

## HEALTHY LIVING

# Screen today for a healthier tomorrow

Health screenings aren't just for older adults. Start these five in your younger years to take control of your health.



## NEED TO RENEW?

You must renew your NJ FamilyCare Medicaid coverage every year. Look for your renewal notice in the mail.

Visit

[aetna.com/su24nj-1](https://aetna.com/su24nj-1)  
or scan the QR code to learn more.



### Blood pressure

All adults should get their blood pressure checked every three to five years. If you're over 40, get it checked every year.

### Cholesterol

Experts recommend checking your cholesterol every four to six years. Ask your doctor if it's time to get yours checked.

### Cervical cancer

Women 21 to 65 years old should get screened every three to five years.

### Diabetes

The American Diabetes Association recommends that everyone start screening for diabetes at 35 years old. But your doctor may recommend screening earlier if you are at high risk.

### Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

If you are sexually active, talk to your doctor about getting tested for STIs like HIV, gonorrhea and chlamydia.

Your doctor may recommend screening more often or earlier based on your health history. Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/providers/clinical-guidelines-policy-bulletins.html](https://AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/providers/clinical-guidelines-policy-bulletins.html) to learn more about our Clinical Practice Guidelines.

To learn more about preventive screenings and vaccines, go to [aetna.kramesonline.com/Search/22,C,6](https://aetna.kramesonline.com/Search/22,C,6)

# Smart strategies for managing multiple health conditions

Juggling different medications, specialists and appointments? These tips and tools can help make it easier to take control of your health and feel your best.

## Review your medications

If you're taking more than one medication, it's a good idea to review them with your doctor each year.

They might suggest a medication that combines the work of two of your drugs, for example. That means you'll have fewer pills to keep track of. Or they could offer alternatives that help you steer clear of unwanted side effects.

## Keep track of your test results

Ask for copies of your hospital and lab records and doctors' notes. This way, you can track your

progress and watch for changes. And it gives you time to process your health information.

You can track your health history in your online Member Portal or in the Aetna Better Health® app. Visit [AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/member-portal.html](https://www.aetna.com/newjersey/member-portal.html) to get started.

## Keep a symptom journal

It can be hard to keep track of symptoms, especially if they change or are unpredictable. But those details can help you and your provider make decisions about treatment and lifestyle changes.

Find a notebook or notepad to use as a symptom tracker. Write down what symptoms you have, how often you have them and how they make you feel. Share this information with your provider each time you meet.

## Educate yourself

We're not talking about going back to high school or college. But you should try to learn as much as you can about the health conditions you have.

Ask your doctor to suggest reliable websites where you can find out more about the latest research and treatments. Once you understand your health situation better, it will be easier to ask the right questions at your doctor appointments.



Your dedicated care manager can help you find providers, manage appointments, learn about your health and more. We also have special programs that can help you manage certain health issues. Call Member Services at **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)** and ask to speak with a care manager to get started.



## Get the support you need

Our population health management programs can help you live your healthiest life possible. Whether you're managing diabetes or just trying to stay healthy, we have special programs to help you get the care you need — and prevent health issues in the future.

You can learn about these programs online at [AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/newjersey) or in your Member Handbook. You can also call us at **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)**.

You have the right to make decisions about your health care. If we contact you to join one of our programs, you may decline. If you are already in a program, you may choose to stop at any time by calling us at **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)**.

# Your diabetes checkup checklist

Diabetes affects your whole body. But you can prevent serious problems with regular self-care and checkups. Use these guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to stay on top of your health.

For more information about managing diabetes, go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/health-wellness/diabetes.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/newjersey/health-wellness/diabetes.html)

Daily checks	Biannual checks	Yearly checks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ <b>Blood sugar.</b> Talk to your care team about how often to check your blood sugar at home. Write down your numbers and bring them with you to your appointments.</li> <li>✔ <b>Foot check.</b> Call your care team if you notice any cuts, sores, blisters, redness or swelling on your feet.</li> <li>✔ <b>Medications.</b> Take your medicines as prescribed by your doctor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ <b>Dental exam.</b> Keep your teeth and gums healthy with twice-a-year cleanings. Tell your dentist you have diabetes.</li> <li>✔ <b>A1C test.</b> This blood test measures your average blood sugar levels over the past few months. Your care team may want to test this more often.</li> <li>✔ <b>Doctor visit.</b> Talk to your care team about how often you should see your doctor.</li> <li>✔ <b>Blood pressure.</b> Get this checked every time you see your doctor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✔ <b>Dilated eye exam.</b> A yearly eye exam can help find diabetes-related problems early, when they're easier to treat.</li> <li>✔ <b>Kidney tests.</b> Regular kidney checks can help prevent or slow kidney problems.</li> <li>✔ <b>Cholesterol test.</b> This helps monitor your risk of heart disease.</li> <li>✔ <b>Complete foot check.</b> Have your doctor do a full foot check at least once a year. They may refer you to a podiatrist (foot specialist) if needed.</li> </ul>

# Signs your “bad mood” could be something more serious

It’s normal to feel angry or sad sometimes. But it can be hard to tell whether you’re just in a funk or have a more serious issue. Here are four signs that it’s time to reach out for help.

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/health-wellness/depression-and-anxiety.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/health-wellness/depression-and-anxiety.html) to learn more.



## A healthier you with MyActiveHealth

MyActiveHealth is a secure online portal that has all the health information that’s important to you. On MyActiveHealth, you can:

- Track your medical history
- Find podcasts, videos, recipes and more on health topics that interest you
- Get help meeting your goals with healthy lifestyle programs

MyActiveHealth is included with your Aetna Better Health plan at no cost to you. Go to [MyActiveHealth.com](https://www.myactivehealth.com) to get started.

### Your anxiety or sadness is hanging around

Anxiety or sadness can be a normal reaction to stressful situations or life events. But if those feelings stick around for more than several weeks and aren’t getting better, it might be time to seek treatment.

### You need a glass of wine

All addictive behaviors aim at soothing an uncomfortable feeling. That could mean turning to alcohol or prescription medicines or gambling to cope. Even endlessly scrolling through your phone can be a problem.

If you notice an increase in addictive or coping behaviors, it could be a sign of a bigger problem.

### You’re struggling to keep up with responsibilities

Depression and anxiety can make it hard to stay on top of work, household chores and even personal hygiene. Any time your mood starts to interfere with your day-to-day life, it could be a sign that it’s time to seek help.

### Your health habits have changed

Conditions like anxiety and depression don’t just cause changes in your mood. They’re linked to plenty of other health issues, like gastrointestinal problems, headaches, trouble sleeping and changes in your appetite.

Talk to your primary care provider (PCP) if you notice any new health issues. They can help rule out any physical problems and refer you to a mental health provider if needed.

**Get help in a crisis.** If you’re having a behavioral health crisis, get help right away. You can reach our crisis line at any time. Just call **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)** and choose option 9. We’ll connect you with a nurse who can help.

# Your statin starter guide

If you have high cholesterol, heart disease or diabetes, there's a good chance you're taking a statin. Statins are one of the most commonly prescribed medicines. According to one recent study, more than one in five adults is taking a statin. They can help lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart attacks and strokes caused by blood clots.

If your doctor recently prescribed you a statin, you may have questions about this wonder drug. We've got answers.



## How do statins work?

You get cholesterol from your diet, from foods like eggs and meat. But most of your blood cholesterol is actually made in your body by your liver.

Statins work by blocking the enzyme that your liver needs to make cholesterol. This means your body makes less of it. And that can help reduce your LDL cholesterol and lower your risk of heart attack and stroke.

## How soon will it start working?

Statins typically start to work within a week. But you may not start noticing the benefits for four weeks or more. Your doctor will usually wait four to 12 weeks before checking your cholesterol again to see if it is lower.

To get the full benefit, be sure to follow your doctor's directions. You'll likely need to take a dose everyday. Some statins

work better at night. Ask your doctor or pharmacist if there are any other specific instructions on when and how to take your statin.

## What are the side effects?

Statins are highly safe and effective, though some people may have side effects. The most common side effect is muscle pain and weakness.

Other side effects include digestive problems and confusion. Side effects may be worse if you're taking multiple medications.

Talk to your doctor if you experience any side effects. They may lower your dose or switch you to a different statin. They may even tell you to stop taking the statin for a while. But don't stop taking it without talking to your doctor first.

## Help is here when you need it

Don't go through life's challenges alone. Our friendly robot Pyxir and the compassionate humans at Pyx Health are here to help you:

- Find resources to support your physical and mental health
- Make the most of what your health plan offers
- Feel better each day with companionship and humor

Sign up today! Go to [aet.na/su24nj-3](https://aet.na/su24nj-3) or scan the QR code to get started. Call Pyx Health at **1-855-499-4777** for a helping hand.



# Your back-to-school checklist

Summer break is a great time to get your or your child's key health checks done. Schedule these appointments before heading back to school.

✔ **Annual well-child visit.**

School-aged kids should get a routine checkup once a year. They may need a physical exam to participate in sports or other activities, too.

✔ **Immunizations.** At the well-child visit, ask your child's doctor if they're due for any routine vaccines. Check with your child's school, too, to see if they require certain vaccines.

These checks and more are covered at no cost to you as part of the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) services. The EPSDT benefit covers all medically necessary and preventive health care services, at no cost, for members up to age 21. For more information on EPSDT services, see your Member Handbook or call Member Services.

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/health-wellness/well-child-visit.html](https://www.aetna.com/health-wellness/well-child-visit.html) to learn more about well-child visits and important vaccines for children and teens.

✔ **Dental cleaning and exam.**

Experts recommend dentist visits every six months to prevent cavities and other problems.

✔ **Eye exam.** Your child should have their vision checked every one to two years. If your child wears glasses, they may need to go to the eye doctor more often.

## Don't skip the HPV vaccine

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus that is spread through skin-to-skin contact, such as sex. Nearly everyone will be infected with HPV at some point in their life.

HPV infection usually has no symptoms, but it shouldn't be ignored. Certain strains of HPV can lead to cancer later in life. In fact, HPV is the most common cause of cervical cancer.

That's why the HPV vaccine is so important. It protects your child against the HPV strains that are most likely to cause cancer.

It's best to vaccinate your child before they are exposed to the virus. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends 2 doses of HPV vaccine for all kids around 11 to 12 years old.

Talk to your child's doctor or go to [cdc.gov/hpv](https://www.cdc.gov/hpv) to learn more about HPV and the vaccine.



# Know the signs of substance abuse

Addiction can happen to anyone — teens, young adults, even seniors. And because symptoms can be mistaken for other problems, they're not always easy to spot. Here are some common signs to watch for.

- Changes in hygiene habits or not caring about how they look
- Sleeping more or less than normal
- Withdrawing from friends and family or hanging out with a different group of friends
- Changes in mood or behavior
- Missing classes, getting lower grades or losing interest in activities
- Unexplained money issues, or you notice money or items missing from your home
- Changes in physical health, like sudden weight loss or gain

If you notice some of these signs in a loved one, try talking to them about the problem. Remember to talk to them with compassion and curiosity, not judgment.

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/health-wellness/drug-alcohol-abuse.html](https://www.aetna.com/better-health/wellness/drug-alcohol-abuse.html) to learn more about substance abuse and how to get help.



## The risk of opioids

Opioids are powerful painkillers. They're often used for short-term pain relief for things like injuries or surgery recovery. But they're also highly addictive. Take these steps to lower your risk of addiction or overdose:

- Use the lowest dose for the shortest amount of time.
- Never take more than prescribed.
- Don't take opioids with alcohol.
- Store opioids in a safe and secure place.
- Throw away any unused pills. Ask your pharmacist how to safely dispose of opioids.

Go to [Aetna.kramesonline.com/HealthSheets/3,S,90893](https://www.aetna.com/kramesonline.com/HealthSheets/3,S,90893) to learn more about opioids.

Aetna complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

**ENGLISH: ATTENTION:** If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card or **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**.

**SPANISH: ATENCIÓN:** Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número que aparece en el reverso de su tarjeta de identificación o al **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**.

**CHINESE:** 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電您的 ID 卡背面的電話號碼或 **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**。



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## Take advantage of your Member Handbook

Your Aetna Better Health® of New Jersey Member Handbook has everything you need to know about your health plan, including:

- ✔ 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



### NJ FamilyCare members:

Go to [aet.na/su24nj-2](https://aet.na/su24nj-2)  
or scan the QR code



### Managed long-term services and supports (MLTSS) members:

Go to [aet.na/su24nj-2-mltss](https://aet.na/su24nj-2-mltss) or scan the QR code



**Prefer a hard copy of your Member Handbook?** Call Member Services at **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)** to have one mailed to you. Let us know if you need it in another language, a larger font or other formats.