

# Healthy Living

Spring 2016

*A newsletter for BlueCHiP for Medicare members*

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Check out our member fairs at:  
[bcbsri.com/Medicare](http://bcbsri.com/Medicare)



# Healthy Discounts

As part of your BCBSRI health plan, you will soon (expected by mid-March) receive an ExtraCare® Health Card from CVS/pharmacy® that will save



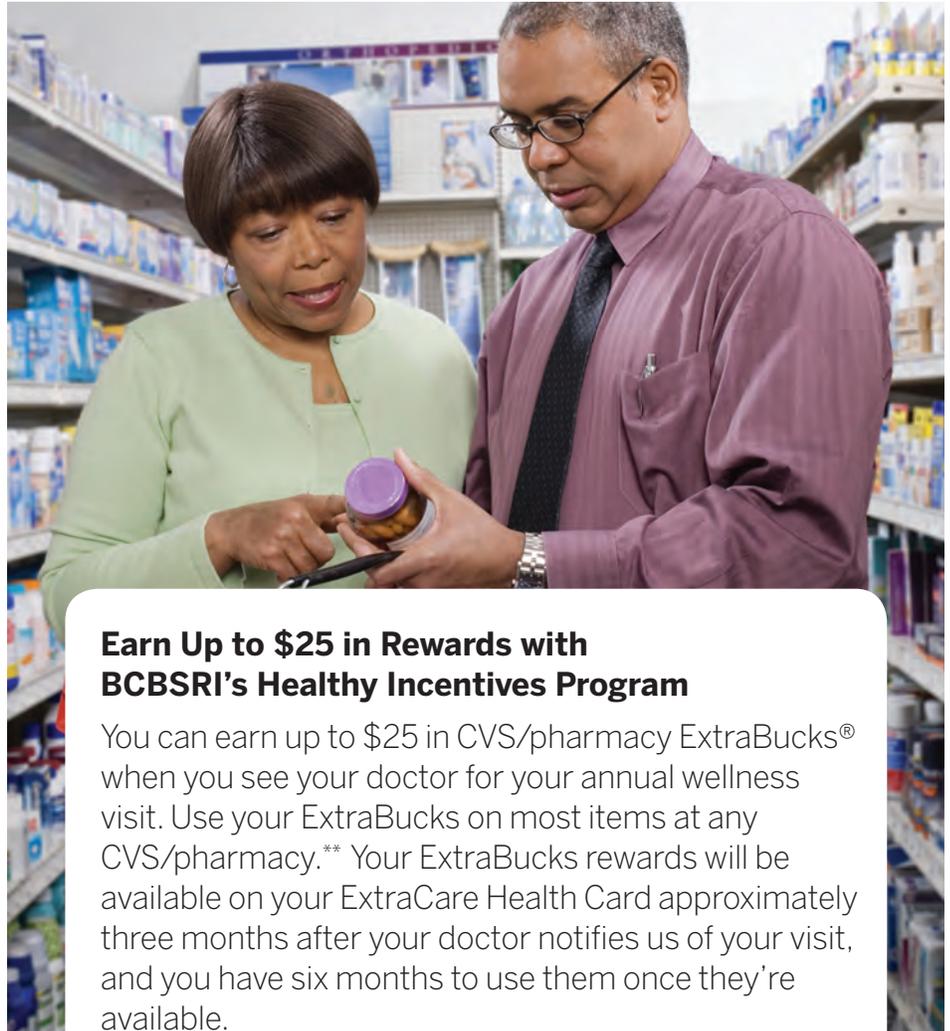
you 20 percent on thousands of CVS/pharmacy Brand health-related items\* like:

- Vitamins
- First-aid supplies
- Pain relievers
- Eye drops
- Allergy and cold medications
- And many more

Just show your ExtraCare Health Card when you make purchases at any CVS/pharmacy.

This information is not part of the plan's benefits. For a complete description, contact the plan for more information.

\* The 20 percent discount is restricted to items purchased for the healthcare of cardholder and applies to regularly priced CVS/pharmacy Brand health-related items valued at \$1 or more. Excludes prescriptions and any items reimbursed by federal healthcare programs.



## Earn Up to \$25 in Rewards with BCBSRI's Healthy Incentives Program

You can earn up to \$25 in CVS/pharmacy ExtraBucks® when you see your doctor for your annual wellness visit. Use your ExtraBucks on most items at any CVS/pharmacy.\*\* Your ExtraBucks rewards will be available on your ExtraCare Health Card approximately three months after your doctor notifies us of your visit, and you have six months to use them once they're available.

\*\* Excludes prescriptions, gift cards, lottery, money orders, postage stamps, pre-paid cards, alcohol, and tobacco products.

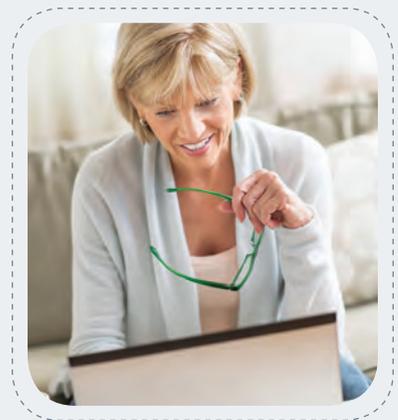
## Have Questions About Your Plan?

Visit [bcbstri.com/Medicare](http://bcbstri.com/Medicare), or call the BlueCHIP for Medicare Concierge Team at **(401) 277-2958** or **1-800-267-0439 (TTY: 711)**.

Our hours are:

- **February 15 to September 30:** Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday, from 8:00 a.m. to noon.
- **October 1 to February 14:** 7 days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

You can use our automated answering machine outside of these hours.



# Manage Your Total Health

## Expert tips for living with multiple conditions

If you have two or more chronic conditions, you're not alone. Three out of four Americans age 65 and older have multiple conditions, like high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, or depression. Take control of your health with these tips from Richard Besdine, M.D., Director of Geriatrics at Brown University.

### Stick to healthy habits

Genetics do partly shape your health. "But the older you get, the more important prevention and management strategies become," Dr. Besdine says. To protect your health, eat well, stay active, and avoid smoking.

### Check in with your primary care physician

Even if you see several specialists, you still need



a primary care physician (PCP). Think of your PCP as the leader of your healthcare team. Your PCP can monitor your tests, medications, and overall health. He or she can also help communicate with your other doctors.

### Keep a list of your medications

The treatment you receive for one condition should not interfere with treatment you receive for another condition, says Dr. Besdine. Take a list of your current medications with you to any doctor's appointment. Be sure to include prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, and supplements.

### Report new symptoms

Symptoms can occur for different reasons: a temporary illness, a change in your condition, or side effects from a medication. Tell your PCP about any new symptoms as well as any ongoing sadness or recent stressful events, which can affect your physical health (see p. 4 for more).

### Tell Us How We Are Doing!

Your opinion really can make a difference in how your doctors, pharmacies, and Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island serve your needs. Over the coming weeks, you may receive a survey in the mail—or perhaps a call—about your experience with your doctors and your Medicare Advantage plan. This annual survey is designed and conducted by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid

Services (CMS), and we love hearing from you as to what we are doing well and where we can do better. Every year, we learn more about how well we communicate with members, how easy it is to use our plans, and what services are rated best by members like you.

So please take part in our survey and help us make our plans work better for the more than 50,000 Rhode Islanders who choose Blue for coverage.

# Healthy Mind, Healthy Body

## Four simple ways to boost your well-being

When mind and body are in sync, you're healthier overall. "The Greek philosopher Aristotle taught the value of a healthy mind in a healthy body, and that's still true today," says Louis Marino, Jr., M.D., a psychiatrist and Chief of Geriatric Services at Butler Hospital in Providence. Try these mind-body strategies.

### **Know that getting older doesn't mean getting sadder**

Depression is not a normal part of aging, Dr. Marino says. If you're feeling sadder or more irritable than usual, tell your doctor. There are treatments for depression, including counseling and medication. Need help finding a specialist? Call the BlueCHiP for Medicare Concierge Team (see p. 2).

### **Ask your doctor if alcohol is safe for you**

Safe drinking ranges depend on your health since alcohol can make chronic conditions



worse and medications less effective. In general, adults age 65 and older should have no more than seven drinks a week, according to the National Institutes of Health. Keep in mind that one drink is equal to:

- 12 ounces of beer
- 5 ounces of wine
- 1.5 ounces of liquor

### **Take medications exactly as prescribed**

Don't take a higher dose, use a medication for longer than prescribed, or keep expired medications "just in case." If you have side effects or think your medication isn't helping, tell your doctor. He or she can adjust your treatment. Your doctor will also write new, appropriate prescriptions as you need them in the future.

### **Lower stress with mindfulness meditation**

You may not be able to change stressful situations, but you can change how you respond to them. Mindfulness meditation teaches you how to be in the present. Try this for 10 minutes a day:

- Sit comfortably.
- Pay attention to your breath without controlling it.
- Notice your thoughts without controlling them, then focus again on your breath.



## **Eat and Move for Your Mood**

Healthy eating and exercise can lower your risk for heart disease, diabetes, and some cancers. They can also improve mental health and help you stay energized. Eat fewer fatty foods and more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Plus, aim to be active at least 30 minutes a day. Try walking, biking, swimming, lifting light weights, or stretching.

# A Super Spring Salad

## Beat hunger with a hearty mix of seasonal veggies

Spring is the perfect time to upgrade salad from side dish to entrée. Start with a base of dark leafy greens, like romaine lettuce or spinach. Add plenty of fresh seasonal vegetables. A mix of colors means a healthy variety of vitamins and minerals. For lean protein, add grilled chicken or chickpeas (with no salt added). Top it off with a bit of healthy fat, like dressing made with olive oil. Enjoy!



### Make Your Own Dressing

Save calories and money by mixing up a homemade dressing. It's easy. You need:

- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 Tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1 tsp dried basil or oregano

Put ingredients in a jar, close lid tightly, and shake until blended well. Chill until ready to use.

### Ingredients

- 6 cups water
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed or cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 skinless, boneless chicken breasts (4 oz each), sliced
- 6 cups chopped romaine lettuce or spinach
- 1 cup cherry or grape tomatoes, halved or quartered
- 1 cucumber, sliced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 1 bell pepper, sliced
- 6 radishes, sliced

### Directions

1. Boil water in large pot over high heat. Add asparagus, cover, and cook 3 minutes. Remove from pot, and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, heat oil in nonstick skillet over medium heat. Cook chicken 4 minutes on each side, or until done. Remove from pan, and set aside.
3. Toss lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, zucchini, carrot, bell pepper, radishes, and asparagus in large bowl. Divide vegetables and chicken among 4 salad bowls, or store desired amount for later use. Serve dressing on the side (see "Make Your Own Dressing" on left).

**Serves:** 4

### Per serving (with 1 Tbsp dressing):

225 calories, 12 g fat, 3 g sat. fat, 21 g protein, 20 g carb, 6 g fiber, 100 mg sodium

# Build a Better Plate

## Get the right mix of calories and nutrients

Eating a balanced diet can lower your disease risk and help you maintain a healthy weight. How much you eat is important, but so is what you eat. Here, learn about calories and an easy way to build a healthy plate.

### Why do calories matter?

A calorie is a measurement of energy. "Think of calories as fuel to support your activities," says Corinne Goff, R.D., a dietitian in North Kingstown. The number of calories you need per day depends on your gender, activity level, and other health factors. Eating too many or too few calories can put you at risk for health problems.

### How many calories do you need each day?

Talk to your doctor about your health and how many calories you need. If you have diabetes or another health condition, your doctor may want you to talk to a dietitian. In general:

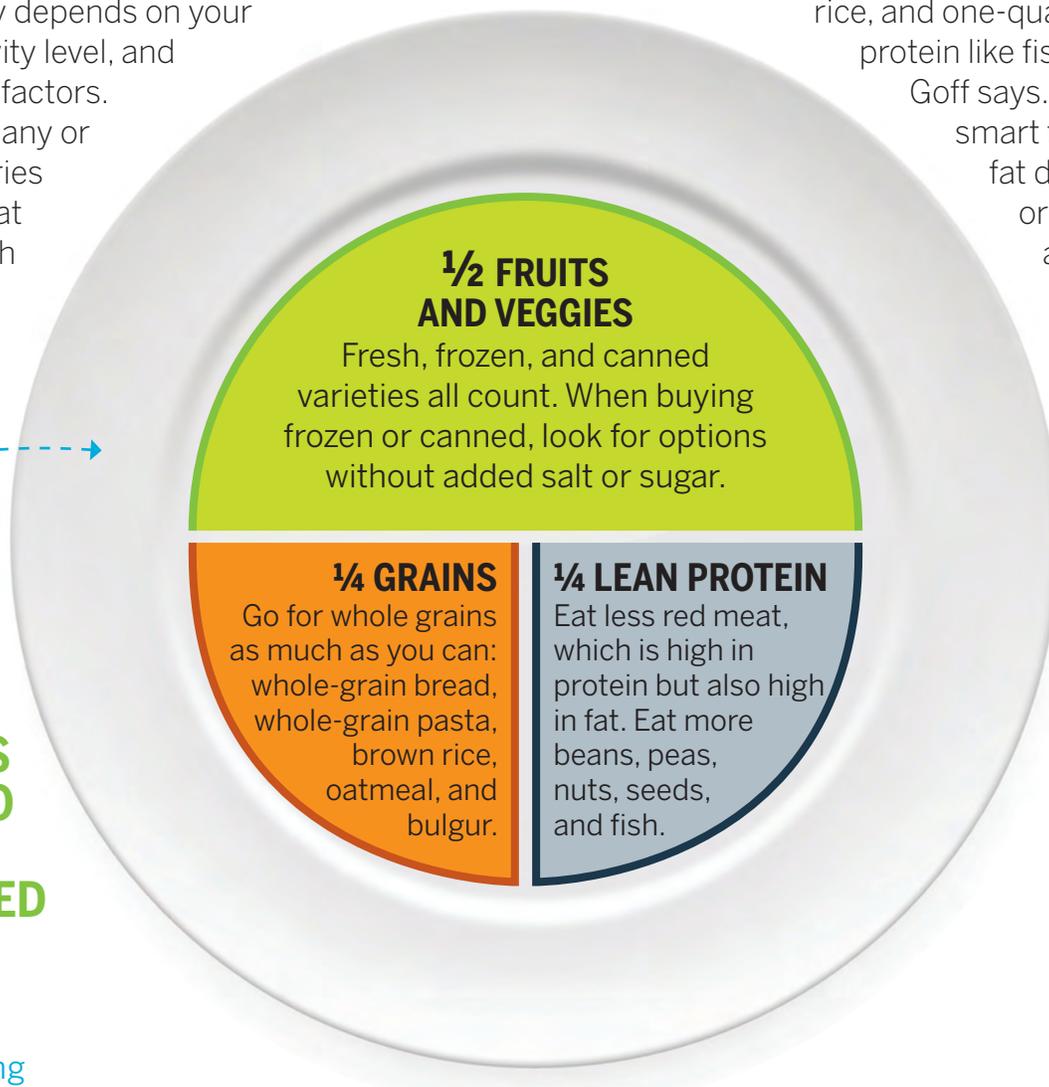
- A woman who is moderately active needs about **1,800 calories** per day.
- A man who is moderately active needs about **2,200 to 2,400 calories** per day.

### What makes a balanced diet?

In addition to calories, your body needs different vitamins and minerals to stay healthy. When choosing foods, it's best to pick nutrient-rich sources over foods that are high in calories but low in nutrients.

To get the right mix of calories and nutrients, Goff recommends the MyPlate method. "Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables, one-quarter grains like brown rice, and one-quarter lean protein like fish or beans,"

Goff says. It's also smart to include low-fat dairy (like milk or yogurt) and a healthy fat (like olive oil).



**USE THIS GUIDE TO BUILD A BALANCED PLATE**

# Get Strong and Steady with Tai Chi

## This gentle workout delivers head-to-toe benefits

Fitness doesn't have to be hard on your bones and joints. Gentle exercise, like tai chi, can improve strength and balance, too. Check out these great reasons to try tai chi and tips to get started.

### Move for mind and body

Tai chi is an ancient Chinese martial art form that focuses on performing a series of slow, specific movements (called "forms") while taking deep breaths. A great mind-body exercise, it's often thought of as "moving meditation."

### Protect yourself from falls

Don't let the slow pace fool you. Tai chi offers a wide range of benefits. "It gets the blood flowing, which is one of the most important things we can do for our health," says Edna Kurtzman, Active Older Adults Coordinator at Bayside YMCA in Barrington. "It improves balance and can help you avoid falls. Plus, if you take a class, you'll get to socialize."

### Check with your doctor

Tai chi is a beginner-friendly, low-impact workout. But before starting a new fitness program, talk to your doctor. If you have a chronic condition or take medication, ask how exercise might affect you, Kurtzman says.



### Free Exercise Classes and Fitness Discounts!

Looking for a fun way to get in shape? We offer free exercise classes at Your Blue Store in Warwick. To sign up for a class, visit [bcsri.com/YourBlueStore](https://bcsri.com/YourBlueStore), or call **(401) 459-2200**.

You may also be eligible for discounted fees or reimbursements at many health clubs in Rhode Island. For more information, visit [bcsri.com/Medicare](https://bcsri.com/Medicare), or call the BlueCHiP for Medicare Concierge Team at **(401) 277-2958** or **1-800-267-0439 (TTY: 711)**. See p. 2 for hours.

### Find a class that fits

"When you're just starting tai chi, it helps to have an instructor who can give you extra attention," Kurtzman says. Ask gym staff which class might be a good match for your fitness needs.

### Try tai chi at home

Follow along to a tai chi video. For videos from Dr. Paul Lam, a family physician and tai chi expert, go to [youtube.com/DrPaulLamTaiChi](https://youtube.com/DrPaulLamTaiChi). You'll find options for beginners and even seated tai chi for arthritis.



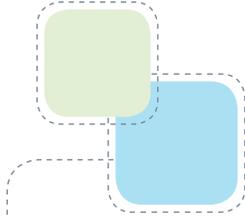
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*See how on p. 2.*

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