

Aetna Better Health Premier Plan MMAI Member Newsletter

FALL/WINTER 2022

AetnaBetterHealth.com/Illinois



Aetna Better Health® Premier Plan MMAI

Safety First!

We care about your safety, health and welfare. It is important to recognize signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation and report it. This will allow you to be safe and get the care you need. If you are or think that you are being abused, neglected or exploited, please call the appropriate number below to report it. They can help prevent or stop the abuse, neglect or exploitation.

To report regarding members who are disabled adults 18 through 59 years of age who live in the community call the Illinois Adult Protective Services Unit of the Department on Aging (DoA).	1-866-800-1409 (voice) 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)
To report regarding members who are 60 years of age and older who live in the community call the Illinois Adult Protective Services Unit of the Department on Aging (DoA).	1-866-800-1409 (voice) 1-888-206-1327 (TTY)
To report regarding members in Nursing Facilities call the Department of Public Health Nursing Home Complaint Hotline.	1-800-252-4343
To report regarding members in Supportive Living Facilities call the Supportive Living Facility Complaint Hotline.	1-800-226-0768
Call member services or your care coordinator at any time to report abuse, neglect and exploitation. You can contact us 24 hours a day 7 days a week.	1-866-600-2139 (toll-free) TTY 711

**For more information,
please visit**
[AetnaBetterHealth.com/
Illinois](https://AetnaBetterHealth.com/Illinois)

Fall/Winter 2022

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Aetna Better Health Premier Plan MMAI
3200 Highland Ave.
Downers Grove, IL 60515

6 ways to prevent high blood pressure

Living a healthy lifestyle can help keep your blood pressure in a healthy range. Preventing high blood pressure can lower your risk for heart disease and stroke. Practice the following healthy living habits:

- 1. Eat a healthy diet.** Choose healthy meal and snack options. Eat plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables rich in potassium, fiber, and protein. Choose foods lower in salt and saturated fat.
- 2. Keep yourself at a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese increases your risk for high blood pressure. Talk with your doctor about ways to reach a healthy weight. This includes choosing healthy foods and getting regular physical activity.
- 3. Be physically active.** Physical activity can help keep you at a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure. The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend adults get at least two hours and 30 minutes of exercise every week. That's 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Try a brisk walk or bicycling.
- 4. Do not smoke.** Smoking raises your blood pressure. Smoking puts you at a higher risk for heart attack and stroke. If you do not smoke, do not start. Quitting smoking will lower your risk for heart disease. Your doctor can suggest ways to help you quit.
- 5. Limit how much alcohol you drink.** Too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure. Men should have no more than two alcoholic drinks per day. Women should have no more than one alcoholic drink per day.



6. Get enough sleep. Getting enough sleep is important to your overall health. Sleeping is part of keeping your heart and blood vessels healthy. Not getting enough sleep on a regular basis is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, high blood pressure and stroke.

To help monitor your blood pressure, your over-the-counter benefit covers the cost of a blood pressure monitor. Call Member Services at **1-866-600-2139** (TTY/TDD: 711) for more information or talk to your Care Manager.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/prevent.htm>



Time for a flu shot

Be prepared for the cold and flu season! Influenza is often called the flu. The flu virus is spread from one person to another through the respiratory droplets of an infected person. This happens through sneezing, coughing, or touching the mouth and nose with contaminated hands. The flu viruses are more commonly spread during the fall and winter months. It is possible to get the flu any time of year.

Flu symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Body aches
- Runny nose
- Cough
- Sore throat

The flu virus is more than just a common cold. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, people over 65 are at an increased risk of developing serious complications from the flu. This is true because our immune systems weaken as we age. The flu can worsen symptoms of chronic conditions, such as diabetes, heart disease, breathing problems and kidney disease. Getting the flu can even result in hospitalization.

Stay protected by getting a flu shot as soon as possible. Aetna Better Health Premier Plan covers the flu shot. You can get a flu shot at your local pharmacy or from your primary care doctor. If you need help locating a place to get a flu shot, call Member Services at **1-866-600-2139** (TTY/TDD: 711) or talk to your Care Manager.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>



5 Common Fall Illnesses

When we think of the fall season, we think of fun activities such as apple picking, visiting pumpkin patches, or even enjoying a cup of warm cider. However, as summer turns to fall and the weather turns cooler, there are less pleasant things such as infections or allergies, that may result in a trip to your doctor.

Read below to learn about 5 common Fall illnesses, their symptoms and how to prevent them.

1. Allergies

Ragweed is the biggest trigger for allergies in the fall. Ragweed allergies usually start in between mid-August and late September depending on where you live.

Symptoms may include:

- Watery, itchy eyes
- Runny or stuffy nose and sneezing
- Itchy throat
- Headache
- Coughing

Tips

- Keep your home and car windows closed when possible
- Spend time inside when the pollen levels are high
- Take a shower after spending time outside
- See your doctor in early fall to discuss how to treat your allergies.

2. Common Cold

The common cold can occur at any time but happens more in the fall. This is because the cold is caused by a virus that can be passed from person to person. As the weather turns colder people spend more time indoors together which increases your risk of catching a cold.

Symptoms of the common cold can be like allergies and include:

- Slight fever
- Runny nose
- Body aches
- Sore Throat

Tips

- Wash your hands frequently throughout the day
- Cover your nose and mouth when you sneeze or cough
- Avoid spending time in crowds

3. Arthritis

Arthritis is the swelling and tenderness of one or more joints. The symptoms of arthritis are joint pain and stiffness, which can worsen with age. For many people, the symptoms of arthritis also worsen as the weather starts to get cooler.

Tips to help manage your pain due to arthritis include:

- Stay warm. Make sure you wear extra layers if you are going to be outside. Keep a blanket handy.
- Take a warm shower or soak in the bathtub to ease joint pain.
- Stretch and exercise to help with stiffness.

4. Influenza

The flu viruses are common in the autumn season and the first cases are usually seen some time in October. Symptoms of the flu include fever, cough, body aches, sore throat, headache, and chills.

Tips to prevent the flu include:

- Get your flu shot as early as possible
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid crowded places
- Cover your nose and mouth when sneezing or coughing

5. Vitamin D Deficiency

Getting enough Vitamin D helps to keep your bones strong and may also keep your immune system strong and protect against heart disease, high blood pressure and some types of cancers. You can get Vitamin D in a variety of ways. These include through the foods you eat, taking vitamins and being exposed to the sun. Vitamin D is produced when your skin is exposed to sunshine. As the temperature becomes colder and we spend less time in the sun, our Vitamin D levels decrease. This is especially true for people greater than 65 years of age.

Symptoms of Vitamin D Deficiency include feeling tired or fatigued, Bone pain, muscle aches or weakness, changes in your mood.

Tips to prevent low Vitamin d levels:

- Increase Sun exposure
- Take Vitamin D supplements- ask your doctor what the right amount for you is
- Eat foods, such as fish, that are rich in Vitamin D

Case management

When you become an Aetna Better Health Premier Plan MMAI member, we assign a Case Manager to you. Your Case Manager can help you find the right care and services. They will assess your wellness goals. And then they will talk to you about your wellness goals.

Your Case Manager will work with you, your health care providers (providers) and any other member of your care team to make sure you receive the right care and services based on what you prefer.

Together we will create a care plan just for you. This will help you live a healthier life. Each member is on their own personal health care journey. We are here to support you along the way. Your Case Manager can help you manage and improve your health. To learn more about how we can help you with your wellness goals, call your Case Manager. You can also call Member Services at **1-866-600-2139** (TTY: 711), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Has an Aetna Better Health Premier Plan MMAI Case Manager already called you?

If you are a new member to our plan, your Case Manager will call to you to welcome you to our plan. Your Case Manager will tell you about ways we can support your wellness goals. During the call, your Case Manager will work with you to complete a health assessment. It will help us learn how to support you on your journey.

The health assessment tells us about:

- You
- Your health
- Your health care
- Your wellness goals

At a minimum, you can also expect that your Case Manager will call you to check in and see how you have progressed throughout

the year. During that call, your Case Manager will update the health assessment. Together you will review your care goals and set new ones based on your preferences.

If you move or change your phone number, please call your local Department of Human Services office and your Case Manager. We need to update your profile, so we know the best way to contact you. You can also call Member Services at **1-866-600-2139** (TTY: 711).



Seasonal Affective Disorder

Everyone can have a change in mood at times, especially when there's something bringing you down, like the death of a loved one or dealing with health problems. Sometimes, these mood changes are more serious, last longer, and affect your ability to live life normally. If you have noticed these changes in your mood as the season changes, you may have a condition known as Seasonal Affective disorder (SAD).

SAD symptoms usually worsen in the fall and winter and then get better in the spring and summer. Some people have symptoms that worsen during spring and summer and improve in the fall and winter.

SAD is usually a type of depression. In many ways the symptoms are much like typical depression, but they start or get worse with the change of seasons.

Symptoms of major depression may include:

- Feeling depressed most of the day, nearly every day
- Losing interest in activities you once enjoyed
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Having problems with sleep
- Feeling tired or on edge
- Having low energy
- Feeling hopeless or worthless
- Difficulty concentrating
- Frequent thoughts of death or suicide

If you have winter depression you may also notice the following symptoms:

- Sleeping too much
- Overeating

- Weight gain
- Not joining in social events

Some research has shown that people with SAD may have a low brain chemical called serotonin. Serotonin helps to keep your mood stable. Less sunlight in the winter may cause your brain to produce less serotonin. A low Vitamin D level may also contribute to symptoms.

We do know that you're at a higher risk of SAD if you already have major depression or bipolar disorder.

The good news is you don't have to wait until the season changes to feel better. If you are diagnosed with SAD there are treatments that can help.

Things that normally work to lift mood can be helpful for easing symptoms of SAD such as:

- Getting regular exercise
- Keeping in touch with friends
- Eating healthy.

There are a few treatments that are specifically recommended for SAD.

1. Light Therapy

Light therapy involves sitting in front of special, bright lamps during the day. This therapy should be done with the help of a doctor or counselor.

2. Medications

If your symptoms are severe, your doctor may also suggest that you try an antidepressant. Some examples of antidepressants your doctor may recommend include:

- Sertraline (Zoloft or generic)
- Fluoxetine (Prozac or generic)
- Venlafaxine (Effexor or generic)



3. Counseling

If your depression does not respond to light therapy plus medications your doctor may suggest you also speak to a therapist.

Working with your doctor can help you feel better and get back to enjoying the season.

Sources

UpToDate. Seasonal affective disorder: Treatment. July 2022.

UpToDate. Seasonal affective disorder: Epidemiology, clinical features, assessment, and diagnosis. July 2022.

Cell service at no cost to you!

See if you're eligible for Assurance Wireless Lifeline cell service plus an Android™ Smartphone

We know how important it is to stay connected to healthcare, jobs, emergency services and family. That's why Aetna Better Health Premier Plan is partnering with Assurance Wireless Lifeline service.

Each month eligible Assurance Wireless customers receive, at no cost:

- Data
- Unlimited Texts
- Voice Minutes

Plus, an Android Smartphone

You may qualify for Assurance Wireless Lifeline service if you are on certain public assistance programs, like Medicaid or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

To apply now or learn more visit aetnabetterhealth.com/illinois

Don't risk a gap in your Medicaid coverage

Update your contact information with your state Medicaid agency. This way, they'll be able to reach you to renew your Medicaid coverage. You can make updates to your contact information in the following ways:

Online at www2.illinois.gov/hfs/address

- By calling the state Medicaid agency at **877-805-5312** from 7:45am–4:30pm. If you use a TTY, call **1-877-204-1012**.





Help us fight fraud

Is your doctor billing for services that were not performed? Is your homemaker billing for more hours than they are actually working? Is someone else using your name to receive medical services?

Each year billions of dollars are lost to healthcare fraud.

Help us fight back.

You can report suspected fraud or abuse directly to Aetna Better Health of Illinois in the following ways:

Call Aetna Better Health of Illinois' Fraud Waste and Abuse Hotline at **1-866-670-6885**.

All calls are anonymous. Call the Special Investigations Unit (SIU) at **1-800-338-6361**

if you have questions or to report fraud.

Use the fraud and abuse reporting form on the Aetna Better Health of Illinois Website:

aetnabetterhealth.com/Illinois. You will see a link to Fraud & Abuse at top of the page.

Do you have medications you need to dispose of?

Stolen\Lost or Misused Medications

Join Aetna Better Health of Illinois and the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) with our fight against prescription drugs finding their way into the wrong hands.

Keep prescription drugs safe. Clean them out and help us take them back!

Visit <https://takebackday.dea.gov/> or <https://safe.pharmacy/drug-disposal/> for a collection site near you.

Note: Even if you provide your contact information, your identity will be confidential.

We can make a difference if we work together.

Contact us



Aetna Better Health® Premier Plan MMAI
3200 Highland Ave.
Downers Grove, IL 60515

24 hours a day
Member Services: **1-866-600-2139**
AetnaBetterHealth.com/Illinois

This newsletter contains general health information that should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own healthcare needs. Articles in our newsletter are for many different people. We write articles about different kinds of medical problems that people are interested in learning about. These articles may not be about medical problems that you have. Aetna Better Health® Premier Plan MMAI is a health plan that contracts with both Medicare and Illinois Medicaid to provide benefits of both programs to enrollees. You can get this document for free in other formats, such as large print, braille or audio. Call **1-866-600-2139 (TTY: 711)**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The call is free.

This is not a complete list. The benefit information is a brief summary, not a complete description of benefits. For more information, contact the plan or read the Aetna Better Health® Premier Plan MMAI Member Handbook.

ATTENTION: If you speak Spanish, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **1-866-600-2139 (TTY: 711)**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The call is free.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios de idiomas gratuitos. Llame al **1-866-600-2139 (TTY: 711)**, las 24 horas del día, los 7 días de la semana. Esta llamada es gratuita.

We comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex and does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. If you speak a language other than English, free language assistance services are available. Visit our website at or call the phone number listed in this material.

In addition, your health plan provides auxiliary aids and services, free of charge, when necessary to ensure that people with disabilities have an equal opportunity to communicate effectively with us. Your health plan also provides language assistance services, free of charge, for people with limited English proficiency. If you need these services, call Customer Service at the phone number on your benefit ID card.

If you believe that we have 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 our Grievance Department (write to the address listed in your Evidence of Coverage). You can also file a grievance by phone by calling the Customer Service phone number listed on your benefit ID card (**TTY: 711**). If you need help filing a grievance, call Customer Service Department at the phone number on your benefit ID card.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights at https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/cp/complaint_frontpage.jsf.

ESPAÑOL (SPANISH): Si habla un idioma que no sea inglés, se encuentran disponibles servicios gratuitos de asistencia de idiomas. Visite nuestro sitio web o llame al número de teléfono que figura en este documento.

繁體中文 (CHINESE): 如果您使用英文以外的語言，我們將提供免費的語言協助服務。請瀏覽我們的網站或撥打本文件中所列的電話號碼。