



# LONG-TERM CARE CONNECTION

Spring/Summer 2026

## Five tips for keeping your heart healthy

The heart is your body's powerhouse and needs a lifetime of care. Follow these five tips to help keep it healthy.

### 1. Keep a healthy weight

Keeping a healthy weight reduces strain on your heart and lowers your risk of conditions like type-2 diabetes, heart disease and certain cancers.

### 2. Eat healthy


Eating a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and healthy fats can improve your heart health. Avoid foods with lots of sugar, saturated fats and sodium (salt).

### 3. Exercise regularly

Get about 30 minutes of exercise like walking, biking or swimming

4 to 5 times a week. This helps keep your heart and mind strong. Add in strength training like weightlifting and yoga twice per week. Always talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise program.

**WATCH:**  
Check out our heart-health video series for more tips



Half fruits and veggies  
One quarter whole grains  
One quarter low-fat protein  
Limit foods that are high in sugar

Fill half your plate with fruits and veggies, fill one quarter of your plate with whole grains, and fill the other quarter of your plate with low-fat protein. Limit foods that are high in sugar.



## Heart story continued

### 4. Don't smoke tobacco or vape

Smoking and vaping damage the heart, leading to high blood pressure and constricted blood vessels which block blood flow in the body. Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your heart.

### 5. Control high blood pressure

High blood pressure (also known as hypertension) is a condition where the force of blood against

the artery walls is too high. It can lead to other heart conditions like coronary artery disease (CAD) and congestive heart failure (CHF). High blood pressure can be managed with lifestyle changes and medication.

Talk to your doctor about treatment plans for staying heart-healthy. Special programs may help you be successful in managing heart health issues. Contact Mercy Care Member Services to find out about Care Management and other heart health wellness programs.

## Get help with housing

AHCCCS members can get help with housing services through the H2O program. A member may be eligible if they are experiencing homelessness or are at-risk of experiencing homelessness. H2O services can help:

- Members with a serious mental illness (SMI) designation who are experiencing homelessness.
- And also diagnosed with a chronic health condition or currently in a correctional facility with a release date scheduled within 90 days or released within the last 90 days.

Mercy Care is working with Solari Inc., the H2O Program Administrator, to help connect members with housing services and coordinate care with our network of providers.

Want more info? **Read about the AHCCCS Housing & Health Opportunities (H2O) Demonstration.**

### Links to H2O partners:

AHCCCS: [azahcccs.gov/Resources/Federal/HousingWaiverRequest.html](https://www.azahcccs.gov/Resources/Federal/HousingWaiverRequest.html)

Solari: Visit [community.solari-inc.org/h2o](https://www.solari-inc.org/h2o) or call **1-480-546-7135 (TTY: 711)**

Arizona Behavioral Health Corporation: [azabc.org/](https://www.azabc.org/)



## Need to renew your coverage?

You must renew your Medicaid coverage every year. Look for your renewal notice in the mail. Go to [healtharizonaplus.gov](https://www.healtharizonaplus.gov) to learn more.



## Medicare Part D

# Prescription drug benefits for dual-eligible members

People who are eligible and enrolled in both Medicaid and Medicare are considered “dual-eligible” members. Once you are Medicare eligible, your Medicaid plan can no longer pay for your drugs. Dual-eligible people need to enroll in a Medicare plan that includes Part D drug coverage.

Medicare Advantage plans include coverage for Medicare-covered services, Part D prescription drugs and other benefits not covered by Medicare.

Some Medicare Advantage plans are special needs plans (SNPs). These plans include coverage for Medicare-covered services, Part D prescription drugs and additional benefits. And they will coordinate with the Medicaid plan coverage a dual eligible member has.

Mercy Care offers a Dual-Eligible Special Needs Plan (D-SNP) called Mercy Care Advantage. It includes Part D drug coverage. If you qualify for the ALTCS E-PD Medicaid program, live in a long-term care facility (like a nursing home) or get home- and community-based services, you pay \$0 for covered drugs. With Part D coverage, you will pay a small amount for covered drugs.

If you don't join a Medicare plan that includes Part D drug coverage, Medicare will automatically enroll you in a stand-alone Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. People who are dual eligible can switch Medicare plans during certain times of the year.

*Note: AHCCCS does not contract nor oversee the activities of any separate stand-alone Medicare Part D prescription drug plans.*

## Integrated care: What to know

Integrated care means that a member needs only one health plan to get care for their body and mind. Mercy Care members can get their physical and behavioral health services from us.

We offer integrated health services to all our members:

- Long-term care (LTC) members
- ACC-RBHA members (including members with a Serious Mental Illness, or SMI, designation)
- Members with a developmental disability
- Mercy Care Department of Child Safety Comprehensive Health Plan (Mercy Care DCS CHP) members

We also provide integrated services for Arizonans who are dually eligible for both Medicaid and Medicare with Mercy Care Advantage (D-SNP).

We are committed to providing our members with more options to get physical and behavioral health care and wellness services. We make accessing care easy for members with complex care needs. If you have any questions or need services, you can call **Member Services**.

# Women's health in focus

Strong and healthy women are vital to our homes, families and communities. Whether age 25 or 65, Mercy Care strives to focus on women's health. That includes:

- Fitness and nutrition
- Disease management
- Mental health
- Reproductive health
- General wellness

Go to [mercycareaz.org/womens-health.html](https://mercycareaz.org/womens-health.html) for helpful tips on women's health such as:

- Pregnancy care
- Health screenings
- Healthy aging

Have a question? Get expert advice on common questions on the **American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists website**. Or talk to your provider.

If you need help finding a doctor, contact Mercy Care Member Services or **view the providers list online**.

## Programs for pregnant members in recovery

Center for Health and Recovery's (CHR) Maternal Health Program provides:

- Outreach and engagement to high-risk pregnant individuals.
- Supportive services addressing:
  - Mental health and substance use disorders
  - Pregnancy and postpartum mood disorders
  - Parenting education and support

Talk to your case manager about getting referred to this program.



## No-cost help for caregivers

Trualta is an online program with helpful tips, support and lessons for caregivers.

Caregivers can find:

- Videos and tips about daily care, medical tasks and medicines
- Info on conditions like diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and dementia
- Support groups to talk with other caregivers
- Simple ways for caregivers to take care of themselves

Trualta is available 24/7. It works on a computer, smartphone or tablet.

Mercy Care covers Trualta at no added cost to you or your caregiver. Give your caregiver the help they need to do their best. Tell them to visit [trualta.link/mercy-caregiver](https://trualta.link/mercy-caregiver) today.

*"I feel great because I am relaxed and ready to face the day knowing I have others who understand what I am going through and I don't have to feel like I am not worthy of self-care."*

—Trualta Caregiver



## Improving your health

Mercy Care Health Assistant gives you tools to help manage your health. You can use these resources through a computer, tablet or phone.

- Get personalized health plans to meet your needs and track your progress.
- Earn rewards for completing healthy activities.
- Browse the library of articles, videos and decision tools.

Learn more at [mercyar.es/healthasst](https://mercyar.es/healthasst).

## Peer and family supports can lend a helping hand

Trained peer support specialists help members on their recovery journey. These are mentors who can relate to your loved one. The peer support specialist can help families and their loved one address the member's social needs.

Peer support provides:

- Resources to connect with the community
- Tools to use in times of crisis
- Help with treatment and wellness plans
- An advocate who will work with their clinical team

There are also family support specialists that educate and guide members and their families through

the behavioral health system.

A family support specialist is an advocate. They help give a voice to the members and their family of choice, and a chance for members to explain their unique family situation.

Also, they can connect members and their family with Mercy Care community partners that provide services such as employment and housing support.

These community partners are part of the treatment team that works with members and their families. **View the list of peer and family support providers.**

Peers and families play an important role in helping members be as healthy as possible. That is why Mercy Care works with the Arizona Peer and Family Coalition, an organization of peer and family member advocates.

The coalition makes sure individuals and families have a say in the behavioral health policy decisions that affect their community.

Want to get involved? Or learn more about peer and family support resources? Contact the Peer and Family Referral Center at [referralhelp.org](https://referralhelp.org) or email the Office of Individual and Family Affairs at [OIFATeam@mercyareaz.org](mailto:OIFATeam@mercyareaz.org).

# Get help quitting tobacco

Do you use tobacco products such as cigarettes or chewing tobacco? Or vapes? Quitting tobacco products and vapes is one of the best things that you can do for your health.

With help, you can double your chances of quitting successfully. You can get help or coaching through group education, over the phone and by text messaging. You can also get medication from your doctor. You can get all this at no cost to you.

Your doctor can also refer you to the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine). They provide coaching and resources to help quit tobacco products and vapes. They can also provide information to help protect you and your loved ones from secondhand smoke. You don't need a referral to the ASHLine.

Looking for more information to help you or someone you know quit? You can:

- Talk to your care manager, if you are part of Mercy Care's Care Management program.
- Talk to your doctor or health care provider.
- Call the Arizona Smokers Helpline (ASHLine) directly at **1-800-556-6222** or visit **ashline.org**.

There are other resources available for you to quit tobacco and vapes. The **Tobacco Free Arizona** program helps Arizonans understand the risks of tobacco use and vaping and offers resources for quitting.



## HIV and pregnancy: Why testing matters

Pregnant or thinking about having a baby? Be sure to get tested for HIV, or human immunodeficiency virus. HIV is the virus that causes AIDS. When you're pregnant, you can pass HIV on to your child during pregnancy or delivery. But if you know you are infected, you can take steps to keep your baby (and you) healthy.

Special medicines can help prevent passing the virus to the baby. These medicines work best when started early. But they can still help if used before labor begins.

HIV testing is encouraged for all pregnant people, even if you don't think you have HIV. HIV may not have any symptoms for years. So you could have it without knowing it. At the first prenatal visit, the third trimester and when the baby is delivered, the provider will check for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) such as syphilis and chlamydia. They will also offer voluntary HIV testing.

If the test is positive for any STI, your PCP can prescribe medication and help you find counseling. Testing, medication and counseling are provided at no cost to members. For babies born with HIV, giving them medicines early can help them live longer, healthier lives.



## Community resources

Help from caring people in your community and special programs are available to you. Here are some health and wellness resources you can reach out to for support:

### 2-1-1 Arizona

Find information about employment and family services, food, clothing and shelter, and how to get help if you're experiencing domestic violence.

Go to [211arizona.org](https://211arizona.org) or call **211**.

### Substance abuse and mental health

Find sites for mental health and substance use treatment.

Go to [findtreatment.samhsa.gov](https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov) or call **1-877-726-4727**.

### Health-e-Arizona

Renew your AHCCCS benefits, check coverage and update your information.

Go to [healtharizonaplus.gov](https://healtharizonaplus.gov)

### ARIZONA@WORK

Get help finding a job.

Go to [arizonaatwork.com](https://arizonaatwork.com).

More resources are available at [mercy-careaz.org/community-resource-guide](https://mercy-careaz.org/community-resource-guide).

## Help for a behavioral health crisis

Mercy Care members can call the **Arizona Behavioral Health Crisis Line** 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call **1-844-534-HOPE (4673)** or text HOPE to **4HOPE (44673)**. Chat support is available at [crisis.solari-inc.org/start-a-chat](https://crisis.solari-inc.org/start-a-chat).

The Crisis Line staff can help:

- Provide crisis support over the phone
- Dispatch a crisis mobile team to support you
- Arrange transportation to take you somewhere safe
- Help you arrange counseling or a connection to your outpatient provider
- Provide options for dealing with urgent situations
- If you feel unsafe at home

### Tribal crisis lines:

- San Carlos Apache Reservation: **1-866-495-6735**
- Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities: **1-800-259-3449**
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: **480-850-9230**
- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation: **480-461-8888**
- San Lucy District of the Tohono O'odham Nation: **480-461-8888**
- Tohono O'odham Nation: **1-844-423-8759**
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe: Tucson **520-591-7206**; Guadalupe **480-736-4943**
- White Mountain Apache Tribe: **928-338-4811**
- Navajo Nation: **928-551-0508**

**Veterans Crisis Line:** 988, press 1

**988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline:** 988

**National crisis text line:** Text HOME to **741741**. Chat support is available at [crisistextline.org/text-us](https://crisistextline.org/text-us).

**Teen Lifeline:** Call or text **602-248-TEEN (8336)**

If you need someone to talk to, call the Warm Line at **602-347-1100**. Get 24/7 support from trained Peer Support Specialists.

*Always call **911** in life-threatening situations.*



# Take advantage of your Member Handbook

Your Mercy Care Member Handbook has everything you need to know about your health plan, including:

- Benefit restrictions outside Mercy Care's service area
- Copayments and other charges you may be responsible for
- How to file a complaint, grievance or appeal
- How we make decisions about your care (called Utilization Management)
- How we evaluate new technology as a covered benefit
- Notice of privacy practices
- Your member rights and responsibilities

The Member Handbook is updated every year. If there are major changes, we will send you a letter about it at least 30 days before the changes are effective.

**You can view your Member Handbook online.** Prefer a hard copy? Call Member Services to have one mailed to you. Let us know if you need it in another language, a larger font or other formats.

**LTC Connection** is published for the members of Mercy Care.

4750 S. 44th Place, Suite 150,  
Phoenix, AZ 85040.

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 AM to 6 PM, at **1-602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879 (TTY 711)**.

Or call the 24-hour nurse line: **1-602-263-3000** or **1-800-624-3879**.

**MercyCareAZ.org**

## 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, sex, health status or need for health care services.

### 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:           Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator  
                          4750 S. 44th Place, Ste. 150  
                          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).

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

This notice is available on the Mercy Care website at

<https://www.mercycareaz.org/content/dam/mercycare/pdf/MercyCare-1557-Notice-16Tags-020421-ua1.pdf>.

