

EMBRACE

Winter/Spring 2021



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Early is Key**

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EMBRACE

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AvMed, one of Florida's oldest and largest not-for-profit health plans, provides affordable, quality health benefits throughout the state.

- Always consult your Primary Care Physician (PCP) regarding medical advice. The health information in this publication is not intended to replace your doctor's directives.
- To contact the Marketing & Communications Department, write AvMed, 9400 S. Dadeland Blvd., Miami, FL 33156; call **1-800-432-6676**, ext. 27366; or email **EMBRACE@AvMed.org**.

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Dear Valued Member:



Whether you are new to AvMed, have been with us for the past year or so, or are a longtime Member – welcome! We appreciate that you have chosen AvMed as your trusted lifelong partner in health.

Last year presented some unique challenges for everyone due to COVID-19. To help you stay connected and engaged while social distancing, AvMed offered specially curated virtual events, programs and services to help you stay safe, active and entertained at home. Make the most of your

benefits and view our calendar of events by visiting www.AvMed.org/About-Us/Calendar.

We want to remind you, since the onset of COVID-19 AvMed has increased access to care and removed potential cost barriers for our Members by offering zero cost diagnostic testing, zero cost treatment, zero cost virtual visits as well as waiving referral requirements and increasing access to prescription medications. For the most up-to-date information about our COVID-19 benefits and coverage, please visit www.AvMed.org/News/Coronavirus.

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. The American Cancer

Society recently revised its screening recommendations and suggests individuals begin screening at age 45 (see page 4). This issue also highlights tips for managing diabetes and steps for a healthy blood pressure during the pandemic (see pages 5 and 6).

Additionally, please remember to take advantage of all the great online tools, resources and tips for living a WELLfluent™ life on our new Member Portal. It includes several new features and enhancements for a richer and more rewarding health experience for you. A video tutorial and step-by-step guide to help you register for an account is available at www.AvMed.org/News/Service-Portals.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue and look forward to a safe, healthy and happy 2021 ahead.

Be well.

James M. Repp

President and COO, AvMed

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Questions About AvMed Coverage or Benefits?

Contact AvMed's Member Engagement Center:
Please call the number listed on your AvMed Member ID Card
(TTY 711) Monday-Friday, 8 am-8 pm; Saturday, 9 am-1 pm.
Hours may vary according to your policy.



Detecting Colon Cancer Early is Key

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Good news: Detecting colon cancer early on can make a big difference. Not so good news: Currently only one-third of people who should be screened have yet to do so.

Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer-related deaths in men and women in the United States, according to the American Cancer Society (ACS). Every year approximately 1 in 22 American men and 1 in 24 women will be diagnosed with colon cancer.

Here's what every adult needs to know to protect themselves.

Be Alert for These Red Flags

Colorectal cancer occurs in the colon or rectum and has few symptoms, many of which mimic stress or other diseases. Often there are no early warning signs to indicate there is a problem. Some later warning signs to be on the lookout for include weight loss, abdomen pain, frequent or loose stools,

and bloating. However, it's not until blood is visible in the stool that most people realize there's a larger problem.

Know Your Screening Options

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recently revised its screening recommendations and suggests that individuals at average risk begin screenings at age 45. The ACS recommends that people who have a higher than average risk of colon cancer because of family history or irritable bowel syndrome should start screenings before the age of 45. If you are in a higher risk group, the ACS recommends only a colonoscopy for screening; those with average risk may use the non-invasive tests.

The goal of screenings is to alert doctors to polyps, which are abnormal growths that can turn into cancer, so they can be removed, before they turn into cancer. Regular screenings can help with early diagnosis, increasing the likelihood of survival. Discuss with your doctor which test is right for you.



Types of Screening Tests:

- **Colonoscopy, Stool DNA test** (also known as a multitargeted stool DNA test, or MT-sDNA)
- **Fecal occult blood test (FOBT)** and fecal immunochemical test (FIT).

For more information, visit www.cancer.org/cancer/colon-rectal-cancer/detection-diagnosis-staging/acs-recommendations.

Your Healthcare Is a Priority

Your feedback helps us deliver the best healthcare experience possible. Every year, AvMed surveys a small sample of our Members with the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS).

The CAHPS survey asks Members about their experiences with AvMed and their network Providers. We encourage you to check your mailbox regularly and fill out any surveys you may receive about AvMed, so we can learn about your experience to improve our services and better meet your needs.

Another way to make your healthcare a priority: getting the flu shot. If you've already had your flu shot, we applaud you for embracing better health. If you haven't, it's still not too late! Ask your doctor or visit a participating pharmacy for a flu shot. Remember to answer "yes" to receiving your flu shot in any survey you may receive.



To find an AvMed Provider near you, log into AvMed.org



Spring Clean Your Health and Wellness

Spring is here! You might be doing spring cleaning around your home, but what about sprucing up your health and wellness? Now is a great time to find ways to make the most of spring and improve your health. Here are three suggestions to get started:

1. See your doctor for an annual wellness visit

Make sure you connect with your doctor to do a review of the preventive care you need this year. Still concerned about COVID-19? While it is important to follow the CDC and your doctor's recommendations about staying well, most Providers offer telehealth or virtual appointment options and have put in place measures to keep you safe if you need to have an in person visit.

2. Follow your doctor's recommended treatment plan, including taking your medications as ordered

Just because you're staying at home more often doesn't mean you can stop your treatment plan. In fact, it is even more important to make your health a high priority as long as COVID-19 is still a concern. Having good health may go a long way in protecting you from the most severe symptoms and complications of the coronavirus, especially important if you have a chronic condition.



3. Stay Active

Staying at home more these days? Don't let that keep you from being active. AvMed offers our Members Active&Fit Direct® which is a discount fitness program you can engage in virtually or at thousands of nationwide fitness facilities. Check it out at AvMed.org.



Want more spring health tips to help you "clean up" your mind, body, and soul from the inside out? Visit www.bestlifeonline.com/spring-clean-health-tips

Checklist for Controlling Diabetes

If you have diabetes or are at risk of developing diabetes, here is a spring check list just for you:

- ✓ **Get a HbA1c test**
Talk to your doctor about what HbA1c goal is right for you. The HbA1c is your average blood sugar over the past 8-12 weeks. Most doctors target a HbA1c of 7% or less for diabetics, but this may vary. The HbA1c of pre diabetes ranges from 5.7%-6.4% (lower is better).
- ✓ **Get your blood pressure checked**
Managing your blood pressure is very important for everyone, but especially for diabetics and pre-diabetics.
- ✓ **Eye check**
Getting your eyes checked every 1-2 years can detect early changes resulting from elevated blood sugar. Eye complications can develop gradually.
- ✓ **Kidney check**
Getting a microalbumin test is an easy way to monitor your kidney health. The kidneys can suffer damage from elevated blood sugars overtime.

To learn more, please visit the following sources: www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/getting-tested
www.cdc.gov/diabetes/basics/prediabetes • www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/managing-blood-sugar/a1c S
www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure



Talk privately to a registered nurse by calling our dedicated 24/7 **Nurse On Call** hotline at 1-888-866-5432.

FORMULARY UPDATE

See the latest Preferred Medication List on our website for copay levels and other pertinent pharmacy benefits. Your formulary may be different depending on your plan type.

New Generics

Brand Name	Generic Name	Use
Atripla	efavirenz / emtricitabine / tenofovir disoproxil fumarate	HIV treatment
Tecfidera	dimethyl fumarate	Multiple sclerosis
Truvada	emtricitabine / tenofovir	HIV prevention and HIV treatment
Vascepa	icosapent ethyl	Lower triglycerides

The Preferred Medication List includes specific coverage information on copayment levels, medications that require prior authorization or have quantity limits, and therapeutic alternatives.

The most recent listing can be viewed online at AvMed’s website, AvMed.org. Click on “Preferred Medication Lists,” located under the Quick Links on the left side of the page.

Medications are added to the AvMed Preferred Medication List (formulary) after careful review by a committee of practicing doctors and pharmacists called the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee.

The committee meets quarterly and decides which medications provide quality treatment at the best value. The medications on this page have been added to the formulary.

ACHIEVING A HEALTHY BLOOD PRESSURE DURING THE PANDEMIC

One of the risk factors for a serious case of COVID-19 is high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, according to both the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Heart Association (AHA).^{1,2} A condition impacting 108 million Americans, per the CDC, whose blood pressure readings are higher than they ought to be.³ In addition, the AHA reports that many people do not even know that they have hypertension—or, if they do, whether it’s being kept under control.⁴

Talk to your doctor about your risk factors. Then learn how managing stress, eating well, and moving more may help lower your risk of high blood pressure—or improve your quality of life if you do have the condition.

1. American Heart Association: “Coronavirus precautions for patients and others facing higher risks”: www.heart.org/en/coronavirus/coronavirus-covid-19-resources/coronavirus-precautions-for-patients-and-others-facing-higher-risks
2. CDC: “Covid-19: People at Increased Risk”: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fneed-extra-precautions%2Fgroups-at-higher-risk
3. CDC: “Facts About Hypertension”: www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts
4. American Heart Association: “The Facts About High Blood Pressure”: www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/the-facts-about-high-blood-pressure



Follow this advice to keep your blood pressure at a healthy level during the pandemic and for the rest of your life: **know your stats, take your medication, check your blood pressure routinely, get to a healthy size and stay there, watch what you eat, keep moving and take it easy.**

AvMed complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. AvMed does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

AvMed:

- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact AvMed Member Engagement, P.O. Box 749, Gainesville, FL 32627, by phone 1-800-882-8633 (TTY 711), by fax 1-352-337-8612, or by email to members@avmed.org.

If you believe that AvMed has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with AvMed's Regulatory Correspondence Coordinator, P.O. Box 749, Gainesville, FL 32627, by phone 1-800-346-0231 (TTY 711), by fax 1-352-337-8780, or by email to regulatory.correspondence@avmed.org. You can file a grievance in person or by mail, fax, or email. If you need help filing a grievance, our Regulatory Correspondence Coordinator is available to help you. You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD).

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

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 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711)。

ATTENTION: Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-800-882-8633 (ATS: 711).

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-800-882-8633 (телетайп: 711).

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم 1-800-882-8633 (رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: 711).

ATTENZIONE: In caso la lingua parlata sia l'italiano, sono disponibili servizi di assistenza linguistica gratuiti. Chiamare il numero 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711)번으로 전화해 주십시오.

UWAGA: Jeżeli mówisz po polsku, możesz skorzystać z bezpłatnej pomocy językowej. Zadzwoń pod numer 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

સુચના: જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા હો, તો નિ:શુલ્ક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

เรียน: ถ้าคุณพูดภาษาไทยคุณสามารถใช้บริการช่วยเหลือทางภาษาได้ฟรี โทร 1-800-882-8633 (TTY: 711).

Important Contact Information

AvMed's Member Engagement Center*:
 Please call the number listed on your AvMed Member ID Card (TTY 711), Monday–Friday, 8 am–8 pm; Saturday, 9 am–1 pm.
 *Hours may vary according to your policy.

- AvMed Nurse On Call: **1-888-866-5432** (TTY 711) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Fraud and Abuse Hotline: **1-877-286-3889**
- AvMed website: **AvMed.org**
- AvMed Facebook  **www.Facebook.com/AvMedHealth**



WE SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE

If you have specific language needs, please call AvMed's Member Engagement Center at the number listed on your AvMed Member ID Card.

AvMed ... Hablamos su idioma!

Si usted tiene necesidades específicas relacionadas con el idioma, comuníquese con el Centro de Atención para Afiliados de AvMed en el número que aparece en su tarjeta de afiliado de AvMed.

AvMed ... a votre service!

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 Tous les jours ... Nous parlons votre language. Si vous ne pouvez pas lire les articles dans ce magazine, veuillez composer le numéro imprimé sur votre carte de Membre pour un représentant qui peut répondre à vos questions.

AvMed's Healthy Living:
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