

Staying Healthy So You Can Live Your Best Life

Screenings, steps, and tips to help maintain wellness





Looking after your garden. Riding your bike. Playing golf. Spending time with family. If these are the kinds of things you like to do, Medical Mutual wants you to do them – and to keep doing them. We’re on your team. But cheering you on also means encouraging you to take care of yourself.

You can help improve your overall physical and mental health, reduce your risk of falling and maintain proper bladder control by talking to your primary care provider (PCP) about these important topics. We also want you to get any screenings and tests you need to catch problems before they become serious. And there are little things you can do every day that can make a positive impact on your health so you can live your life the way you want to live it.

“Exercise is the key not only to physical health, but to peace of mind.”

- Nelson Mandela

Physical Activity

Just keep moving as often as you can. Regular physical activity is one of the most important things you can do for your health. It can help prevent or delay many health problems. It also helps your muscles grow stronger so you can keep doing your day-to-day activities. Plus, exercise can improve your brain health and help you manage your weight. Even simple activities can benefit your overall health. Chaz McGrain, Senior Fitness Program Manager at Medical Mutual has a few suggestions:

- Go for daily walks
- Use light dumbbells or resistance bands
- Take the stairs if you are able
- Try an online exercise class

McGrain also recommends setting up a dedicated exercise space where you can focus on exercising without distractions. “It can be a spare bedroom, basement or even a corner of your living room.”

SilverSneakers®

If you have a MedMutual Advantage plan, you have access to SilverSneakers. This program for people ages 65 and up offers online video workouts, a fitness app, in-person classes in your community and access to more than 15,000 fitness locations across the United States. Visit www.silversneakers.com to find out more. Talk to your PCP before beginning any exercise program.

Check Your Bone Strength with a Bone Mineral Density Test

Most common in women ages 50 and over, osteoporosis is a disease that makes your bones weak and brittle and can lead to a curved backbone or compressed fracture of your spine. Talk to your PCP about getting a bone mineral density test. It’s covered under your plan at 100% with an in-network provider once every 24 months, so there’s no cost to you.

Visit MedMutual.com/BestLife to learn more about osteoporosis and bone mineral density tests.

Source:
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
National Institute of Health

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“Leaves are supposed to fall.
People aren’t.”

- Ohio Department of Aging

Falls Prevention

Making your home safer to help prevent you from falling doesn’t require too much extra effort. There are easy things you can do around your home to lower your risk. Dr. Olapeju Olasokan, Assistant Medical Director at Medical Mutual, suggests taking these steps:

- Declutter your living space and secure cords and rugs to reduce tripping hazards.
- Organize things on the same floor of the house; Keep what you need every day within reach.
- Use nightlights to safely move in the dark and install handrails in your bathroom.

How’s your balance?

Your balance is another thing to keep in mind. Loss of muscle strength and flexibility can be caused by declining balance. Dr. Olasokan suggests doing exercises to strengthen your legs and back. Walking regularly, using resistance bands, shifting your weight from one leg to the other or trying yoga can help keep you strong and flexible.

See your eye doctor

Make an appointment with your eye doctor once per year to test for glaucoma and cataracts that can affect your vision. Being able to see clearly can help prevent you from falling.

Review your medications

Dr. Olasokan also says that some medications, or combinations of medications, can make you feel sleepy, dizzy, or confused, which can lead to a fall. Talk to your PCP or pharmacist about all the medicines you are taking – even over-the-counter medicines.

Relieve Aches and Pains at Home with Sword Health

Combining licensed physical therapists with easy-to-use technology, Sword Health can help you overcome joint, back or muscle pain from the comfort of your own home.

Learn more at join.swordhealth.com/medmutual/register.

“Mental health is not a destination, but
a process. It’s how you drive, not where
you’re going.”

- Noam Shpancer, Ph.D., Psychology

Mental Well-being

Your mental health, which includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being, is just as important as your physical health. It has a big impact on your life, affecting how you think, feel, act and relate to other people. Reach out to family or friends if you’re feeling sad, anxious, or lonely. Sometimes, just connecting with others can be helpful.

Change can affect mental health

If you experience any changes in your life, such as serious illness or the loss of a friend or loved one, you may feel anxiety, grief, or loneliness. How you cope with these feelings is important to your mental health. Recognizing any signs of a problem is the first step to maintaining your quality of life.

Some symptoms of mental health issues include:

- Noticeable changes in mood, energy level or appetite
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping too much
- Anger, irritability, sadness or hopelessness
- Ongoing headaches, digestive issues or pain
- Misuse of alcohol or drugs
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Practice self-care

It’s important to practice self-care to help maintain your mental health and to seek treatment if you are struggling. Activities like exercising, meditation and deep breathing can boost your mood. Setting goals and reaching out to friends and family can also help keep your mind focused on positive things.



“Little leaks sink the ship.”

- Benjamin Franklin

Urinary Incontinence

Loss of bladder control can get in the way of your daily life. Also known as urinary incontinence, it's common among older adults and usually doesn't cause major health problems. However, prolonged incontinence can lead to urinary tract infections and other health issues. That's why it's important to discuss it with your PCP.

There are several common types of incontinence:

Stress incontinence – This is the most common type of incontinence in women and happens when you sneeze, cough, laugh, jog, or do other things that put pressure on your bladder.

Urgency incontinence – Also called overactive bladder, this occurs when the urge to urinate is so strong that you cannot reach the bathroom in time, even when your bladder isn't full.

Reflex incontinence – This is sometimes caused by nerve damage which makes the bladder contract or reflex and can trigger urine leaking.

Overflow incontinence – This occurs when the bladder doesn't empty completely. Urine leaks because the bladder is overflowing.

Things you can do to treat or prevent incontinence:

- Get in the habit of urinating every 2-4 hours
- Do Kegel exercises to strengthen your bladder muscles
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Be physically active
- Stop smoking (Call our QuitLine at 1-866-845-7702 for help)

At-home therapy with Bloom

Medical Mutual also offers you access to Bloom, which provides digital pelvic care at no additional cost to you. Bloom is designed to address pelvic floor dysfunctions, such as urinary incontinence and more. Find out more and enroll at join.hibloom.com/MedMutual.



To learn more about these topics, including additional tips and common treatments, visit [MedMutual.com/BestLife](https://www.medmutual.com/BestLife) or capture the QR code with your smartphone. You'll also be able to take a short survey on the website about this booklet and your preferences for communications from Medical Mutual.

Seek professional help

If your symptoms last more than 2 weeks, it's a good idea to talk to a professional. Mental health disorders are treatable. Your PCP can give you a referral to a professional if you're not sure where to start. If you ever have thoughts of suicide, call, or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or visit 988lifeline.org to chat with someone.

Keep in Good Company with SilverSneakers + Stitch

SilverSneakers members now get a complimentary membership to Stitch – a trusted social community for anyone over age 50. Connect with other members in your area and start making new friends today. Learn more at go.silversneakers.com/stitch.

Sources:
National Institute of Mental Health
www.nimh.nih.gov
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
<https://findtreatment.gov>

Source:
National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (Urologic Diseases)



MEDICAL MUTUAL®

100 American Road
Cleveland, OH 44144-2322

Things to discuss with your PCP

If you're not sure what to ask your PCP at your next visit, we can help. Our PCP Checklist includes a variety of topics and questions you may want to discuss during your next appointment. Visit [MedMutual.com/BestLife](https://www.MedMutual.com/BestLife) to download the list.

These recommendations are for your information only. They do not take the place of your provider's advice, diagnosis, or treatment. You should make decisions about your care with your provider. What is covered by your plan will be based on your specific benefit plan.