

# All Together HEALTHY

**elderplanhomefirst.**  
a member of MJHS Health System

Summer 2023

## How to Stay Safe in the Summer

As the weather heats up, it can be challenging to get outside and enjoy the summer. That is because our bodies cannot regulate temperature as well as when we were younger. As we age, we produce less sweat and our heart does not circulate blood as well. This makes it harder for our bodies to release heat, causing our internal body temperature to rise. Other factors – obesity, fever, dehydration, heart disease, mental illness, sunburn, and certain prescription drugs – also play a role in how well our bodies can cool off in hot weather.

Older adults and people with chronic diseases are at an increased risk of developing heat exhaustion or heat stroke. That's why it's important to know the **signs of heat-related illness**. These include:

- Disorientation/confusion
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- High body temperature
- Rapid pulse
- Excessive tiredness
- Muscle cramping
- Fainting

### Tips to Help You Stay Safer While Enjoying the Warmer Weather



Stay Hydrated



Know the Side Effects of Medications



Stay Cool



Wear Light, Loose Fitting Clothing



Have Emergency Contacts



Know the Weather Forecast



Wear Sunscreen



Use Eye Protection



Limit Exercise and Outdoor Activities



Find a Cooling Center

If you do not have air conditioning, we can help to find a cooling center near you.  
Call Member Services at 1-800-353-3765 (TTY: 711), 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.,  
7 days a week.

## In This Issue...

At Elderplan/HomeFirst, helping our valued members be as healthy as possible is our primary goal. That's why we strive to offer benefits and services that help you improve or maintain your health. It's also why we provide information in each issue of *All Together Healthy* that encourages you to live a healthier lifestyle.

In this issue, we have focused on what you can do to optimize your health and well-being during the summer months. We know summers can get very hot and humid in the New York metropolitan area. That's why we want to make sure that you have the information and tools necessary to stay cool, comfortable, and safe. And remember, our Care Management team can be a valuable part of your health journey, providing guidance and support along with ensuring that you receive great care.

Since our members are the heart of our health plan, finding ways to improve the member experience – and your satisfaction with the benefits, support, and service we provide – is always on our minds. If you'd like to play a more active role in helping us continue to make the plan even better, please consider joining our Member Advisory Council. This newsletter will let you know how to join.

And last, but definitely not least, Elderplan/HomeFirst realizes that staying healthy is not always as easy as seeing the doctor or taking medications as prescribed. Unfortunately, gaps in access to quality health care based on race, ethnicity, and financial stability are still far too often a factor. Consistent with our values, Elderplan/HomeFirst is committed to health equity, to closing these gaps in care, and ensuring that all our members have access to high-quality programs and services. It's part of our commitment to you.

We are honored you have chosen Elderplan/HomeFirst as your health plan. Our team is always here when you need us. If you have questions or need our support, please call 1-800-353-3765 (TTY: 711), 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week.

Sincerely,



David Wagner  
President & CEO  
MJHS Health System



David Wagner, President & CEO  
MJHS Health System

## Can You Get the Flu in the Summer?

The flu is a respiratory illness that is caused by influenza viruses. It infects the nose, throat, and lungs, and can cause mild to severe illness. In some cases, it can even lead to hospitalization or death.

Flu season typically starts in October and lasts through May, peaking between December and February. But the flu strains that circulate every year do not disappear between June and September. That means that even though it is not common to catch the flu during the summer, it is still possible.

### Why should you get a flu shot?

Studies have shown that getting vaccinated against the flu works. It prevents flu-related illnesses, hospitalization, and deaths every year, especially among high-risk groups, including older adults and those with chronic conditions.

### Where can you get a flu shot?

You can get a flu vaccine at your doctor's office, health clinics, or participating pharmacies that are covered by Elderplan at no cost. Visit the Elderplan website ([www.elderplan.org](http://www.elderplan.org)) for the most current list of locations. You can also call the Wellness Line at (718) 759-4413 Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for more information on getting vaccinated.

## Get Vaccinated and Get Rewarded

Elderplan/HomeFirst is pleased to offer a \$25 gift card to our members who receive the flu vaccine.

Call the Wellness Team at (718) 759-4413 Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for more information on this exciting program.



### Source:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/flu/index.html>

## Getting to Know Your Care Management Team

At Elderplan, we take pride in ensuring that you, our valued members, receive best-in-class care and know there is someone who values you and your needs to help you live independently for as long as possible. We are excited to announce that as part of our commitment to providing a high-quality member experience, Concierge Care Management has been introduced to Elderplan Extra Help and Flex members.

**We'd like to introduce you to members of your Concierge Care Management team:**

**You, Our Valued Member**

**Your Elderplan Care Management Team is just a phone call away!**

- Health Coach
- Your Nurse Care Manager
- Transitional Care Nurse
- Your Doctors
- Managed Care Coordinator

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### How can the team support you?

- 1. Coordination of health care services** – These services may include assisting with scheduling appointments with your PCP or specialists, reminding you that it's time for important screenings, ordering medical equipment and medical supplies, and arranging transportation.
- 2. Liaison between you and providers** – The team collaborates with your physician and other health care professionals to ensure you receive the services you need. They also help connect you to community resources, as needed.
- 3. Advocating for your needs** – We understand that navigating the healthcare system is difficult. That's why our care team will support you throughout the continuum of care.
- 4. Transitional care** – If you are hospitalized, the team will coordinate services and create a care plan to help ensure a safe discharge from the hospital. In the event you require short-term rehabilitation in a skilled nursing facility, we can help coordinate with the hospital and rehab to make arrangements. We will also make arrangements along with your physician for nursing home care if you agree to a nursing home stay after the hospital.
- 5. Ensure seamless care across the system** – Should you require access to additional services and support over time, such as home care, hospice, or even a nursing home level of care, the Elderplan team can work together with their colleagues within Metropolitan Jewish Health System, MJHS, part of the same health system as Elderplan/HomeFirst.

## Shooting for the Stars

As part of our commitment to our members, providing an exceptional member experience is a high priority.

Earlier this year, you may have received an emailed survey asking you to rate different aspects of Elderplan/HomeFirst. We are pleased to report that nearly 90% of you chose “agreed or strongly agreed” when rating the statement “Elderplan/HomeFirst cares about your well-being” and were likely to recommend the Plan to family and friends. Thank you to all who participated in completing this survey – your input is invaluable to us. Understanding your needs and expectations helps us make important improvements to our plan benefits, as well as in the services and member support we provide.

Additionally, we were delighted to meet some of you at our Member Advisory Council (MAC) meetings, at which members and caregivers provide feedback on how to improve member experience and satisfaction. In past meetings, we discussed various topics, including future benefits, prescription drug coverage, website usability, accessing benefits, communication preferences, special member programs, and more. At each meeting, we invite representatives from different departments so we can focus on specific topics and get your feedback on what we’re doing well and what we can do better. We hope more of you will consider joining. For more information about participating in the MAC, please email [memberadvisorycouncil@mjhs.org](mailto:memberadvisorycouncil@mjhs.org) or call 347-254-7700, Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



We are very proud to announce that MJHS Health System and Elderplan/HomeFirst have reached a new milestone. Effective July 2023, we have relocated our corporate headquarters to 55 Water Street in the financial district of downtown Manhattan. Our new 138,000 square foot space will allow us to bring together most of our lines of business, supporting even greater collaboration. This will make it even easier for Elderplan/HomeFirst to provide our members with access to the range of programs and services MJHS Health System offers, including home care, hospice care, and more. A critical part of the organization's roots, and for the convenience of our members, we will continue to maintain offices at 6405 7th Ave in Brooklyn.

## Tips to Help You Take Your Medication As Prescribed

Taking your medications as prescribed – the correct dose at the right time – is an important step in managing chronic conditions. It also helps reduce hospitalization and improves your overall long-term health and well-being. These are some common reasons for not taking medications as recommended and ways to overcome them:

Why Medications Are Not Taken as Prescribed	Solutions
<b>Forgetfulness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set alarms on your cell phone or watch to remind you to take your medicine.</li> <li>• Keep a list on hand to remember what medicine you take and the dosage.</li> <li>• Use a daily pill organizer or blister packs to organize your medicines.</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of understanding of medication dose and frequency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Speak to your doctor to better understand why you are taking medications.</li> <li>• Inform your doctor if you feel side effects or no noticeable difference, but do not skip a dose.</li> </ul>
<b>Not easy to get refills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure to see your doctor regularly. This way, you are more likely to get refills on time.</li> </ul>
<b>It's too expensive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask your doctor to prescribe generic drugs that are less expensive but are still effective.</li> </ul>

Contact Elderplan Member Services at 1-800-353-3765, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., 7 days a week to reach your Care Manager for assistance with:

- Coordinating visits to your doctor
- Managing your medications

Contact the Elderplan Pharmacy Team at 917-836-2949 or 929-675-9123, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday for help with:

- Coordinating refills with your doctor's office
- Answering questions about the medications you are taking
- Switching to a 90-day supply to save trips to the pharmacy \*
- Finding out about home delivery pharmacies if you have difficulties going to the pharmacy \*

\* Switch to the mail-order pharmacy (Caremark) to save trips to the pharmacy and for copay savings. By making this switch, you only pay for two months' copay for a three-month supply of medications!



## Chicken Avocado Wrap

These tasty wraps are the perfect light summer meal when you don't feel like cooking.

### Ingredients

- 1 small ripe avocado, mashed
- 1 Tbsp lime juice
- 1 small red onion, diced
- 2 plum tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 12 oz chicken breast, cooked and diced
- Black pepper to taste
- 1 cup chopped Romaine lettuce
- 4 whole wheat low-carb tortillas (10-inch diameter)

### Preparation

In a medium bowl, mix avocado, lime juice, onion, tomato, chicken breast and pepper until well combined.

Place 1/4 cup chopped lettuce in each tortilla. Top with chicken and avocado mixture. Roll up, slice in half on a bias, and serve.

### Nutrition Facts

**Servings: 4, Serving size: 1 Wrap**

**Per serving:** Calories: 339 Fat: 13g Saturated Fat: 2g Cholesterol: 49mg Sodium: 196mg Carbohydrates: 27g Fiber: 19g Protein: 30g

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1-800-353-3765

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## ModivCare MetroCard Program for Members

We are pleased to remind you that as part of your transportation benefit, you have access to MetroCards for use on NYC trains and buses.\*

Call ModivCare to request a MetroCard and they will be happy to assist you.

To ensure you receive your MetroCard in time for your medical appointments, we recommend requesting it at least 10 business days in advance of your first reservation. You can make reservations up to 30 days in advance.

If you need transportation for an aide to accompany you to and from your appointment, a MetroCard will be provided to cover the cost of the transportation for your aide.



**If you want to request a MetroCard or have any questions or concerns about our transportation benefit, please don't hesitate to call ModivCare. You can find their phone number on the back of your Elderplan/HomeFirst ID Card.**

\* Elderplan Flex (HMO) members must choose transportation as their Flex Extra to receive this benefit.