Quitting tobacco

Do you use tobacco? Quitting tobacco is one of the best things that you can do for your health. If you get medication and coaching, you can double your chance for successfully quitting tobacco. You can get help or coaching through group education, over the phone and by text messaging. You can get medication from your doctor. Your doctor can also refer you to the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) for coaching and resources to help quit tobacco. You do not need a referral to the ASHLine. The ASHLine also offers information to help protect you and your loved ones from secondhand smoke. Many people have quit smoking and stopped tobacco use through programs offered by the ASHLine. If you want more information to help you or someone you know quit tobacco, you have choices. You can:

1. Call Mercy Care Member Services at 602-263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879 (TTY/TDD 711).

2. If you are part of Mercy Care’s Care Management program, talk to your case manager.

3. Talk to your doctor.

4. Call the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) directly at 1-800-556-6222 or visit www.ashline.org.

In addition to the ASHLine, there are other resources available for you. For more information on quitting tobacco, go to Tobacco Free Arizona at www.azdhs.gov/prevention/tobacco-chronic-disease/tobacco-free-az/index.php. Tobacco Free Arizona is a program to help Arizonans know the risks of tobacco use and resources for quitting.
Breastfeeding protects baby and mother

The cells, hormones and antibodies in breastmilk may protect babies from illness. This protection is unique and changes to meet your baby’s needs. And breastfeeding can help you, too, by lowering your risk of type 2 diabetes, certain types of breast cancer and ovarian cancer. Breastfeeding may also help you lose pregnancy weight.

Learning to breastfeed takes time, practice and patience. A good latch is important for your baby to breastfeed correctly and for your comfort. During the early days of breastfeeding, it can take time for your baby to latch on well.

You can tell whether your baby is getting plenty of milk. He or she will be mostly content and will gain weight steadily after the first week of age. If you worry that your baby is not getting enough milk, talk to your baby’s doctor.

You can take certain medicines while breastfeeding — but not all. Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist about medicines you are using and ask before you start using new medicines. This includes prescription and over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and dietary or herbal supplements.

You can still breastfeed even after you return to work or school. Planning ahead for your return to work can help ease the transition. Talk with your employer about your options.

Resources for you

• The Arizona Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program offers food, nutrition counseling and access to health services for women, infants and children. Breastfeeding mothers may receive peer counselor support, an enhanced food package, breast pumps and other supplies. Call WIC at 1-800-252-5942 to see if you qualify.

• You can call the Arizona Department of Health Services Breastfeeding Hotline at 1-800-833-4642, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

• La Leche League of Arizona offers mother-to-mother support for women who choose to breastfeed. Call 602-234-1956, or visit www.lllofaz.org.

Source: “Your Guide to Breastfeeding” from the CDC Office of Women’s Health
Do you have high blood pressure?
The only way to know for sure is to have your blood pressure taken

If your doctor has told you that you have high blood pressure, we want to help you lower your risk.

Here are five things you can do to lower your blood pressure:

• **Maintain a healthy weight.** If you are overweight, make a plan to lose weight. Even losing 5 or 10 pounds may lower your blood pressure.

• **Get active.** Aim for at least half an hour of moderate activity a day at least five days a week (examples of moderate activity include gardening, a brisk walk, climbing stairs, raking leaves, swimming or biking).

• **Eat a healthy diet.** Include fruits and vegetables, nonfat or low-fat dairy, fish and skinless chicken, whole grains, and nuts.

• **Lower the sodium (salt) in your diet.**

• **Take your prescribed medicines as directed.** Follow the plan you and your doctor make to lower your blood pressure, including taking all of the medications your doctor has ordered.

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**HIV and pregnancy: Why testing matters**

Are you thinking about having a baby? Are you pregnant now? Be sure to get tested for HIV. That’s the virus that causes AIDS.

A woman who has HIV can pass the virus on to her child. This can happen while she is pregnant. It can also happen when she is giving birth.

If a woman knows she is infected, she can take steps to keep her baby — and herself — well. Special medicines can help her avoid passing the virus to the baby.

These medicines work best if you start them early. But if you can’t, they can still help if used before labor begins and the baby is born.

Testing is encouraged for all pregnant women, even those who don’t think they have HIV. People who have HIV may not have any symptoms for years at a time.

Learning your HIV status will help ensure you and your baby are healthy. Ask your doctor about how to get tested. If you test positive for any sexually transmitted disease or HIV, your doctor can give you medication and help you find counseling. Testing, medication and counseling are provided at no cost to you.

*Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*
The change of seasons during springtime can stir up a range of emotions. It can be a time of renewed energy as the weather becomes warmer and we begin to spend more time outside. With the pandemic restricting the ability to connect with friends and family, many people feel lonely. We have been living in times of uncertainty, financial strain, increased duties, health concerns and more. But it’s important to know that you’re not alone.

Here are some helpful tips from SAMHSA and the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline on how to help yourself, your friends and family. We encourage you to check in with five friends or family members after reading this article. You can make a difference and #BeThe1To reach out.

**Help for you**
Talking with someone about your thoughts and feelings can save your life. There are steps you can take to keep yourself safe through a crisis. Call or connect online with the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline to get support. They can help you:
- Find a therapist/support group
- Build and use a support network
- Make a safety plan

**Help for someone you know**
Learn how to recognize the warning signs when someone’s at risk — and what you can do to help. If you believe someone may be in danger of suicide:
- **Call 911**, if danger for self-harm seems likely.
- **Ask them** if they are thinking about killing themselves. This will not put the idea into their head or make it more likely that they will attempt suicide.
- **Listen without judging** and show you care.
- **Stay with the person** or make sure the person is in a private, secure place with another caring person until you can get further help.
- **Remove any objects** that could be used in a suicide attempt.

Learn more about action steps you can take. You can call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or visit www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org. Talk to their professionals and follow their guidance.

**For a behavioral health crisis**
Mercy Care members can call the Behavioral Health Crisis Line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Maricopa County: 602-222-9444
- Pima and Pinal counties: 1-866-495-6735
- Gila County: 1-877-756-4090
- All Arizona: 1-888-404-5530

Crisis Line staff can help:
- Meet you in the community
- Take you somewhere safe
- Help you identify your resources for care
- Help you arrange counseling
- Provide options for dealing with other urgent situations

Always call 911 in life-threatening situations.

**If you need someone to talk to**
Call the Warm Line: 602-347-1100.
This support line is operated by credentialed peer support specialists. It’s available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Source: www.samhsa.gov/suicide*
Language and interpretation services

Mercy Care can help you get a telephone or sign language interpreter for your health care visits at no cost to you. If you need help in your language or if you are deaf or have difficulty hearing, call Member Services for an interpreter at 602-263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879 (TTY/TDD 711).

Child dental health: Don’t skip brushing — or checkups

Regular dental visits are important for people of all ages. Plaque forms from food and causes dental decay (cavities). Arizona children, on average, have five teeth affected by cavities. That’s about 1 out of every 4 teeth in a child’s mouth. Brushing and flossing doesn’t get rid of all of the plaque that causes cavities.

That is why it is important to have your dentist clean your child’s teeth. A teeth cleaning will remove what’s left behind. Routine dental services are covered for members up to 21 years of age.

Your dentist can also catch problems early, when they’re easier to treat. For example, cavities are easier to fill when they’re small. And gum disease can be reversed if caught early.

When to see the dentist

Follow your dentist’s lead on how often to take your child. Here’s what experts usually recommend:

Babies. Take your baby to the dentist after the first tooth sprouts. The American Dental Association says babies should see a dentist before turning one.

Children. Most kids should see the dentist every six months.

During your visit

Tell your dentist if your child’s health has changed. Medical conditions may affect your teeth, especially if your child has:

- Tooth sensitivity
- Puffy or bleeding gums
- Persistent bad breath
- Pain or swelling in your mouth
- Dry mouth
- Diabetes, heart disease, an eating disorder or HIV
- A family history of tooth decay or gum disease


HEALTH MATTERS is published for the members of Mercy Care, 4755 S. 44th Place, Phoenix, AZ 85040.

Contract services are funded under contract with AHCCCS.

This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs.

Mercy Care is administered by Aetna Medicaid Administrators, LLC, an Aetna company.

Call Mercy Care Member Services Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., at 602-263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879 (TTY/TDD 711). 24-hour nurse line: 602-263-3000 or 1-800-624-3879.

www.MercyCareAZ.org

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Nondiscrimination Notice

Mercy Care complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Mercy Care does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Mercy Care:

- Provides no-cost aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
  - Qualified sign language interpreters
  - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)

- Provides no-cost language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
  - Qualified interpreters
  - Information written in other languages

If you need a qualified interpreter, written information in other formats, translation or other services, call the number on your ID card or 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).

If you believe that Mercy Care has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance with our Civil Rights Coordinator at:

Address:  
4500 East Cotton Center Boulevard  
Phoenix, AZ 85040  
Telephone: 1-888-234-7358 (TTY 711)  
Email: MedicaidCRCoordinator@mercycareaz.org

You can file a grievance in person or by mail or email. If you need help filing a grievance, our Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, D.C. 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 1-800-537-7697 (TDD).


MC-1449
Multi-language Interpreter Services

ENGLISH: ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card or 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).

SPANISH: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número que aparece en el reverso de su tarjeta de identificación o al 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711).

NAVAJO: Díí BAA AKÓNÍNÍZHIN: Díí bee yáąti'go, saad bee áká' ánida' awo'déé', t'áá jíik'eh, éí ná hóló. Ninaalssoos níih'íí bee nééhoozhííjí bine'déé' bëéesh bee hane'í biká'ígíí bee hod'ilínih doodago 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) hólné dooleef.

CHINESE: 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電您的ID卡背面的電話號碼或1-800-385-4104（TTY: 711）。


KOREAN: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 귀하의 ID 카드 뒷면에 있는 번호로나 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) 번으로 연락해 주십시오.


JAPANESE: 注意事項:日本語をお話になる方は、無料で言語サポートのサービスをご利用いただけます。IDカード裏面の電話番号、または1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)までご連絡ください。

PERSIAN: اگر به زبان فارسی صحبت می‌کنید، به صورت رایگان می‌توانید به خدمات کمک زبانی دسترسی داشتے باشید. با شماره درجه شده در پشت کارت شناسه‌ای یا با شماره 1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) تماس بگیرید.

SYRIAC: حضوردا هابطلا ءلاخخنا سيدنی ئادجشتارلا ئازانلا سيدنی ئازانلا داشم. دادئ ولا ئادجشتارلا ئازانلا ئازانلا لاباف_EXTRA_1 (1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711) (1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)


SOMALI: FEJIGNAAN: Haddii af-Soomaali aad ku hadasho, adeegyada gargaarka luqadda, oo bilaash ah, ayaad heli kartaa. Wac lambarka ku qoran dhabarka dambe ee kaarkaaga aqoonsiga ama 1-800-385-4104 (Kuwa Maqalka ka Adag 711).

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