

# Check Up

*CCA Senior Care  
Options Magazine*



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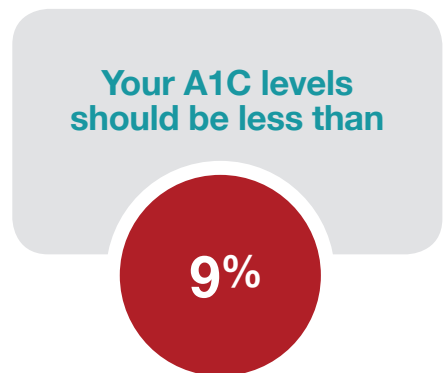
# Have Diabetes?

## Get These 4 Routine Tests to Stay Healthy

Did you know that November is Diabetes Awareness Month? You may wonder why this matters. First, diabetes is a very common disease: Over 100 million American adults are living with diabetes or prediabetes. Second, diabetes can cause serious health problems. These include heart disease, kidney disease, eye disease, stroke, foot problems, and gum disease.

One of the best ways to manage diabetes is to take steps that can limit your chance for complications. You can do that by getting these **4 routine tests** every year:

- 1. Blood Glucose:** A hemoglobin A1C test is a simple blood test that measures average blood sugar over the past 3 months. Everyone with diabetes should get an A1C test at least once a year. If needed, your doctor may order these tests more often. This will depend on the type of diabetes you have and your individual treatment plan.
- 2. Blood Pressure:** Regular blood pressure checks may help prevent many complications of diabetes, like diabetic eye disease, kidney disease, and heart disease.
- 3. Vision:** A complete eye exam may find eye problems caused by diabetes before vision loss occurs. Vision loss for people with diabetes can happen quickly and may have no symptoms until it is too late.
- 4. Kidneys:** Get a microalbumin urine test every year to check for early signs of kidney disease. This test checks for small amounts of albumin (protein) in your urine. These levels are so small a regular urine test might not find them.



## A healthy lifestyle is important too!



Exercise regularly



Keep a healthy weight



Stop smoking



Limit salt & alcohol intake

And don't forget: **Take your medications on time, every day!**

# Member Spotlight: Meet Deborah

*“At one point I had stopped going out completely. I used to fall once or twice a month. It was hard for me to even wash up.”*

CCA member Deborah has struggled with her health more as she’s gotten older. She’s had two strokes and has a hard time getting around. But she says diabetes is still her main health concern.

Deborah learned that she had diabetes 30 years ago. Even though both her parents and grandmother had diabetes, she didn’t know much about it. “I just never paid attention to it. We never thought about diabetes.”

“My mother used to make homemade donuts for us and other sweets, like pies and cakes. We never paid any attention [to what we ate]. Eating the sweets—it was just part of our diet. We had them continuously—even after Christmas time.”

Deborah joined CCA three years ago and has been getting help with the things she needs. “I don’t have the pains and tiredness I had before.”



She credits taking the right medications and eating more veggies. She’s also been learning about the vitamins in different fruits and vegetables, and about portion sizes.

*“I’m not eating a muffin in the morning anymore.”*

Deborah says she’s also not falling as much as she used to. She’s focused on getting out more to stay active. She wants to join an adult day program where she can do more activities. “They do a lot of things that keep your mind and body active.”

*“A good day is being able to get up out of bed and talk with good sense.”*



## Speak Up! Tell Us About Your Care

Member Voices is a program that brings CCA members together to share their experiences about the care they get from CCA. Help improve care for all members while meeting new people!

Call Emily Escobar at **857-246-8862** or email [membervoices@commonwealthcare.org](mailto:membervoices@commonwealthcare.org) to join the Member Voices program.

# Take Action Early

## Talk to your doctor about cancer screening

Breast cancer (for women) and prostate cancer (for men) are two of the most common cancers among adults. Even though many people may not have symptoms in the early stages, both can be found early with screening. That's why it's important to get screened even if you feel healthy.

Plus, CCA covers both breast cancer and prostate cancer screening at no cost to you!



### Breast Cancer

1 in 8 women will get breast cancer in their lifetime.

### Prostate Cancer

1 in 9 men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime.

#### You may be more at risk...

- With a family history
- As a female (men can get breast cancer)
- With age (risk increases with age)
- With a family history
- As an African American
- When 65 or older (60% of cases are in men 65+)

#### You can help lower your risk by...

- Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables daily
- Staying at a healthy weight
- Being physically active
- Limiting alcohol and not smoking
- Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables daily
- Staying at a healthy weight
- Being physically active
- Not smoking

*There is no way to prevent breast or prostate cancer, but you can lower your risk.*

#### Screening

Women 50-74 years old should have a mammogram (breast x-ray) every 2 years.

Talk with your doctor about any risk factors and whether screening before age 50 or more frequently may be necessary.

Men 55 years old and older, or those with a family history of prostate cancer, should talk with their doctor about when to start screening. There are two options available:

- PSA blood test
- Digital rectal exam (DRE)

**If your doctor hasn't mentioned cancer screenings recently, make sure you ask!**



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# 4 Reasons to Get Your Flu Shot

Flu season is here! Getting the flu is never fun and can set you back for weeks. For seniors and those with chronic conditions, the flu can be especially serious.

Flu shots are a great way to try to prevent the flu. Plus, the more people who get the flu shot, the better off your whole community will be. Best of all—CCA covers the flu shot! If that's not enough, here are 4 more reasons to get the flu shot:

- 1 Protect Your Family**  
If you get the flu, chances are other people in your family will get it as well. Think about your children, nieces and nephews, and grandchildren. It is harder for anyone older or younger to battle the flu.
- 2 Prevent Missed Work Days**  
Flu symptoms, like fever and fatigue, may mean someone can't do their job or go to work for days or even weeks. This could cost you and your family income that you depend on.
- 3 Keep Your Community Healthy**  
If you go out with the flu, you put your community at risk. You may have friends who cannot get the flu shot due to their own medical conditions. These people rely on your help to keep common areas free of flu.
- 4 Know Your Rights**  
Information about you, including your immigration status, is confidential and protected by law. Health workers want to keep everyone healthy. The only goal of the flu vaccination effort is to fight the flu.

Now is the time to act and get your flu shot—before the flu spreads. Talk to your care partner or doctor today about getting the flu shot. If you do get the flu, or experience fever and fatigue, contact your doctor or visit a clinic immediately.



## Pharmacy Corner

Have you paid for a medication that one of your providers prescribed? CCA will pay you back. To get your money back, please fill out and send us a **Reimbursement Form**. This form can be found on CCA's website using the steps below:



- 1** Visit [www.commonwealthcarealliance.org](http://www.commonwealthcarealliance.org).
- 2** Go to the "For Members" section and choose "Pharmacy Program" from the drop-down menu.
- 3** Click on "Prescription Drug Coverage" and open the "Reimbursement" section.
- 4** Click the "Navitus Health Solutions Reimbursement Form" text in red. This will open the form for you to print.
- 5** Mail the form with your receipts to Navitus Health Solutions. The address is provided on the form.

### Need More Information?

If need help finding or filling out the form, 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.

# 5 Tips for Participating in Your Care

Being more involved in your care can give you a sense of control. It also builds confidence to help make decisions.

We know it's easier said than done. Many people don't speak up for themselves when it comes to health care. Some feel that they are getting too much information at once and are unable to understand everything. (The more doctors you see, the harder it can be!) Others feel that asking too many questions may seem disrespectful. (It's not!) It's important to find the best way to ask for what you need and express your concerns.

You can take simple steps to play a more active role. Start by asking more questions at your next doctor's appointment. Advocating for yourself doesn't mean you alone are responsible for your care. In fact, taking charge of your care involves getting support from others.

Here are some more tips to keep in mind as you work with your health care team.

**1 Bring a list of questions AND a family member to your appointments.** Doctor's visits are fast and it's hard to remember everything you want to ask. Writing down your questions before can help. Consider bringing a friend or family member for support.

**2 Check and see if your doctor's office has a "patient portal."** This is a secure website where you can see your test results and communicate with your doctor. Ask their office to show you how to sign up and use it.

**3 Don't forget that CCA is here to help!** We're here to support you through the health care maze. We can work together to identify what matters most to you to make informed decisions. We can help communicate with your doctors to get:

- Information you need from your visits
- Answers to your questions
- Access to your medical records

**4 Confirm how to schedule appointments with specialists.** Sometimes your regular doctor wants you to see a "specialist" — an expert in a specific kind of health care issue. Your regular doctor will give you a referral. Make sure you ask if you should call the specialist or if the doctor's office will call for you.

**5 Follow up on test results.** If you don't hear from your doctor within a week, call their office to ask about your test results (or anything you're waiting to hear about).



## *I heard about CCA from a friend.*

We love hearing that! We want to support more people like you. Talk about CCA to your family, friends, and neighbors! Let them know how we help you. If they're interested in becoming a member, we can answer their questions or help them enroll at **877-780-4711 (TTY 711)**.

# Turkey Sloppy Joes

This is perfect for a quick and easy weeknight dinner! Using ground turkey instead of beef makes for a lighter version of this comfort classic.

**Prep Time:** 10 minutes

**Cook Time:** 20 minutes

**Total Time:** 30 minutes



## Turkey Sloppy Joes



### Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1 cup onion(s), chopped
- 1 cup green bell pepper, chopped
- 1 pound lean ground turkey
- 1 cup no-salt-added tomato sauce
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar
- ½ cup ketchup
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

### Directions

1. Heat the oil in a large skillet and sauté the onion and bell pepper until they lose most of their crunch.
2. Add the turkey and cook about 5 minutes. Drain off any fat.
3. Add the remaining ingredients and mix well. Simmer 15 minutes.
4. Serve on buns, if desired (not included in nutrition analysis).

## Nutrition Facts

Serving size: ½ cup  
Servings per recipe: 4

**Calories**                      **220**

**Total Fat:** 5 g

**Cholesterol:** 65 mg

**Salt (sodium):** 400 mg

**Total Carbohydrates:** 16 g

**Dietary Fiber:** 2 g

**Sugars:** 11 g

**Protein:** 30 g

CREDIT: Diabetes Food Hub, American Diabetes Association [www.diabetesfoodhub.org](http://www.diabetesfoodhub.org)

Commonwealth Care Alliance (CCA) Senior Care Options 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.

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## Narcan Can Prevent Opioid-Related Deaths

Opioids are commonly prescribed in the United States to help people manage pain. However, they can be very addictive. It's estimated that over 2 million Americans are misusing or are addicted to opioids.

Around every 12 minutes, someone overdoses on opioids. They affect the part of the brain that controls breathing. So, if opioid levels in your blood are too high, your breathing can slow down to dangerous levels. This could even cause death. Naloxone ("Narcan") reverses the life-threatening effects of an opioid overdose.

Some members use opioids to manage serious pain. To support the safe use of opioids, CCA provides all our members access to Narcan at no cost. You don't need an opioid or Narcan prescription to get it. Just ask for Narcan at your pharmacy and show the pharmacist your CCA member ID card. Your care partner can train you on how to use it.

**There is no shame or stigma in getting Narcan. It saves lives. If you are taking opioids, talk to your doctor and your CCA care partner about your risks.**



### Get More Information

To learn more about opioids, review the *Frequently Asked Questions* on our website:  
[www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/opioids](http://www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/opioids)