Date						
	Result						

Note: ♥ indicates Normal values

# Daily Blood Sugar Monitoring: Quick Tips

Regularly checking your blood sugar (glucose) levels is an essential part of managing diabetes, especially for seniors. Tracking these levels can help you stay healthy, prevent complications, and feel your best.

## Why Monitoring Blood Sugar is Important

- ◆ Helps manage diabetes effectively
- ◆ Prevents dangerously high or low blood sugar levels
- ◆ Guides medication and dietary choices
- ◆ Reduces the risk of complications like heart disease, nerve damage, and vision problems

## Tips for Monitoring Blood Sugar Daily

### When to check:

- ◆ Before meals (especially breakfast)
- ◆ Two hours after meals
- ◆ Before bedtime
- ◆ When you feel symptoms of high or low blood sugar (Check with your doctor about how often you should test.)

## How to Get an Accurate Reading

- ◆ Wash your hands before testing (to remove food or residue)
- ◆ Use the same meter consistently for reliable results
- ◆ Check at the same times each day for patterns
- ◆ Keep a log of your readings to track trends

## What Your Numbers Mean

- ◆ Fasting (before meals): 80-130 mg/dL
- ◆ After meals (2 hours later): Less than 180 mg/dL (Your target range may be different—ask your doctor.)

### TIP:

Use the Blood Sugar Log on the next page to track patterns and share with your doctor.



## Know when to call your doctor

Seek medical help if:

- ◆ Your blood sugar is consistently above 250 mg/dL
- ◆ Your blood sugar drops below 70 mg/dL and doesn't improve
- ◆ You feel dizzy, confused, extremely tired, or faint



# Wellness Resources

At HealthTeam Advantage, we want to make sure our members have the tools they need to stay healthy and active. We offer the following wellness resources at no cost to our members., and we hope you'll take advantage of them!



## Living Plus Wellness Program

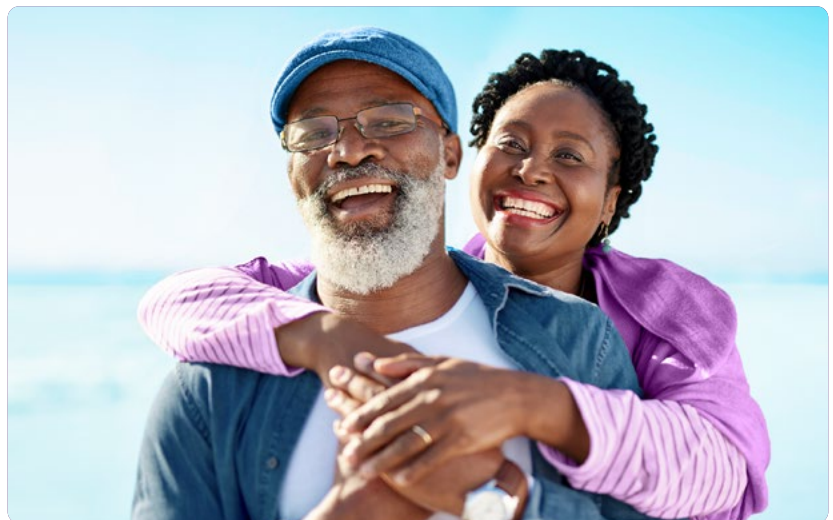
Designed just for HealthTeam Advantage members of all abilities, Living Plus promotes active living, healthy eating, and social connections. You can participate in a variety of programs through Living Plus based on your needs and interests:

**Health Coaching:** Our registered dietitian and health coach offers specialized, one-on-one coaching sessions over the phone. Available to members who are referred for medical nutrition therapy, stress management, and other chronic disease management support.

**Diabetic Wellness Program:** Designed to help members learn to better manage diabetes with personalized coaching, videos, and group meetings.

### Nutrition and Cooking Demos:

Learn how to prepare healthy, nutritious recipes by watching videos anytime on Facebook or YouTube. Scan the QR code to explore our cooking video.





## SilverSneakers<sup>®</sup>

All HealthTeam Advantage plans include access to our fitness benefit, SilverSneakers, a nationally recognized leader in fitness for mature adults, at no cost. That means you can take free fitness classes, in person or online, and visit participating fitness locations for free! Just scan the QR code to learn more.



## Memory Fitness

Just as exercise is important for physical health, brain training exercises can improve memory and cognitive performance. That's why all HealthTeam Advantage plans include BrainHQ, a program of online exercises that work on attention, brain speed, memory, people skills, and navigation.

You can do these exercises at home on a computer or mobile device. There is no cost to you and no big time commitment — it takes less than five minutes to complete each BrainHQ level. Just scan the QR code to learn more.



## Wellness Articles

Looking for more information about fitness and exercise, healthy living, or managing a chronic condition? Our blog is packed with articles that cover topics on everything from physical and mental health to fitness, healthy eating, chronic conditions, dental, vision, and hearing, and more. Just scan the QR code to learn how to stay healthy.





## We're Here for You!



### Online

[healthteamadvantage.com](https://healthteamadvantage.com)

### Let's Talk



Reach out to our local Medicare Experts for questions related to Medicare or our Medicare Advantage Plans.

**Call 336-221-3260 (TTY 711)**

8 a.m.-8 p.m. | Oct. 1-March 31, 7 Days a Week  
April 1-Sept. 30, Monday-Friday



### Local Benefit Center

5815 Samet Dr., Suite 107, High Point, North Carolina 27265

Open Monday-Friday from 9 a.m-4 p.m.

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