

Check Up

CCA One Care
Magazine



What's Inside:

- Sexual Health
- Member Spotlight
- Women's Health
- Springtime Pasta Primavera Recipe

Your Sexual Health Matters

Sexual health is as important as your physical or mental health. It is common for people to remain sexually active throughout their lives. Being in good sexual health includes being informed and making healthy choices. Talk to your doctor about your sexual health concerns and questions—like your risk for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Use the information below to open a conversation with your doctor.

Health Conditions and Medications Affecting Sex Life

- Illness and disease
- Effects of aging
- Sexual desire and performance

Reproductive Health

- Women's reproductive health (gynecology)
- Menopause
- Men's reproductive health (urology)

Sexual Violence

- Prevention
- Trauma-informed care

LGBTQ+ Health

- Gay and bisexual persons
- Transgender persons
- Non-binary persons
- Sexual partner preferences

What Is Sexual Health?

Sexually Transmitted Diseases & HIV/AIDS

- STDs with no symptoms
- Increasing rates of STDs
- Condoms and other ways to prevent transmission

Get More Information

To learn more about these sexual health topics, visit *Your Health Audio Library*:
www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/audiolibrary

STDs Are on the Rise!

Cases of gonorrhea, syphilis, and chlamydia increased every year from 2013 to 2017.



Please Don't Hang Up... It Might Be CCA!

We often call when you are due for important appointments and tests. These recorded phone messages can also connect you to the Member Services team to help schedule appointments for things like:

- Dental check-ups
- Diabetes tests for your eyes and kidneys
- Cervical cancer tests (Pap tests)
- Breast cancer tests (mammogram—an X-ray of the breasts)

Some tests and appointments need to happen every year. Look for calls or voicemails from a Boston area code so you don't miss these important messages. You can also call the number back at any time to hear your personal message.

We want to ensure you are getting the preventive care you need to stay healthy. Please keep answering!

Member Spotlight: Meet Mike

Back in 2015, Mike, a retired marine, was experiencing a number of health issues. He was often in the hospital due to problems with his heart. He weighed 300 pounds, and short walks left him out of breath. Mike was sleeping on his couch because “it was all I could do to even get to the bathroom.”

Mike’s weight and heart problems weren’t his only health issues. At 25, Mike lost his leg in a car accident. He also survived a battle with cancer. Mike explains, “I don’t just have one thing to manage—it’s a lot to manage.”

Mike needed a range of health care services. After one visit to the hospital, Mike decided to get a second opinion. This led him to Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA). Since becoming a member at CCA, Mike says, “it’s only been up.”

Mike has lost 145 pounds. Once he started seeing his care partner weekly, he didn’t need to go to the hospital as much. In the past year, he’s only been twice. Unless it’s an emergency, instead of going to the hospital or calling 911, his first call is to CCA. He now enjoys walking, gardening, and going to the gym. Last year, he also started working with an adaptive sports program and is doing archery, tennis, biking, skiing, golf, and kayaking. This past October, he walked a 5K. He reflects, “I want to stay around. I feel like the team I have in Boston and CCA—we’re in it together.”



Keep going. Don’t give up.

Mike’s motto is, “Keep going. Don’t give up.” He trusts in keeping life simple and suggests doing what you can to cut out stress. His other advice to CCA members: “Follow the directions. Don’t mess with the recipe. CCA is there to help you with that. If you work hard, you get the rewards.”

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Your Voice Deserves to Be Heard

Member Voices is a program that brings CCA members together to share their experiences about the care they get from CCA. It gives you the chance to help improve care for all members. It's also a great way to learn from fellow members and to build friendships.

What is the goal of *Member Voices*?

Our goal is to make sure that we, and our providers, are respecting our members' values, preferences, and needs. Feedback from the *Member Voices* program helps us do that.

What are some of the *Member Voices* activities?

When you join *Member Voices*, you'll be invited to share in activities like:

- Focus groups
- Surveys
- Workshops
- Advisory groups



How Do I Join?

Call **Emily Escobar** at **857-246-8862** or email **membervoices@commonwealthcare.org**.

We will schedule an orientation session to give you information and skills to help you participate.



Pharmacy Corner

Spring is here! Spring brings fast-changing weather. It also means colds, asthma, and allergies can flare up. When the weather is bad or you're not feeling well, it can be hard to get to the pharmacy. Make sure you keep up to date on your medications. That way you can take them even if you can't go out. Here are **2** ways to help manage all your medications:

1 3-Month Medication Supply

You may be able to obtain a prescription from your doctor for 3 months. You can also call your local pharmacy to request that they contact your doctor directly to request a 3-month prescription. A 3-month supply means you don't need to pick up your medications every month.

2 Medicine-On-Time (MOT) Packaging

Do you have trouble keeping track of your medications? Some pharmacies can package your monthly medications together. The package is labeled so you know what the medication is and what time to take it. This can help you manage your daily medication routine.

Need More Information?

If you have questions about your pharmacy benefits, talk to your CCA care partner or call Member Services at **866-610-2273 (TTY 711)**, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.

What Steps Can You Take for Better Health?

Women face unique barriers that are important to address to live a healthy and independent life. We are here to help all our members, including our female members, thrive. As a woman, there are important steps you can take to avoid or detect medical issues early. Start by talking to your doctor about your health needs.

Pregnancy and Family Planning

If you are under 45, talk to your doctor about your pregnancy plans. This will ensure you receive the care you need.

- If you **don't** want to be pregnant, it is important to talk to your doctor about how to prevent pregnancy until you are ready.
- If you **do** want to, or may want to, be pregnant in the next year, or recently had a baby:
 - Talk to your doctor about how to have a healthy pregnancy. Ask about health conditions, medications, and any changes that could be needed. Also ask about prenatal vitamins, vaccines, smoking, and weight management to be at your healthiest.
 - CCA's doulas, or birth coaches, have special training to give members and their families information and support throughout pregnancy and birth, and after birth. If you are pregnant or recently had a baby, our doulas can help you get the most out of your CCA benefits.



Get Tested for Breast and Cervical Cancer

Breast cancer and cervical cancer screening are important for women. Screening for breast and cervical cancer is important because it can find the cancer early. Early treatment is likely to work best. Cervical cancer can often be prevented.

Talk to your care partner or call Member Services to schedule free tests that screen for cancer. Your doctor can also tell you if you need tests more often.



Learn More About Preventive Care

Medical tests and screenings can help your doctors catch health problems early. Following preventive care guidelines is one of the best ways for you to stay healthy. Read the guidelines here: www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/preventivecare



Are you on Facebook? We are too!

Follow us: www.facebook.com/commonwealthcarealliance

Concerned About Opioid Addiction?

Get Help from CCA's New Drug Management Program

Many of our members are in pain because of serious health conditions or disabilities. Pain medications, such as opioids, may be the only way to treat this pain. Opioids can be very addictive. At Commonwealth Care Alliance, we want to make sure that each member's pain treatment plan is safe.

This winter, we started a new drug management program to focus on creating safe treatment plans for members who use prescription opioids. Our drug management program is dedicated to helping our members manage chronic pain while preventing addiction and overdose.

If you are taking an opioid medication for pain, talk to your doctor about your risk for addiction. We are committed to providing quality care that meets the needs of each of our members as safely as possible.



For any medications, including opioids, always only take as directed by your doctor and follow these 3 rules:

1. **Never take more pills than prescribed**
2. **Never take pills more often than prescribed**
3. **Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about side effects**



Get More Information

To learn more about opioids, review the *Frequently Asked Questions* on our website:

www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/opioids

Springtime Pasta Primavera

It's time to put the spring back onto your plate!

This simple pasta dish celebrates spring and all the new veggies popping up from the ground: broccoli, squash, peas, and tomatoes. It's light and bright, but still perfect for satisfying those pasta cravings.

Prep Time: 15 minutes • **Cook Time:** 13 minutes • **Total Time:** 28 minutes



Springtime Pasta Primavera



Ingredients

- 8 ounces uncooked pasta
- Reserved starchy cooking liquid from cooking the pasta (~¼ cup)
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 ½ cups broccoli florets (fresh or frozen)
- 3 shallots or 1 small yellow onion, diced
- 1 medium yellow squash or zucchini, diced
- 4 large cloves garlic, finely minced
- Salt and pepper, to taste (~¼ teaspoon each)
- 1 cup frozen green peas
- ¼ cup low-sodium or unsalted chicken broth or stock
- Zest and juice of ½ lemon
- 1 pint grape tomatoes, halved
- Fresh basil or parsley and reduced-fat parmesan-style grated topping for garnish (optional)

Directions

1. Cook the pasta to package instructions in water. Before you drain, don't forget to reserve a mug full of the cooking liquid.
2. While the pasta is cooking, preheat a large skillet over medium-low heat for a minute or 2, and add olive oil to the pan.
3. Add shallots and broccoli and cook for 2 minutes.
4. Add squash and cook another 2 minutes.
5. Add the frozen peas and cook another 2 minutes.
6. Add salt, pepper, and garlic, and stir to combine, being careful not to burn the garlic. Cook one more minute.
7. Add the chicken broth and cook about another minute and a half.
8. Zest the lemon over the pan.
9. After the minute and a half is up, turn off the heat, and add the lemon juice, tomatoes, and cooked pasta, stirring to combine.
10. Add a little reserved starchy cooking liquid from the pasta (~¼ cup).
11. Sprinkle with parmesan-style topping and fresh basil. Serve immediately.

Nutrition Facts:

Serving size: ~2 ½ cups

Servings per recipe: 4

Nutrition per Serving:

Calories: 389.9

Total Fat: 11.3 g

Cholesterol: 0 mg

Salt (sodium): 223.3 mg

Total Carbohydrates: 63.1 g

Sugars: 10.5 g

Protein: 11 g

Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA) One Care Program (Medicare-Medicaid) is a Coordinated Care plan offered under contract with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Service's Innovation Center and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts/EOHHS. Enrollment in the Plan depends on contract renewal to provide benefits for enrollees.

News and Views for Our Members!



We Are Listening!

This fall, over 3,000 members answered our questions about their experience using their pharmacy. Here's what we learned:

9 out of 10 members said their pharmacy was easy and convenient to use.



9 out of 10 members said their pharmacy did a good job communicating with them and their doctor.



We use your feedback to learn what is important to YOU and improve services for all members. Look out for the next survey that may ask you about:

- Your experience at the hospital
- Paid helpers
- Medical equipment
- Transportation

Thank you for helping us ensure you get the care you deserve.