

WHOLE you

SPRING 2024



Welcome back to a new edition of Whole You — a newsletter from Absolute Total Care.

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Absolute Total Care's Secure Member Portal

It's a convenient and secure tool to help you manage your health care. By creating a free account, you can:

- Access medical records
- Find a provider
- Access a digital version of your ID card
- And more!

CEO Message

**To our valued members:
You are important to us.**

I want to start by saying thank you for trusting us as your partner in healthcare. At Absolute Total Care, healthcare is personal. Every individual, family and community we serve is unique.

Caring for people and making healthcare accessible and easier to understand is at the heart of all we do. We are excited to bring you this newsletter as another tool to help you live well and get the most out of your health coverage.

This issue is full of great advice and topics to empower your health journey. We talk about the risk factors of diabetes. We've got tips on managing allergies and ways to eat healthy on a budget. You'll learn how to identify the signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Plus, we will talk about your member rights and responsibilities.

There's an important reminder about Medicaid Redetermination on the next page. Renewal is not automatic. To keep your benefits, South Carolina Healthy Connections verifies eligibility on an annual basis. We are here to help answer any questions you have about this process. We can even assist you in completing your renewal form. You can read more about this in the next article.

I hope you enjoy the first newsletter of 2024 and that it helps you take care of the whole you.



**Absolute Total Care CEO
John McClellan**

IMPORTANT: Keep Your Coverage!

Renewing Medicaid Benefits

KEEP YOUR FAMILY COVERED!

Every year, South Carolina Healthy Connections will need to make sure that you're still eligible for Medicaid coverage. Absolute Total Care is here to help you stay healthy and continue enjoying your benefits.



Need Help with the Annual Review Form?
Call us at 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711)



Here are three important things to know:

- 1** You will get a letter from South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (SCDHHS) before your Medicaid anniversary. This letter will explain how to verify that you are still eligible.
- 2** If you are eligible for Medicaid, you can keep your Absolute Total Care coverage or choose another plan. If you are no longer eligible for Medicaid, you can check out our Medicare and Marketplace choices by visiting wellcare.com for Medicare or ambetter.absolutetotalcare.com for Marketplace.
- 3** If you don't get a letter or you don't know your anniversary date, you can confirm your eligibility with the SCDHHS online. Go to: www.scdhhs.gov/members/annual-reviews. You can also confirm eligibility by calling 1-888-549-0820.

HAVE YOU MOVED OR CHANGED YOUR PHONE NUMBER?

Make sure South Carolina Healthy Connections has your current contact information. You can do that by visiting apply.scdhhs.gov. And if you have any questions <or need help with the process to keep your Medicaid coverage>, contact Absolute Total Care.

Understanding PTSD

Trauma can take many forms. Any experience that threatens your life or someone else's can cause post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Over 12 million people in the United States suffer from some form of PTSD. The good news is that you are not alone and there is treatment that works. Below are four common symptoms related to PTSD:

1

Reliving the event. Memories of the trauma, or flashbacks, can happen at any time. They can feel real and be very scary. Memories can be triggered by something that reminds you of the event.

2

Avoiding things that remind you of the event. You may try to avoid certain people or situations that remind you of the event. You may also try to stay busy so you don't have to think about the event.

3

Having more negative thoughts and feelings than before. You might be sad or numb. You may feel that the world is dangerous and you can't trust anyone. It may be hard for you to feel happiness or be positive.

4

Feeling on edge. It may feel hard to relax. You might have trouble sleeping or concentrating. You may suddenly get angry or irritable. You may feel like you are always on the lookout for danger.

If thoughts and feelings about a trauma are bothering you, you should talk to your behavioral health care provider to learn more about PTSD and PTSD treatment.

If you have PTSD, you are not alone.

PTSD is real and it can happen at any age. It affects over 12 million American adults in any given year.



If you need help finding a behavioral health provider, call Member Services at **1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711)**.



Need Care? Who Do You Call?



Let's say you have a terrible earache or bad cold. Who should you call? Your primary care provider (PCP) is a great choice. This doctor will help you if you have a cold, earache, sore throat or rash. Your PCP can also help you with injuries like a sprain, minor cut or burn. Your PCP is also a good choice if you have stress or anxiety.

But what if you have quick questions about medicines or your health? Many of us might not think of our local pharmacist. We should. Your pharmacist is there to provide good advice at no cost to you, helping you manage your prescriptions and health.

ASK YOUR LOCAL PHARMACIST ABOUT:

- Your prescriptions or over-the-counter medicines
- Side effects from medicines and how to handle them
- Medication refills
- How your medicine works
- Which medicines are safe to use with each other
- How to stay on track using your medicines
- Over-the-counter medicines when you have a cold or the flu, a headache or a sore throat
- Questions about vaccinations

[Find a PCP or pharmacy near you.](#)



If you're not sure where to go for the care you need, call our 24/7 nurse advice line — they can help you!

1-866-433-6041 (TTY 711)

Tips to Triumph Over Seasonal Allergies



Nip them in the bud!

Allergy season is here, and it affects millions of people every year. But there are ways to help control seasonal allergies symptoms. These tips can help you get through allergy season more comfortably.

1 CONSIDER ALLERGY TESTING.

Ask your healthcare provider or allergist about the benefits of allergy testing. Allergy testing helps medical providers find out what triggers your allergies. Once you know what works for your body, you can create a plan to stay comfortable during allergy season.

2 LIMIT TIME OUTSIDE.

If it's dry and windy, try to stay inside. Rain reduces pollen on outdoor surfaces, so that's a better time to enjoy the outdoors. The time of day matters, too. Pollen counts are high in the morning. So, plan outdoor activities in the evening when counts are low.

3 MONITOR THE ALLERGY INDEX IN YOUR AREA.

Technology makes it easy to know how pollen will affect your day before you go outside. Most TV stations broadcast allergy forecasts during the weather. Websites, apps and text messaging programs can also alert you to conditions in your area.

4 BREATHE EASIER INSIDE.

At home or while riding in a car, turn on the air conditioner, instead of opening the windows. Open windows bring allergens inside. High-efficiency air filters can also help your air conditioner work even better. Keep carpets and floors clean of pet dander and dust. Also, take a bath or shower before going to bed to keep pollen off sheets.

5 YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT.

Many people don't realize that certain foods can make you have an allergic response. Keep track of the food you eat. Pay attention to foods that cause nausea, headaches, dizziness, wheezing or an itchy throat. Sugars, wheat, dairy and processed foods can increase allergic reactions and mucus production. Drink plenty of water to flush and hydrate your system.

You have rights and responsibilities

Absolute Total Care members have rights. They also have responsibilities.

Rights are things you can expect from your health plan.

They include:

- Getting all the services we provide
- Being treated with respect
- Having your medical information kept private
- Getting a copy of your medical record

Responsibilities are things your health plan expects from you.

They include:

- Asking questions if you don't understand your rights
- Keeping your scheduled appointments
- Having your member ID card with you at appointments
- Telling your doctor if you had care in an emergency room

You can find more rights and responsibilities in your Member Handbook. Read it online at absolutetotalcare.com. Call 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) to ask for a paper copy.

Are you at risk for Diabetes?

Diabetes and prediabetes are serious health conditions. Let's take a look at your risks and what to do if you think you might have one of these conditions.

ABOUT PREDIABETES: More than 1 out of 3 American adults have prediabetes, which means your blood sugar levels are higher than normal but not high enough to be called diabetes. Prediabetes is a warning that you are at an increased risk for developing Type 2 diabetes. Symptoms aren't always obvious, and 90% of people with prediabetes don't know they have it. The good news is that a simple blood sugar test can tell you. Get the test if you have any of these risk factors:

- Being overweight
- Being 45 years or older
- Having a parent, brother or sister with Type 2 diabetes
- Physically active less than three times a week
- Having gestational diabetes during pregnancy
- Giving birth to a baby weighing over 9 pounds
- Having polycystic ovary syndrome
- African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians and some Pacific Islanders and Asian Americans are at particularly high risk for Type 2 diabetes

If you have any of these risk factors, call your doctor to schedule a prediabetes screening.



ABOUT DIABETES: Diabetes affects the way your body turns food into energy. When you eat, your body breaks down the food into sugar and sends it into your blood. That signals your pancreas to release insulin, which lets the sugar into your cells so they can use it for energy.

With diabetes, your body either doesn't make enough insulin or has trouble using it. That means too much sugar stays in your blood. That can cause problems like heart disease, blindness, kidney disease and more.

While there is no cure for diabetes, losing weight, healthy eating and exercise can help. It's also important to take any medicine your doctor prescribes and keep all your doctor's appointments.

Make an appointment today to talk with your doctor about your risk for diabetes.

Tips to Eat Healthy and Shop Smart on a Budget

Healthy eating doesn't have to come with a high price tag.

1 Choose in-season or frozen fruits & veggies

Choose wisely by selecting in-season and frozen fruits and vegetables. Check for price-per-pound deals on meat. Ask the butcher for lean and inexpensive cuts. Beans are also an easy and affordable source of protein.

2 Try the farmers' market or discount stores

Discount grocers and farmers' markets offer healthy options at lower costs than other stores. Many of the same products are carried in sister stores with different brand names.

3 Make a shopping list

Make a shopping list to cut down on impulse buys. Many grocers now have their own apps that let you make a shopping list. Then you can "clip" digital coupons and view their advertised sales.



TRANSPORTATION BENEFITS

Can we give you a lift?

Getting to the care you need is important. So along with your Absolute Total Care Medicaid benefits, you may also be able to get non-emergency transportation.

That means we'll get you no-cost rides to checkups and other medical visits. We can also get you rides to the drugstore and programs and services near you. You may also be able to get a monthly bus pass. Plus, if family or friends drive you to a medical visit, you may be able to get help paying for gas.

Call Member Services at 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) or visit our website at absolutetotalcare.com to learn more and see if you qualify for these services.

