



January

Member Newsletter



Get back on track with **preventive care**

If you've allowed regular check-ups, screenings and other preventive measures to lapse over the past year, now's the time to get back on track. This is especially important if you are an older adult or a person with chronic medical conditions. **Here are some suggestions:**



Find out about new safety measures for in-person check-ups. Many healthcare professionals have new office policies in place, including a mask requirement and sanitation and hygiene measures.



See if you can have a routine screening via telehealth. For example, you may be able to schedule a virtual consult with your provider for colorectal cancer screening prior to colonoscopy or your provider may elect to use a stool test that can be done at home.



Ask about getting a flu shot. The CDC recommends a flu vaccination every year (even into January) for everyone over 6 months of age. It's particularly vital for young children, pregnant women, and those 65 and older or who have asthma, diabetes, lung or heart disease—who are also more susceptible for COVID-19 infection. For information about flu vaccination, go to: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/keyfacts.htm>.



Follow good hygiene among household members. Especially if anyone has a cold or flu: keep a distance or isolate from others, cover coughs or sneezes with a tissue and then discard it, wash hands frequently, and sanitize frequently-touched surfaces.

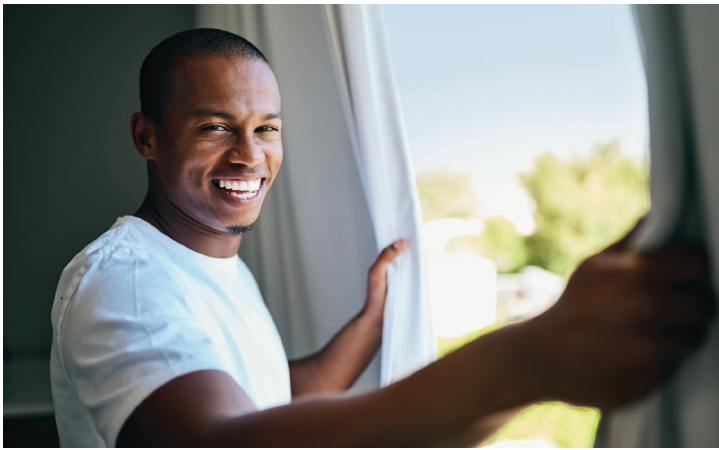


Get up and move! Being sedentary may increase your risk for developing chronic conditions, and lead to loss of muscle strength and even depression. Try to stand and move for 5 minutes every half hour—pace while you talk on the phone, for example.



Remember other preventive measures! Brush and floss daily, eat nutrient-rich foods, limit alcohol and get proper sleep.

Ask your health practitioner about other ways to protect your health.



Let's begin 2021 with
a fresh mindset

Start the new year with a **fresh mindset**

This past year tested us in more ways than we can count—yet we endured. Let's begin 2021 with a fresh mindset and a renewed commitment to health and well-being! **Keep these tips in mind as you start the New Year.**



Empower yourself! Reflect back on all you've been through and think about how your experiences have made you a stronger person. This can boost your confidence and empower you to take on 2021's opportunities—and challenges—head-on.



Reset your priorities this year. Saying “no” to non-essential tasks frees up time for more restorative activities, like reading, catching up with friends and spending time on your hobbies.



Think of each new day as an opportunity to start fresh, live healthier and be the best version of you. Hit a few bumps at work? Got off track with your exercise goal? Good news—you get another opportunity to try again tomorrow



Talk to yourself as you would a loved one. Avoid talking negatively to yourself. If you find this hard to do, every time you put yourself down, compliment yourself twice immediately after.



Perform small random acts of kindness every day. No grand gestures needed—just simple and spontaneous.



Remember that many things are simply beyond your control. When possible, try to reframe certain troublesome defeats as opportunities to learn and grow.

If you're feeling depressed or suffered a loss, seek help. You're not alone!

Talk to your health practitioner or a licensed counselor about getting support.

Break the stress eating habit during COVID-19

If you've been routinely devouring pizza, cookies, and other high-calorie foods during these uncertain times, you're not alone. It's a common way to cope with feeling stressed, bored, lonely, sad or afraid. Stress releases cortisol, making you crave fatty, sugary "comfort foods." Read on for tips to help you control your emotions, overeating...and COVID-related weight gain!



Keep an "emotional eating" log or journal.

It can help you recognize real hunger vs. stress eating and become aware of your food choices. Note what's causing you to eat when you're not hungry (be specific). Jot down the foods you crave when you feel a certain way and if they make you feel you feel better or worse after eating them.

Don't skip meals. Eat well-balanced meals at set times daily. This can help you sidestep mindless trips to the kitchen for snacks.

Get enough sleep. Lack of sleep may prompt your desire to overeat high-calorie foods.

Plan alternatives to eating when faced with triggering emotions.

Some ideas: Listen to music, go for a walk, exercise, play a game, or drink a glass of water flavored with fresh lemon. When a snack attack hits, wait ten minutes to see if the urge passes.

Pay attention and eat mindfully. Stress eating is often unconscious. Using mindfulness techniques that focus on the present moment can calm your body and mind and slow your reaction to stress, including overeating. Slow down and savor every bite, noticing the texture on your tongue, aroma, etc.

Blood Donor Month



There is a constant need for blood and platelets to meet the needs of patient care during the pandemic. **For details about donating, go to the Red Cross website:** <https://rcblood.org/3naTLrO>

