

# CIRCULATORY

DISEASE MANAGEMENT NEWS



## Tips for Making Healthy Changes

Change can be hard, even if someone really wants to improve their health. It is important to keep a few things at top of mind when setting goals.

### **Commit**

Choose a goal and make a promise to meet it.

### **Choose a starting point**

Take a quick inventory of current habits to figure out an initial goal. Examples of habits include current activity level; number of sodas consumed each day; or number of cigarettes smoked each day.

### **Set realistic goals**

Start with a small goal. Ensure its specific and measurable. Examples of habits include walking for 15 minutes every day; reducing cigarette intake; or eating at least one serving of vegetables with each meal.

### **Identify support sources**

Family members, friends or coworkers are good options for support, as are support groups or professionals, such as dieticians.

### **Track progress and understand roadblocks**

Are the goals being met? If not, adjust the plan. Examine a work schedule, a craving or something else that could be in the way of progress.

Don't forget to take time to celebrate accomplishments. Change is difficult to navigate. With the right tools, and a plan in place, success is possible.

*An important note about TRICARE program information: At the time of publication, this information is current. It is important to remember that TRICARE policies and benefits are governed by public law and federal regulations. Changes to TRICARE programs are continually made as public law and/or federal regulations are amended.*

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## VIRTUAL SUPPORT FROM YOUR DISEASE MANAGEMENT TEAM

We are glad to give you support with printed materials and expert disease management clinicians. However, we would also like to help you stay healthy through free virtual support, which we offer in three exciting ways:

**Webinars:** We offer live webinars via computer and phone. Our live webinars bring you up-to-date information about medical subjects from our clinical experts through presentations and audio. After the online session, you will have a chance to ask questions of the clinician. Getting signed up for a free Zoom session is easy. Visit [www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm](http://www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm) to make your reservation today.

**Community groups:** These live sessions, conducted by our clinical experts, give you the support you need to stay healthy. For beneficiaries struggling with diabetes or depression/anxiety disorder, signing up is easy. Visit the group meetings calendar at [www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm](http://www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm).

**Web-based training:** On our disease management website, you will find videos about your disease and how to control it effectively. Available to you 24/7, these digital resources give you the knowledge you need to stay focused on your health. Please visit [www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm](http://www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm) to access this information.

We hope you will take advantage of these exciting tools to help you achieve your health and wellness goals.



EAST REGION

# Humana Military Outreach

Humana Military helps beneficiaries manage many medical and behavioral health conditions. We have programs to educate and help people with new or long-term conditions, such as:

- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Coronary Artery Disease (CAD)
- Heart failure
- Depression
- Hypertension
- Anxiety

A team of nurses call identified individuals following a hospital stay. They check-in to make sure beneficiaries have what they need after returning home.

## What to expect from a Humana Military nurse

Since a phone call from us could include talking about sensitive

and protected health information, all staff are required to make a privacy statement and validate a beneficiary's identification. A beneficiary will be asked to provide:

- Name
- Sponsor's identification number or Defense Benefits Number (DBN)
- One additional piece of information, such as Date Of Birth (DOB) or address

These steps help Humana Military to protect confidential information.

## A note about phone numbers

Humana Military is based in Louisville, KY; therefore, calls from us may appear with a 502 area code on a caller ID. We understand the hesitation to answer an unknown number and to provide the required authentication information or both. Please feel free to call us at 800-881-9227.

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## Electrolytes and Cardiac Health

Electrolytes are substances in the body that have a natural charge (positive or negative) and float around in the blood stream to help control several body functions. For example, they balance fluids, regulate chemical reactions and help with nerve or muscle function.

Here are some common electrolytes:

**Sodium** attracts water and manages the amount of fluid in the body. Signs of too much sodium in the body include swelling, increased thirst or confusion. If levels are too low, symptoms are nausea, vomiting, fatigue or muscle spasms.

**Potassium** helps pump the heart and keep it at a normal rhythm. If potassium levels are too high, symptoms can include muscle fatigue, nausea or abnormal heart rhythms. Signs of low levels include fatigue, constipation or heart palpitations.

**Magnesium** manages heart rate and blood pressure. Signs of it being too high are nausea, vomiting, confusion or lethargy. If it's too low, symptoms can include tremors, heart palpitations, constipation or low appetite.

**Chloride** helps control the amount of fluid in the body and maintain blood pressure. If levels are too high, a body would rarely show symptoms (but could include diarrhea, vomiting or excessive thirst). If levels are too low, symptoms include constipation, irritability, confusion or decreased appetite.

Always review symptoms and questions about electrolytes with your provider. Testing may include lab tests. Treatment may include some electrolyte supplements (over the counter or prescription) or changes to diet.



# Heart Health On the Go



Members of the military are often on the go—travel for work, a move to a new station or travel for vacation or to visit family. Here are some tips for heart health while traveling:

- 1. Remember to take enough doses of your medication**  
Make sure prescriptions and over the counter medications taken daily have plenty of doses to cover days away from home, plus a couple of extras—in case of a change in travel plans. Often, a pharmacy will fill a prescription early or partially due to vacation or travel plans.
- 2. Pack medications carefully**  
If flying, make sure prescriptions are in a carry-on bag. If medications need to be refrigerated, pack them in an insulated lunch bag or small cooler. Keep medicines in their original containers with the labels in case security has questions, or if a family member or travel companion needs to help you with them.
- 3. Decrease the risk of blood clots**  
Long car rides or air travel may increase the risk for blood clot formation due to long periods of sitting. Try some simple exercises to keep blood moving. If flying, try to get an aisle seat to have access to get up and walk the aisle. This decreases the risk of forming blood clots.

- 4. Pay attention to altitude**  
If traveling to high altitudes or mountain locations, the cardiovascular system may experience increased stress. Consider following a low-sodium diet and increase fluid intake. Watch for signs of chest pain and shortness of breath.

With good planning, it's possible to enjoy traveling while limiting the risk of any adverse heart issues.



## FROM THE CLINICIAN



Meli is a clinician in the disease management program who feels called to help Humana Military beneficiaries. She reflects on her last six years as a clinician: “I love helping people believe in their ability to make a change.”

As part of helping participants improve their health, clinicians also empower beneficiaries through education. This happens through phone call conversations and print materials specific to the beneficiary's condition that a clinician mails to the beneficiary. These items explain diagnosis, treatments or medications.

Celebrating small wins and positive progress is the backbone of Meli's approach. “Positive thinking gives beneficiaries confidence to best manage their health,” she said.

Having clinicians like Meli ensures that Humana Military can give each beneficiary the care and personalized support they need.



## A PHYSICIAN'S PERSPECTIVE

The beginning of a new season is a great time to make one or two new goals for better health, such as beginning a daily walking program or adding another serving of fruit or vegetables every day. No matter the choice, write it down and revisit your goals at the end of the season. Consistency is the key to lasting change and perfection is the enemy of good. Making small changes with exercise and what you eat does make a difference over time to improve health.

Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in the world. These are conditions of the heart and blood vessels. In the heart, it is called coronary artery disease and, in the brain, cerebrovascular disease. High blood pressure, elevated blood sugar and high cholesterol or triglycerides or both are signs of this family of conditions. More than four out of five cardiovascular-disease deaths are due to heart attacks and strokes. One-third of these deaths occur in people under 70 years of age.

Try not to be discouraged, as each person can have some control during these conditions. Changes in behavior can reduce the risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure and death. Regular exercise, quitting smoking and reducing or eliminating alcohol intake will have positive effects on health. Eating a diet with a variety of fruit and vegetables, less salt and less red meat will also decrease risk. The Mediterranean Diet is a great example of how to eat for improved heart health.


Attend scheduled appointments with a provider for the best health outcomes. A Primary Care Manager (PCM) is a great resource to answer questions about starting exercise, quitting smoking and changing a diet.



*Connie Lorenzo, MD,  
FAAPMR, CPC-A*



## FROM THE PATIENT

 When Humana Military beneficiary Cooper joined the disease management program, he didn't understand how cardiac health connected to overall physical health or mental wellness. Now after working with his clinician, Meli, he says he has more confidence that he can manage his health.

Meli encouraged Cooper to take small steps towards changes in areas of his life, such as exercise, taking medications and improving diet. "I learned how these things can improve my health and decrease cardiac risks," he said.

Meli, like all clinicians, educates a beneficiary in different areas related to a specific diagnosis or condition. With Cooper, Meli shared information on disease prevention and warning signs related to cardiac events. Meli also taught Cooper on topics

related to goals he set for himself, like nutrition, exercise and weight loss. One of Cooper's favorite areas of conversation was about the importance of a holistic approach to health for mind, body and spirit.

As a participant in the disease management program, Cooper changed his health through taking steps to lose weight, lowering his A1c number and taking medicines as prescribed. All of this led to an increased quality of life.

"I learned the importance of following up with my provider— not just for heart health, but for behavioral health," Cooper said. "I now see how one can impact the other."

*\*Beneficiary's name changed to protect privacy*



## TURKEY BURGER CLUB

**Prep time:** 20 minutes  
**Cook time:** 20 minutes  
**Yield:** 4 servings  
**Serving size:** 1 burger with toppings

### Ingredients:

#### For turkey burger:

12 oz 99 percent fat-free ground turkey  
 ½ C scallions (green onions), rinsed and sliced  
 ¼ tsp ground black pepper  
 1 large egg  
 1 Tbsp olive oil

#### For spread:

2 Tbsp light mayonnaise  
 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard

#### For toppings:

4 oz spinach or arugula, rinsed and dried  
 4 oz portabello mushroom, rinsed, grilled or broiled, and sliced (optional)  
 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven broiler on high temperature (with the rack 3 inches from heat source) or grill on medium-high heat.
2. To prepare burgers, combine ground turkey, scallions, pepper, and egg, and mix well. Form into ½- to ¾-inch thick patties and coat each lightly with olive oil.
3. Broil or grill burgers from about 7-9 minutes on each side (to a minimum internal temperature of 160 °F).
4. Combine mayonnaise and mustard to make a spread.
5. Assemble ¾ tablespoon spread, 1 ounce spinach or arugula, several slices of grilled portabella mushroom (optional), and one burger on each bun.

Hint: To grill portabella mushrooms, scrape off the gills from underneath the mushroom caps. Lightly coat with olive oil, and grill or broil for 2-3 minutes on each side or until tender. Slice and set aside until burgers are ready.

### Nutritional information (per serving):

Calories	299	Cholesterol	89 mg	Saturated fat	2 g
Total fat	11 g	Potassium	424 mg	Total fiber	5 g
Protein	29 g	Carbohydrates	26 g	Sodium	393 mg
<i>Percent daily values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.</i>					



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## Care Management Program



**EAST REGION**

- Toll-free phone number: **800-881-9227**
- Find information on the My health page [www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm](http://www.HumanaMilitary.com/dm)

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## Resources



Humana Military is here to help you on your health journey. Do you have a new diagnosis affecting your heart or circulatory system? Do you just want to know what else you can do to manage your condition? Did you start a new medication? We have resources to support you.

First, there are online resources you can use to manage your health, including videos and live, web-based events. Also, consider working with a disease management clinician for your heart and vascular health. To learn more about this free program, or to join, call Humana Military at 800-881-9227. Your dedicated clinician can help you set up some health goals to better manage your condition. As always, don't forget to routinely check in with your provider, and take all medications as instructed. Look forward to a healthier you by keeping your health under control.

