

Complete Community

VOLUME 2 — 2023

Ascension **Complete**

Tips and resources to support a healthy lifestyle.

Your health is our priority.

Ascension Complete's member newsletter – *Complete Community* – is provided as a resource to members periodically throughout the year. We hope you'll use this newsletter to stay connected to your Ascension Complete Medicare Advantage plan.

In these newsletters, you will find announcements, articles written by reputable sources, tools and resources to explore, videos to view, and tips to ensure you're getting the most out of your benefits. We post each issue to our website at <https://www.AscensionComplete.com/newsletter> and notify our members by email each time an issue has been published.

If you would like an email when our next issue is published, and have not given us your email address, you can do so quickly by registering for a Member Account by going to [member.AscensionComplete.com](https://www.AscensionComplete.com/member).

We also want to hear from you! If there is content you would like to see in future newsletters, let us know at Complete_Community@AscensionComplete.com. We hope you enjoy this issue!

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Tools & Resources

Member Orientation

We want to make sure you get the most from your Ascension Complete benefits. Please see our informative Member Welcome Orientation (PDF) presentation on how to use your *Extra Benefits* located on our website at <https://www.AscensionComplete.com/Orientation>.

Use your Transportation Benefit

Some of our Ascension Complete health plans have a transportation benefit that gets you to and from plan-approved places using ModivCare. Check your [Summary of Benefits](#) at <https://www.ascensioncomplete.com/plan-benefit-materials.html> for the number of trips on your plan. For more information, visit our [transportation benefits webpage](#) at <https://www.ascensioncomplete.com/member-resources/member-perks/transportation.html>.

Set up your Telehealth Teladoc Account

As part of your benefits plan, you have access to telemedicine services through Teladoc. Telemedicine and telehealth allows you to see a doctor right from your own home — saving time and money! Be sure to register for a Teladoc account if you don't already have one at <https://www.Teladoc.com/AscensionComplete>.

Lower your Out-of-Pocket (OOP) Costs

With Ascension Complete, you have a wide range of resources and extras that can help you save money and make the most of your plan. [Watch the video](#) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ul_tFs683_M for four tips on how to lower your OOP costs.



What's New

COVID-19: Detecting Symptoms and Ways to Stay Healthy

The COVID-19 public health emergency status ended on May 11, 2023, but the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) still tracks the virus and its long-term effects. Proper handwashing is always key in staying healthy.

Here are other things that you can do to stay safe:

- **Stay Current with Vaccinations:** COVID-19 vaccines stop people from getting seriously ill, being hospitalized, and dying. You are protected best when you stay up to date with the recommended vaccines, including boosters. COVID-19 boosters can help restore protection that has lessened since your last vaccination and give you a broader defense against newer variants.
- **Spend Time Outdoors:** If you have the option, choose to spend time outside instead of indoors.
- **Increase Indoor Ventilation:** Bring as much outdoor air inside as possible, by opening windows, filtering your air, and improving air flow.
- **Be Aware of Symptoms:** People with COVID-19 report a range of symptoms — from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear two to 14 days after exposure to the virus (being close to someone with the virus). COVID-19 can also spread before a person starts showing symptoms (signs of illness).

Symptoms may include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, muscle or body aches, and a new loss of taste or smell.

Seek emergency medical attention (call **911** or call ahead to your local emergency facility) if you have:

- Trouble breathing.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- New feelings of confusion.
- A hard time waking up or staying awake.
- Pale, gray, or blue skin, lips, or fingernails.

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No matter how careful you are, COVID-19 can still spread, and people of all ages can get sick. If you believe you have been exposed, here are some rules to follow:

- **Wear a mask:** Wear a high-quality mask for 10 days and get tested on the fifth day.
- **Get tested:** If you have COVID-19 symptoms, get tested. Call us using the phone number on the back of your member ID card. Or, visit a community testing site or your local health department.
- **Isolate:** If you have tested positive, stay at home and away from others for at least five days. Wear a mask when indoors around others.
- **Seek treatment:** If you have COVID-19, contact your PCP about ways to help lessen your symptoms.

While there may not be a cure, this illness is getting more manageable each day. By following the advice above, we can all do our part to stay safe.

Member Services Hours of Operation:

October 1-March 31: Monday-Sunday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

April 1-September 30: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

A messaging system is used after hours, weekends and on federal holidays.

SOURCES: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), “Moving Forward with COVID-19 Data” retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/covidview/>, “Symptoms of COVID-19” retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html> and “CDC streamlines COVID-19 guidance to help the public better protect themselves and understand their risk” retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/p0811-covid-guidance.html>



Managing Your Care

Hospitalization Follow-Up

If you have recently gotten out of the hospital, make sure to follow your doctor’s advice once you are home.

Also make sure you:

- Take medications as prescribed.
- Get help with everyday activities as needed.
- Know how to do any special care you may need — like giving yourself a shot or changing a bandage.

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Remember to:

- ✔ See your primary care provider (PCP) within seven days of leaving the hospital.
- ✔ Take your discharge papers with you to your PCP or specialist visit.
- ✔ Seek medical help if you are not feeling well or new symptoms develop.
- ✔ Call Member Services using the phone number listed on the back of your ID card and request transfer to Case Management if you need assistance with meals, your discharge orders, medications, transportation or help with everyday activities.

These steps will keep you as healthy as possible at home. If you have any questions, call your doctor. As always, be sure to go back for follow-up visits, either in the office or using telehealth.

SOURCE: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, “Your Discharge Planning Checklist,” retrieved from <https://www.medicare.gov/pubs/pdf/11376-discharge-planning-checklist.pdf>

Chronic Pain? Read on Before Reaching for that Bottle...

Chronic pain is pain that lasts for three months or more. *Opioids* are strong drugs that are sometimes used to treat chronic pain. However, opioids also have side effects and can be addictive.

Work with your provider(s) to come up with other ways to help with your pain. This may include:

- **Exercise and physical therapy:** Moving more and in different ways could lessen or stop your chronic pain. With physical therapy, you’ll loosen and strengthen the parts of your body that are causing pain.
- **Behavioral health:** Stress and other emotions can also cause our bodies to feel pain. If that’s the case, you may want to see a behavioral health expert. That way you can learn ways to better cope with these feelings.
- **Non-opioid medications:** Opioids aren’t the only ways to treat chronic pain. Medications like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®) can provide relief.

Contact your provider to discuss other ways to relieve chronic pain. That way you can work together towards a pain-free life!

SOURCE: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “Safely and Effectively Managing Pain Without Opioids,” retrieved from: <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/featured-topics/pain-management.html>

Tips to Avoid Falls

Stopping falls is an important part of your health and safety. Start by ensuring your diet has plenty of calcium and vitamin D for strong bones. Stay active to improve your strength and balance. Take extra measures inside and outside of your home to stop falls.

Some steps to take to lessen your risk of falling include:

Personal Safety

- ✔ Stay active! It will help you keep muscle strength and balance.
- ✔ Talk with your doctor about whether any of your medications might lead to falls.
- ✔ Stay up to date with vision and hearing checks.

Indoor Safety

- ✔ Keep the rooms in your house free from clutter.
- ✔ Use nightlights.
- ✔ Consider wearing low-heeled, supportive shoes, even in your home.
- ✔ Tack carpets to the floor and check that they have skid-proof backing.
- ✔ Use a rubber bathmat and put grab bars in the tub or shower.
- ✔ Make sure stairways are well-lit and have handrails on both sides.
- ✔ Keep a flashlight and extra batteries at your bedside.

Outdoor Safety

- ✔ Wear boots with rubber soles for better traction in winter.
- ✔ Consider using a walker or cane for extra stability in bad weather.
- ✔ Use bags that keep your hands free, such as a backpack or shoulder bag.

SOURCE: National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, "Preventing Another Broken Bone," retrieved from:

<https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/preventing-another-broken-bone>



Upcoming Events

Your In-home Health Assessment

Ascension Complete makes your care our top priority. You may have received a letter or phone call from one of our partners — Signify or Harmony Cares — informing you of a special service.

There is no charge for this service. You don't even have to leave your home.

Our healthcare partners — [Signify](https://www.signifyhealth.com/at-home) at <https://www.signifyhealth.com/at-home> or [Harmony Cares](https://harmonycaresmedicalgroup.com/) at <https://harmonycaresmedicalgroup.com/> depending upon where you live — will provide a 45-minute, free, and personalized in-home health assessment by a nurse practitioner.

They'll review:

- ✓ Your vital signs.
- ✓ Medication/drug review.
- ✓ Medical history review.
- ✓ Medical advice and education.
- ✓ Personalized checklist to review at your next PCP visit.

Once done, your health assessment will be sent to your PCP to help coordinate your care. This information will ensure you receive the care and services you need.

This opportunity is only available once a year. It's easy to participate. All you have to do is:

- Make an appointment when you're contacted.
- Have your medications on-hand for the provider to review for your appointment.

Have questions?

If you have more questions about this assessment or your plan benefits or services, please call Ascension Complete Member Services using the phone number on the back of your member ID card.

Always Talk with Your Doctor

Always talk with your doctor(s) about the care that is right for you. This material does not replace your doctor's advice. It is based on third-party sources. We are presenting it for your information only. It does not imply that these are benefits covered by Ascension Complete. Also, Ascension Complete does not guarantee any health results. You should review your plan or call Member Services to find out if a service is covered. Call **911** or **your doctor** right away in a health emergency.

Please contact your plan for details.