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At Manatee Your Choice Health Plan, we're dedicated to finding ways to help our members live healthier lives. Our Nurse Advocate team of experienced and highly trained nurses and our additional Employee Health Benefits team (including behavioral health, pharmacy, nutrition, fitness and certified diabetes educator) are here when you need someone to guide you.

## WHAT IS NURSE ADVOCACY?

### OUR NURSE ADVOCATES MAY CALL YOU ON THE PHONE AND HELP YOU:

- Understand your diagnosis and treatment options
- Coordinate your care with your Primary Care Physician, Specialist and other providers
- Understand your medications and how to take them as prescribed
- Address barriers you may have with obtaining your medications
- Understand your plan of care
- Get support for you/your family/caregivers to keep you safe at home
- Understand your benefits
- Link with community resources
- Understand health issues related to aging

### WHEN AND WHY WE CALL OUR MEMBERS:

If you've been in the hospital with a serious health condition or experienced complications, are living with multiple health conditions and finding it difficult to manage your daily activities, a NURSE ADVOCATE may call to help:

- Identify what's important to you, to manage your health condition such as asthma, cancer, COPD, diabetes, heart disease.
- Guide you to appropriate resources
- Keep you on the road to recovery by assisting you with your discharge instructions

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Nurse Advocates are provided as part of your plan benefits at no additional cost. If you or a family member could benefit from the Nurse Advocacy program, please call us Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. at **(941) 741-2963 option 3.**



*"Our nurse advocates play an important role in caring for your overall personal wellbeing. Not only do they help you manage your physical health, they also provide emotional support to many of our members facing difficult diagnoses. Additionally, our nurses support financial wellbeing by ensuring that appropriate tests and procedures are covered by your medical insurance plan. I am so proud of our nurses and all of the work they do to provide care for our members."*

Lesli Strickland, Benefits Manager



## ESTABLISHING A NEW NORMAL AT HOME

[From Welcoa](#)

When so many things are changing rapidly, it's hard to consider investing energy into a new routine. It may feel like the moment you get settled into it, things will likely change again. That's valid; however, the reality is that nothing you're experiencing now is similar to anything you've done or been through before and that can be very unsettling in the day to day. In order to establish a new normal, knowing it could change again soon, try taking a lighter approach. Take 15 - 20 min and ask yourself these questions:

1. What is expected of me right now related to my work, my parenting, my caregiving, etc.?
2. Are there any patterns that emerge in those expectations? For example, if you have to log into work each day at 8:30 AM and your child has to log into school each day at 9:00 AM, then there is potential for overlapping priorities and that creates a pattern. Take a moment to consider what overlaps occur in your day to day priorities.
3. Once you have a sense of the patterns, how might you construct your daily routine? In the example above, if you need to be logged into work at 8:30 AM and your child needs to be logged into school at 9:00 AM, then you know that your child needs to be up and ready to start their day when you need to be online. Here is a sample morning routine for that example: 7:00 AM - Wake up and shower 7:30 AM - Get dressed/personal grooming routine 8:00 AM - Breakfast 8:15 AM - Help children get ready for their daily school work 8:30 AM - Log into work 9:00 AM - Help child log into school
4. The next thing to consider once you have a general timeline for your day is to consider whether it's realistic. This is perhaps the most important part of establishing a healthy new normal that supports your well-being in difficult times. We attempt to be excellent. We forget the emotional work load of responding to challenges that arise. Create a routine with lots of flexibility.
5. Consider what you need for self-care, like frequent breaks, time to move your body, time to prepare food, and time for relaxation. Build these things into your daily plan. Perhaps, it feels overwhelming to create something like this when in a few weeks it may change again. However, having an understanding of your needs and priorities and how they will be met throughout the day can be very helpful. If you live with other people, be sure everyone is aware of the daily plan and invite them to be helpful team members. Write the plan down somewhere where everyone can see it and refer to it. Remember, the goal of this plan is not to live perfectly within it, the goal is to have a semblance of order. There will be many opportunities that require flexibility from the plan. Grant yourself and those around you flexibility when necessary and extra grace and kindness. The daily plan should help orient your household in a new way that gives everyone a framework.

# PAIN, PAIN GO AWAY!

Ibrahim Fadeyi PharmD, RPh

Drug Free Manatee has continued to positively impact the community by engaging community partners in order to prevent and reduce substance abuse disorders and promote safety, health, and wellness, especially among the youth. The fight against opiate addiction is still a priority in Manatee County. Manatee County Sheriff Rick Wells has stressed the importance of taking action against opiate addiction and misuse, as the number of hospitalizations from overdoses and deaths have increased from last year.

Manatee YourChoice Health Plan is dedicated to helping fight opiate addiction and properly manage pain. Unfortunately, there may be times that you are in a lot of pain but we are unable to authorize your prescription because there are laws (state and federal) and recommendations from the CDC and the FDA that we, the health plan, and your dispensing pharmacist must follow. The intent of these laws and guidelines is to promote patient safety. These medications can be dangerous, and it is our responsibility to ensure safe and effective use. Some of the restrictions include the number of pills that can be dispensed and the number of days between refills.

Please note: If your doctor prescribes opioids for pain relief – it does not mean you will automatically become addicted.

## **Here are some facts about short-term & long-term pain management and some of the health plan coverage requirements.**

### **Short term pain management:**

- Only take opiate pain medication as needed for pain.
- Some instances where providers may prescribe short term pain medications are after surgery, after a dental procedure, or after an acute injury.
- Studies show that patients can become addicted to opiate medications in as little as 3 days.
- State laws limit the length of treatment for short term pain from 3 days to a maximum of 7 days.

### **Long term pain management:**

- Only take opiate pain medication as needed for pain.
- In order to ensure appropriate and safe prescribing of opiate medications, Manatee Your Choice may request clinical chart notes from the prescriber at the start



of long-term pain management, and once per year thereafter.

- Dosage changes may also require a review of clinical chart notes before an approval can be granted.
- Most pharmacies will refill your pain medication no more than two days earlier than the actual refill date.

If your prescription rejects at the pharmacy, please call me at 941-748-4501x6406 so we can begin the prior authorization process. If you need assistance after normal business hours, over the weekend, or on a holiday, and it's an urgent matter that cannot wait, you can ask your pharmacist to call the Optum RX help desk at 1-855-828-9837. If you would like to reduce the number of pain medications you are currently taking, give me a call so we can work together with your provider to create a plan and discuss some of the options available to you through the health plan.



## MAKE SUNSCREEN PART OF YOUR OUTDOORS ROUTINE

[From Environmental Working Group](#)

### First things first

Check your skin regularly for new moles that are tender or growing. Ask your primary care doctor how often you should see a dermatologist.

The best defense against getting too much harmful ultraviolet radiation is a combination of protective clothing, shade and good timing. Our checklist:

**Don't get burned.** Red, sore, blistered or peeling skin means far too much sun – and raises your skin cancer risk.

Cover up. Shirts, hats, shorts and pants provide the best protection from UV rays – and they don't coat your skin with goop.

**Find shade – or make it.** Picnic under a tree, read beneath an umbrella or take a canopy to the beach. Keep infants in the shade – they lack the tanning pigments, known as melanin, that protect skin.

**Plan around the sun.** Go outdoors in early morning or late afternoon,

when the sun is lower. UV radiation peaks at midday.

**Sunglasses aren't just a fashion accessory.** Good shades protect your eyes from UV radiation that causes cataracts.

### Now put on sunscreen

Some sunscreens prevent sunburn but not other types of skin damage. Make sure yours offers broad spectrum protection.

**Don't fall for high SPF labels.** Anything higher than SPF 50+ can tempt you to stay in the sun too long. Even if you don't burn, your skin may get damaged. Pick a sunscreen with an SPF between 15 and 50+. Choose a product based on your own skin coloration, anticipated time outside, shade and cloud cover. Reapply often.

**Avoid sunscreen with vitamin A.** Eating vitamin A-laden vegetables is good for you, but spreading vitamin A on your skin may not be. Government data show that

tumors and lesions develop sooner on skin coated with creams laced with vitamin A, also called retinyl palmitate or retinol. Avoid any skin or lip product whose label includes retinyl palmitate, retinol or vitamin A.

**Avoid oxybenzone,** a synthetic estrogen that penetrates the skin and can disrupt the hormone system. Look for products with zinc oxide, 3 percent avobenzone or Mexoryl SX. They protect skin from harmful UVA radiation.

**Don't combine sunscreen with repellent.** If you need bug repellent, buy it separately and apply it first.

**Pick a good sunscreen.** EWG's [sunscreen database](#) evaluates the safety and efficacy of SPF-rated products, including sunscreens for beach and sports use and SPF-rated moisturizers and lip products. We give high ratings to products that provide broad spectrum, long-lasting protection with ingredients that pose fewer health concerns when absorbed by the body.

**Don't spray.** Sprays cloud the air with tiny particles that may not be safe to breathe.

**Reapply cream often.** Sunscreen chemicals sometimes degrade in the sun, wash off, or rub off on towels and clothing.

**Men ignore sun safety at their peril.** In 2015, more than twice as many American men died from melanoma as women. Surveys show that 48 percent of men report routine sun avoidance, compared to 68 percent of women.

**Got your vitamin D?** Many people don't get enough vitamin D, a hormone manufactured by the skin in the presence of sunlight. Your doctor can test your level and recommend supplements if you are low in this vital nutrient.

## Sun safety tips for kids

A few blistering sunburns in childhood can double a person's lifetime chances of developing serious forms of skin cancer. The best form of sunscreen is a hat and shirt. After that, protect kids with a sunscreen product that's effective and safe.

### Take these special precautions with infants and children:

#### Infants

Infants under 6 months should be kept out of direct sun as much as possible. Their skin is not yet protected by melanin. When you take your baby outside:

- Cover them up with protective clothing, tightly woven but loose fitting, and a sun hat.
- Make shade. Use the stroller's canopy or hood. If you can't sit in a shady spot, use an umbrella.
- Avoid midday sun. Take walks in the early morning or late afternoon.
- Follow product warnings for sunscreens on infants younger than 6 months old. Most manufacturers advise against using sunscreens on infants, or advise parents and caregivers to consult a doctor first. The American Academy of Pediatrics says that small amounts of sunscreen can be used on infants as a last resort when caretakers can't find shade.

#### Toddlers and children

Sunscreens are an essential part of a day in the sun. But young children's skin is especially sensitive to chemical allergens, as well as the sun's UV rays.

- Test sunscreen by applying a small amount on the inside of your child's wrist the day before you plan to use it. If an irritation or rash develops, try another



product. Ask your child's doctor to suggest a product less likely to irritate your child's skin.

- Slap on sunscreen and reapply it often, especially if your child is playing in the water or sweating a lot.

#### Sun safety at school

Send a sunscreen to daycare and school. Some childcare facilities provide sunscreen, but you can buy your own to make sure it's safe and effective. Share EWG's safe sunscreen tips and product suggestions with your child's school and caregiver.

Sometimes school and daycare policies interfere with children's sun safety. Many schools treat sunscreen as a medicine and require written permission to use it on a child. Some insist that the school nurse apply it. Some ban hats and sunglasses. Here are a few questions to ask your school:

- What is the policy on sun safety?
- Is there shade on the playground?
- Are outdoor activities scheduled to avoid midday sun?

#### Teens

Teenagers who covet bronzed skin are likely to sunbathe or patronize tanning salons, both of which are a bad idea. Researchers believe that increasing UV exposure may have caused the marked increase in melanoma incidence noted among women born after 1965. Tanning parlors expose the skin to as much as 15 times more UV radiation than the sun and contribute to the increase in melanoma rates.

Be good role models for your teens – let them see that you protect yourself from the sun. Tan does not mean healthy.