

THE ADVOCATE

Health tips and resources for MCG employees and their families



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Welcome to 2022!

This year, the Manatee YourChoice team welcomes you to participate in the new Health Improvement & Incentive Program, or HiiP. A major goal of the Manatee YourChoice team is to help improve the overall health of our employees. Recent data shows that there are underlying health conditions that our employees are struggling to manage. As a team of health professionals, we felt that it was important to help address these issues beginning with our employees in the initial roll out of HiiP. Our employees are the nuts and bolts of the organization and without them, the organization cannot perform at its optimum level.

We are excited to have you join us as we partner together to tackle health issues that employees are facing. The YourChoice team has been diligent in designing this new program to lead you to use the multitude of resources that are available to you through the health plan. Our goal through this process has been to increase your knowledge and use of our YourChoice Advocates, drive engagement in the current programs that are specific to your health needs, and increase literacy of the benefits that are available to you. We look forward to partnering with you to help you set new goals and reach new healthcare milestones in 2022.

In good health, *Luan L. Atkinson*





ADDITION ATTITUDE

It's a new year. Many of us make resolutions to eat better for improved health or perhaps to lose weight. We tend to make big, impressive promises that too often we only stick to for short periods of time. Resolutions about better eating are often about cutting out foods. Depriving yourself can be depressing and can lead to binging. This year, start practicing an attitude of addition rather than subtraction. Fight off the desire to cut food out and embrace what you can add in!

For example, eat more vegetables. You've heard this message time and time again, but truth is, more and more scientific research shows the power of veggies. They are full of vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients that help fight off cancer and heart disease. Plus, vegetables are loaded with fiber. Fiber helps control blood sugars, battles constipation, and works as a diarrhea treatment. See? Mom was right. Maybe it is time to make vegetables the hero of your plate.

This year instead of focusing on what you shouldn't be eating, think about what you could add to your diet!

Want more tips to eat better in 2022? Contact Kay Renshaw, your Nutrition Advocate at x6459.



CREAMY BROCCOLI FETA SALAD

Ingredients:

- 6 oz nonfat plain yogurt
- ½ cup crumbled plain or flavored reduced fat feta cheese
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, peeled & minced
- 8 oz (approx. 2 bunches broccoli florets, chopped into small pieces
- 1- 15 oz can chickpeas, rinsed & drained
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded & chopped

Simple Ways to Make Vegetables the Hero of Your Plate:

- Eat your vegetables first.
- Add vegetables to EVERY meal, even breakfast.
- Add vegetables to foods you already eat. Think about adding more veggies to stir fries, sandwich wraps, kabobs, pizzas, even soups.
- Turn vegetables into noodles. Use a spiralizer to make noodles out of carrots or zucchini. Or check the produce or even freezer aisle for precut vegetable noodles.

This salad pairs well with chicken or fish. The leftovers hold up well for lunch the next day.

Instructions:

Combine yogurt, feta, lemon juice, and garlic in serving bowl. Add broccoli, chickpeas, and red peppers to toss with yogurt dressing.

Note: Recipe makes six servings of one cup each.



BLOOD PRESSURE

Blood pressure is the force of circulating blood on the walls of the arteries. It is measured with two different numbers:

- Systolic (measured when the heart beats, when blood pressure is at its highest)
- Diastolic (measured between heart beats, when blood pressure is at its lowest)

Blood pressure is written with the systolic blood pressure first, followed by the diastolic blood pressure. 120/80 is considered a healthy blood pressure. If you have higher blood pressure, consider the amount of force it takes to deliver blood from your heart to other areas of your body. The force, over time, causes disruption to your arteries, breaking down their walls and can slow the flow of blood to necessary organs.

Keeping your arteries strong and lowering your blood pressure is a key to cardiovascular longevity.

Many factors can cause elevated blood pressure such as diet, sedentary lifestyle, stress, and genetics. Aside from genetics, most blood pressure factors can be addressed through lifestyle changes. If you struggle with elevated blood pressure, your doctor will probably suggest that you try to become more active to lower it. Being more active lowers your blood pressure by keeping your heart and blood vessels in good shape, lowering your risk of heart disease and stroke! For most people with higher blood pressure, it is safe to add activity, but it's always best to consult your primary physician before you start any new physical activity. The American Heart Association recommends (5) 30 minute moderate intensity activity sessions weekly. This could be walking, jogging, dancing, swimming, biking or hiking! If you prefer more intense exercise, limit to 75 minutes maximum per week. Blood pressure is one of the lab factors analyzed for our Health Improvement & Incentive Program. To learn more about Hiip and the resources we have to address blood pressure, visit

www.manateeyourchoice.com/hiip

MOVE THROUGH 2022

Let's get 2022 off to a healthy start! The YourChoice Fitness Center is hosting a movement challenge. To participate, simply track your movement weekly. You can get a tracking card at www.manateeyourchoice.com/wellbeing-programs/fitness/fitness-events

Challenge leaders will be recognized on our MYC Fitness Community Facebook Group!

If you have any questions about the challenge, please contact Julie Drackett at jdrackett@manateeyourchoice.com or 941-748-4501 x3966

10 WAYS TO SNEAK EXERCISE INTO YOUR DAY

1. Take a mile walk during a break
2. Walk somewhere to eat your lunch rather than eating at your desk
3. Park further away from the store
4. Set an alarm on your phone to get up and move every hour
5. Take 10 deep, slow breaths
6. Take the stairs instead of waiting for the elevator
7. Do 30 minutes of yard work
8. Take your child to the playground and play with them
9. Go for a short bike ride around the neighborhood
10. Try hiking a short trail at one of our many parks



For more tips on how to incorporate movement into your daily routine, contact Julie Drackett, Fitness Coordinator at ext. 3966



Save the Date!

WHAT: Cook Once, Eat Twice (Or More!): A LIVE Cookalong with Florey Miller, Manatee Your Choice Registered Dietician/Nutritionist and Polly Pitchford, Aetna Health Promotion Specialist

WHEN: January 26, 2022 6-7:30 pm

WHERE: Your Kitchen!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION: Hosted by Polly Pitchford, this live class will teach you how to prepare chicken and to use leftovers in new and exciting ways! Each participant will get recipes and shopping lists ahead of time. This is the first in a new series of Cookalongs presented in partnership with Sarasota County.

For more information or to register, visit www.ManateeYourChoice.com/Cookalong

WHAT IS CHOLESTEROL?

Cholesterol is a waxy substance your body uses to build cells, and make vitamins and hormones. It's also one of the HiiP Lab Values that we will be measuring for this year's program!

Your liver makes enough cholesterol to fuel your body. Getting excess cholesterol from your diet can cause problems. Any cholesterol that your body does not need flows through your body via your blood. It can stick to the walls of your blood vessels and build up over time. This can lead to heart disease or stroke.



There are several types of medications available for high cholesterol. Medications called statins are recommended for most people who have high cholesterol. They work by slowing the cholesterol that is made by your liver. These medications can also help stabilize the plaques that have built up in your blood vessels. One medication, Zetia works by preventing cholesterol from being absorbed by your intestines. Fibrates are another type of medications that help lower your cholesterol and triglycerides.

Your doctor may also recommend that you take Omega 3 Fatty Acids, commonly known as fish oil. Omega 3's are available over the counter, or as a prescription. They can help significantly lower your triglycerides, or fat in the blood. There is also evidence that Omega 3's can increase your HDL, or good cholesterol. For more information on medications associated with high cholesterol, reach out to your Pharmacy Advocate, Vanessa Rene at ext. 6418.

UNDERSTANDING TRIGLYCERIDES

Triglycerides are the most common type of fat in your body. They come from foods, especially butter, oils, and other fats you eat. Triglycerides also come from extra calories. These are the calories that you eat, but your body does not need right away. Your body changes these extra calories into triglycerides and stores them in fat cells. When your body needs energy, it can release the triglycerides.

Besides eating more calories than are burned off or foods high in sugar & fat, other factors that may contribute to high triglycerides are excessive alcohol consumption, kidney disease, poorly controlled diabetes, obesity, smoking cigarettes, or having an underactive thyroid.

If your body has a high level of triglycerides, it may lead to hardened arteries which can increase your risk of a stroke, heart attack, heart disease, or can cause inflammation of the pancreas known as pancreatitis. A healthy range for adults is below 150 mg/dl. Your yearly Blueprint for Wellness Labs measure your triglyceride levels. You can find these results in your Quest MyGuide booklet, or by logging into the Quest portal.

SAY GOODBYE...

Exciting news! Beginning January 1, 2022, Manatee YourChoice no longer has any preferred pharmacies. This means you can get your prescriptions from any pharmacy in the Optum network and receive these benefits:

- \$5 co-pay per 30-day supply of generics
- 90-day supply available

Optum network pharmacies include Winn Dixie, Publix, CVS, Walgreens, and Walmart.

...TO PREFERRED PHARMACIES



QUIT SMOKING NOW

Gulfcoast South is hosting a FREE Quit Smoking class! Quit Smoking Now support groups meet via Zoom once a week for 4 weeks and cover a variety of topics including coping with withdrawal symptoms, managing addiction, and preventing relapse. Cessation groups cover all forms of tobacco. Participating in class more than **DOUBLES** your chances of success!

Dates: 2/17/22, 2/24/22, 3/3/22, 3/10/22

Time: 6-7 pm

For more information: www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/quityourway

To register: (866) 534-7909

We invest in a holistic wellbeing approach and offer programs and services in the areas of physical, emotional, financial, community, and career health. When each of these areas are well, our employees are able to bring their best selves to work and help us make Manatee County a premier place in which to live and work and play.



7 STRATEGIES TO LIVE A HEART-HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

1. Learn Your Health History-Know your risks and talk to your family and doctor about your health history.

2. Eat a Healthy Diet-Make healthy food choices like more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats and low-fat dairy products. Eat less salt, saturated fat and added sugar.

3. Move More, Sit Less- Get at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity aerobic activity every week, plus muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days a week.

4. Quit Smoking- Start your quit plan today!

5. Take Medicines as Directed-If you take medicine to treat high cholesterol, high blood pressure or diabetes, follow your doctor's instructions carefully. Always ask questions if you don't understand something. Never stop taking your medicine without talking to your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist

6. Rethink Your Drink-Substitute water for sugary drinks to reduce calories. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.

7. Monitor Your Blood Pressure at Home-Self measured blood pressure monitors are easy and safe to use and your doctor can show you how to use one if you need help.

To learn more about heart-healthy lifestyle strategies, contact Debbie Miskell, Nurse Advocate at ext. 6407.



GIVE ME FIVE

As a member of the Manatee YourChoice Health Plan you are eligible to receive:

5 free visits with a registered dietician

5 free visits with a personal trainer

5 free visits with a health coach

5 free visits with a certified counselor (LAMP)

Visits renew each calendar year.

Learn more at: www.ManateeYourChoice.com/wellbeing-programs



Up to \$600 can be YOURS in 2022!



Introducing the Health Improvement & Incentive Program (Hiip), a program designed to improve health using resources already available to employee members on the MYC medical plan. You'll earn incentive dollars when you invest in your health!

www.ManateeYourChoice.com/Hiip

\$100

Blueprint Labs
Automatically earn Health Bucks for completing Blueprint Labs in 2022.

\$100

Get to Know MYC
Complete this scavenger hunt where you'll search our website and learn more about all the resources available to you.

\$100

Prescription for Health Zero (0 Risk Factors)
Automatically earn for zero risk factors on 2021 Blueprint Labs.

\$50

Prescription for Health Lite (1 Risk Factor)
Based on 2021 Blueprint Labs, complete a short form about your results and review available resources on the MYC website.

\$300

Prescription for Health Full (2+ Risk Factors)
Meet with an Advocate to review 2021 Blueprint Labs and choose an area of health to improve with a custom prescribed program.

\$100

Happy Mind
Complete a short survey about resiliency in the face of stress and then chat with a LAMP Advocate about your responses.

\$100

Happy Body
Visit the fitness center to complete a face-to-face session with a Fitness Advocate focused on posture and balance.

**Health Bucks earned in 2022 are applied to your 12/22 paycheck.
Program registration begins 1/1/22. Don't miss out!**



Meet the YourChoice Advocate Team!



Allison Minardi
Worksite Wellness Manager
aminardi@manateeyourchoice.com
x3667

I can help with:
Ergonomics & Desk Station Set Up
Posture Assessments
Pre-Work Stretch Program
HiiP: Happy Body L-Z



Julie Drackett
Fitness Coordinator
jdrackett@manateeyourchoice.com
x3966

I can help with:
Stretches and strengthening moves to support mobility and decrease discomfort
Workspace ergonomic assessments
Fitness Programs
HiiP: Happy Body A-K



Claribel Gill, MS
LAMP Counselor &
Psychiatric Clinic Coordinator
cgill@manateeyourchoice.com
x6408

I can help with:
In-house individual, couples, and family counseling
Scheduling appointments for in-house counseling and Psychiatric ARNP
Assisting with medication management
HiiP: Happy Mind



Kay Renshaw, RD/LDN
Nutrition Advocate
krenshaw@manateeyourchoice.com
x6459

I can help with:
Discussing nutrition and diet
Assessing risk for lifestyle-related chronic conditions
HiiP: Prescription for Health Full A-F



Debbie Miskell, RN
Nurse Advocate
dmiskell@manateeyourchoice.com
x6407

I can help with:
Pre-authorizations
Proper sleep, bone, and heart health
Healthy Pregnancy
Provider Referrals
Nurse Related Questions
HiiP: Prescription for Health Full S-Z



Vanessa Rene, CPhT, RPhT
Pharmacy & Tobacco Advocate
vrene@manateeyourchoice.com
x6418

I can help with:
Tobacco Cessation Aids
Prior Authorizations
Vaccination Questions
Compound Reimbursements
Pharmacy Related Questions



Florey Miller, MS, RD, CDE
Nutrition & Diabetes Advocate
fmiller@manateeyourchoice.com
x6410

I can help with:
Managing diabetes
Assessing risk for diabetes
Discussing nutrition and diet
HiiP: Prescription for Health Full G-L



Ro Mohamed
Health Services Manager
rmohamed@manateeyourchoice.com
x3967

I can help with:
Overall strategy for lifestyle management and wellbeing programs
Quality improvement initiatives



Jennifer Ruiz, RN
Nurse Advocate
jrui@manateeyourchoice.com
x6409

I can help with:
Nurse Advocacy
Bariatric Program
Healthy Weight Resources
General Health Insurance/Health Guidance
Community Physician Referrals
HiiP: Prescription for Health Full M-R