

# Wellness Today

Autumn 2023

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Tips for  
**eye health**

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Guided  
**stretching  
and relaxation**

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**Caprese skewers**  
recipe

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**CarePlus**  
HEALTH PLANS

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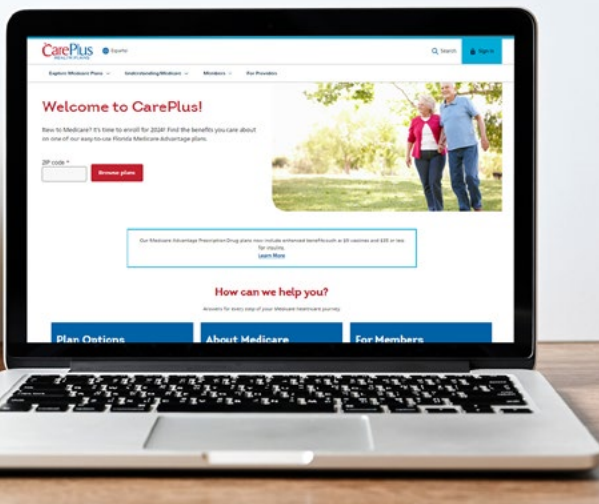
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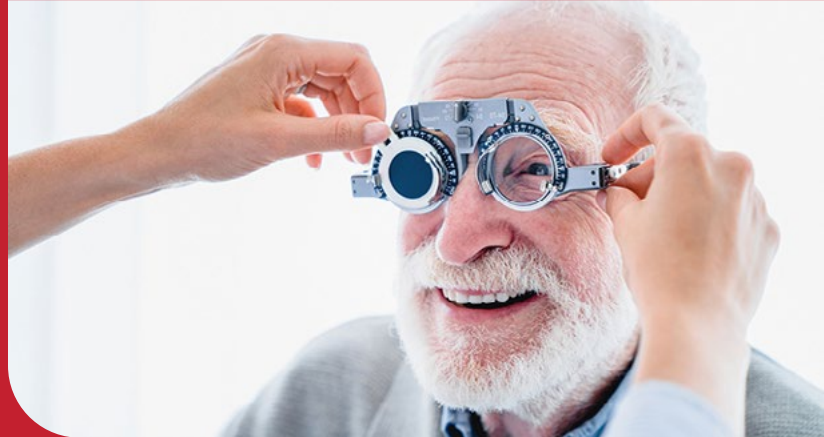
## Visit the New CarePlus Website

We're excited to introduce our **new and improved CarePlus website**.

We hope it makes it even easier for you to find the information and reSource you need.

Please be sure to visit our new **Member Resources** and **Benefits overview** pages to see what's available to you as a CarePlus member.

# Get a new view on vision health!



Here are a few tips for taking care of your eye health.

**1 Super Foods for Super Sight:** Did you know that certain foods can make your eyes extra happy and healthy?<sup>1</sup>

**Check out these superhero foods for your eyes:**

**Carrots contain beta-carotene**, which turns into vitamin A. This vitamin acts as a shield that protects your eyes from getting weak and helps them see better.<sup>1</sup>

**Spinach and other leafy greens have lutein and zeaxanthin**, which can help your eyes be strong and healthy.<sup>1</sup>

**Fish like salmon, tuna, and sardines are full of omega-3 fatty acids** that help moisturize your eyes.<sup>1</sup>

**2 Minimize Screen-Time Strain:** Give your eyes regular breaks by following the **20-20-20 rule**.

Every **20 minutes**, look away from your screen and focus on something **20 feet** away for at least **20 seconds**.

This exercise relaxes your eye muscles and reduces eye fatigue.<sup>2</sup>

Challenge yourself to consciously blink more often, especially during screen activities. Blinking helps moisten the eyes and prevents dryness.<sup>2</sup>

**3 Schedule Regular Eye Check-ups:** These appointments play a crucial role in maintaining your vision health and detecting issues early on.

**Most eye diseases are treatable**, but complications can occur if they are not caught on time.<sup>3</sup>

**4 Protect Your Eyes from the Sun:** UV radiation can cause damage to the eyes, contributing to cataracts and other ocular disorders.<sup>4</sup>

**Protect your eyes from the sun's harmful rays** by wearing sunglasses with 100% UV protection and a wide-brimmed hat.<sup>3</sup>

Sources: 1. [Medical News Today](#). 2. [Medical News Today](#). 3. [National Institute on Aging](#). 4. [National Eye Institute](#).





# Stay on top of your health care!

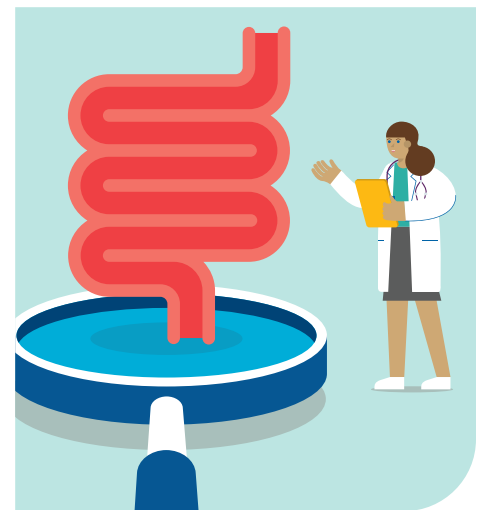
Preventive care like health screenings and vaccines play an important role in your well-being. **Consider taking these proactive steps for your health:**

## Colorectal Cancer Screenings

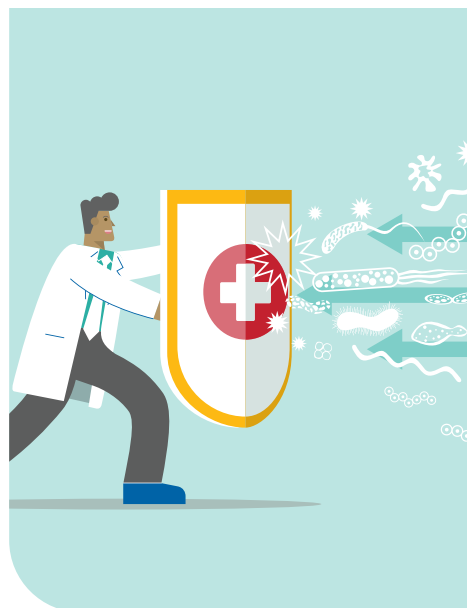
Colon cancer can happen to anyone, regardless of family history. Early detection is key for treatment.<sup>1</sup> The American Cancer Society recommends regular screenings starting at age 45.<sup>1</sup>

Talk to your doctor about when and how often to have a colorectal cancer screening. Several screening options are available to you, including stool tests that can be performed from your own home.<sup>2</sup>

**No matter which option you choose, the most important thing is to get screened.**



## Flu Shots



Getting your flu shot as soon as possible helps give you protection so you can keep up with the people and activities you love. A flu shot is generally safe, effective, and up to date.<sup>3,4</sup> **Not only can it help you avoid getting sick, but it can also make the flu less severe if you do get it.<sup>5</sup>**

**Here are three ways that you can get your flu shot:**

- See if your local grocery store or pharmacy offers walk-in flu shots.
- Use our Find a Pharmacy tool to find nearby spots offering flu shots. [CarePlusHealthPlans.com/Pharmacy-Finder](https://www.careplushealthplans.com/Pharmacy-Finder)
- Reach out to your doctor and ask if they can give you a flu shot or nasal spray at your next visit.

Sources: 1. [American Cancer Society](#). 2. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). 3. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). 4. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#). 5. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

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# Unlock the benefits of CarePlus Rewards and finish strong!



As a valued CarePlus member, you have exclusive access to our **CarePlus Rewards program**.

Keep prioritizing your health and attending appointments to earn valuable points towards rewards.

**Earn 50 points to redeem them for a \$50 gift card before the year ends.** Don't miss out on the opportunity to enjoy the benefits you deserve!

Visit Sharecare for more chances to earn points and access rewards.

[CarePlus.sharecare.com](https://www.careplus.sharecare.com)



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# Get Social at a CarePlus Community Center

## Have you stopped by one of our Community Centers yet?

We host a variety of activities every month for people in our community.

With **SilverSneakers® fitness classes, dance socials, and monthly birthday celebrations**, there are plenty of ways to stay social with CarePlus.

Plus, you can bring your family and friends, even if they aren't CarePlus members.



To find a location near you and see a schedule of events, visit [CarePlusHealthPlans.com/CommunityCenters](https://www.CarePlusHealthPlans.com/CommunityCenters).



# Is this medicine safe?

Certain prescription and OTC medications may help you live a healthier and longer life. However, what works well for someone else might not be the best medication for you. It can be a good idea to approach new medications with curiosity and caution.

**Be informed and ask questions.**

**Here are a few tips and questions from WebMD<sup>1,2,3</sup> to help you talk to your doctors and pharmacists about medications:**

**Bring a list of all medications and supplements you take.** Certain medications may have side effects when mixed.

- How will they interact with a new medication?
- Should I stop or change any of my current medications?
- Should I take all medications at once or space them out at different times?

**Discuss allergies or issues with previous medications.** You may be sensitive to a certain ingredient in some medications.

- Did you experience rashes, trouble breathing, indigestion, dizziness, mood changes, or changes in your sex life?

**Ask questions about your new medication.**

- What condition does it treat? Why do I need to take it?
- Should I avoid certain foods or activities while taking it?
- How much should I take, and when? What if I miss a dose?
- How can I tell if it's working? How long will it take for me to notice changes?
- What side effects should I watch for, and what should I do if I have a bad reaction?

Sources: 1. [WebMD](#). 2. [WebMD](#). 3. [WebMD](#).



## Understand your options.

- What other prescription medications are available for this health need?
- Is there an over-the-counter option?
- Are there nutrition, exercise, or other lifestyle changes that could work instead of medication?

## Your doctors and pharmacists have your best interests at heart.

By sharing your questions and concerns, you can help your healthcare providers know how to take the best possible care of you.

# Serving Florida

CarePlus team members recently volunteered at Feeding South Florida in Palm Beach. **We prepared 700 lunches and 1,000 drinks for children in the area.** This is just one of the many ways we care about and give back to our communities. If you see us in your community, please say hello!





# Caprese Skewers

This recipe from **Craving Small Bites** is perfect for an appetizer tray or an afternoon picnic.

## Caprese Skewers:

**Prep Time:**  
10 mins

**Total Time:**  
10 mins

**Makes:**  
12 skewers

**Equipment:**  
Cocktail sticks or  
bamboo knot picks

### Ingredients:

- 12 fresh mini mozzarella balls
- 24 cherry tomatoes
- 24 fresh basil leaves (preferably small leaves)
- ¼ cup balsamic glaze

### Quick marinated mozzarella ingredients:

- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ tsp Italian seasoning
- Salt to taste
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes or as needed

### Instructions:

1. Marinate the mozzarella. To a small bowl, add olive oil, Italian seasoning, minced garlic, red pepper flakes, and salt, and mix to combine. Add the mozzarella balls to the infused oil and mix. Set aside for about 10 to 30 minutes to marinate. Meanwhile, prep the rest of the ingredients.
2. Prep. Wash the cherry tomatoes and pat dry, and get the cocktail sticks ready.
3. Thread a cherry tomato, a basil leaf, a marinated mozzarella ball, another basil leaf, and then another cherry tomato on a toothpick (cocktail stick). Place the assembled skewer on a plate. Repeat the process until you have used all the ingredients.
4. Drizzle the balsamic glaze on the caprese skewers just before serving. Enjoy!

Source: [Craving Small Bites](#).





# Positive Thinking: Improve health and reduce stress

**Harness the power of positive thinking to reduce stress and enhance your health.**

Mayo Clinic suggests replacing negative self-talk with positive affirmations for a more optimistic outlook on life.<sup>1</sup> Embrace the best possible outcomes and practice gratitude. Positive thinking is a tool for effective stress management and offers health benefits.<sup>1</sup>

**Let positivity shape your mindset and well-being.**

## Stay Flexible and Energized with Regular Stretching

Just a few minutes each day spent on stretching can make a difference to your body and mind. Stretching helps improve flexibility, boosts blood flow, relieves muscle tension, and leaves you feeling refreshed.<sup>1</sup> Let's explore a simple stretching exercise<sup>2</sup> to help you feel more flexible and energized.

### **Relax and breathe:**

Focus on your breaths in and out. Allow your thoughts to come and go.

### **Start stretching:**

As you relax, begin your stretching routine:

- Sit upright with your ears aligned over your shoulders.
- Roll your head forward and then to the right so that you feel a stretch in the left side of your neck. Hold this position for 10 seconds.
- Return to the starting position and repeat on the other side.
- Repeat 3 times in each direction.

Find a few minutes each day to set aside time to stretch and embrace the energizing benefits it brings. You can stretch in the morning to start your day well or in the evening to relax before bed.

Sources: 1. [Mayo Clinic](#). 2. [Mayo Clinic](#). 3. [Healthline](#).



## Get Plenty of Sleep

Experience the benefits of a restful night's sleep with these tips from the National Institute on Aging.<sup>1</sup>

- Start by establishing a **regular sleep routine** like going to bed and waking up at the same time every day
- Create a **sleep-friendly environment** by keeping your bedroom cool, quiet, and free from distractions
- Prioritize **relaxation before bedtime** by engaging in calming activities such as reading or taking a warm bath
- Don't eat large meals or drink caffeine or alcohol **late in the day**
- **Exercise at regular times each day**, but not within three hours of your bedtime
- Aim for **7 to 9 consecutive hours** of sleep per night

## Learn about Financial Assistance



If you have limited income and assets, you may be eligible for assistance from state and federal programs such as Medicaid, SNAP (food stamps), Long-Term Care, Cash Assistance, and Extra Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan costs.

Many people are eligible for these savings and don't even know it. For example, as many as 3 out of 5 older adults who qualify for SNAP (food stamps) aren't enrolled in the SNAP program.<sup>2</sup>

**CarePlus Social Services can help you check eligibility** and apply for state and federal assistance programs.

**Why wait? Call us for more information.**

**1-855-392-3900 (TTY: 711),**

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Sources: 1. [National Institute on Aging](#). 2. [National Council on Aging](#).

We hope you enjoyed reading *Wellness Today!*



## What do you want to see in the next edition?

To let us know, [complete this form](#).

In the meantime, please stay in touch with CarePlus on Facebook.



[CarePlusHealthPlans](#)



For questions about your plan, please [call Member Services](#) at the phone number on the back of your CarePlus member ID card.

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This information is provided for educational purposes only. It is not to be used for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Consult your healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns. Consult your doctor before beginning any new diet or exercise regimen. In accordance with the federal requirements of the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), no amounts on the gift cards shall be redeemable for cash and no amount may be applied toward the purchase of any prescription drug under your plan. Rewards (gift cards) must be earned and redeemed in the same plan year. Rewards not redeemed by 12/31 will be forfeited.

Important: At CarePlus, it is important you are treated fairly. CarePlus Health Plans, Inc. complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, disability, age, marital status, religion, or language in their programs and activities, including in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, their programs and activities. The following department has been designated to handle inquiries regarding CarePlus' non-discrimination policies: Member Services, PO Box 277810, Miramar, FL 33027, 1-800-794-5907 (TTY: 711). Auxiliary aids and services, free of charge, are available to you. 1-800-794-5907 (TTY: 711) CarePlus provides free auxiliary aids and services, such as qualified sign language interpreters, video remote interpretation, and written information in other formats to people with disabilities when such auxiliary aids and services are necessary to ensure an equal opportunity to participate. This information is available for free in other languages. Please call our Member Services number at 1-800-794-5907. Hours of operation: October 1 - March 31, 7 days a week, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. April 1 - September 30, Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. You may leave a voicemail after hours, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays and we will return your call within one business day.

Español (Spanish): Esta información está disponible de forma gratuita en otros idiomas. Favor de llamar a Servicios para Afiliados al número que aparece anteriormente.

Kreyòl Ayisyen (French Creole): Enfòmasyon sa a disponib gratis nan lòt lang. Tanpri rele nimewo Sèvis pou Manm nou yo ki nan lis anwo an.



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HEALTH PLANS

