



Managing Spring Allergies

Spring is in the air, and along with the sunshine and warm weather come pollen, dust, and other allergens that can cause great discomfort to allergy sufferers. Unfortunately, older adults are not immune to springtime sniffles and sneezing. In fact, a growing number of seniors are developing allergies for the first time in older age. Though allergies are best known for affecting children, rates of adult-onset allergies are skyrocketing, and it's not uncommon for an adult over age 75 to be diagnosed with allergies for the very first time in his or her life.

Allergies pose a higher risk for seniors than for any other age group. Allergies can complicate other chronic medical conditions, including asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Also, the most common medication for allergy relief contains antihistamines that are potentially dangerous if taken with blood pressure medication. Antihistamines can also cause drowsiness and dizziness, which can increase the risk of a fall.

If you know you have allergies, plan ahead by working with your healthcare provider to identify the best treatment options. If you experience symptoms of an allergic reaction, including sniffing, sneezing, runny nose or itchy eyes, be sure to let your care manager know. Help manage seasonal allergies by staying inside on days with high pollen counts, keeping windows closed, and cleaning and vacuuming to remove dust and other allergens.

The top cause of spring allergies is pollen from trees like oak, maple, birch, and elm.



Tuna Salad

Canned tuna is high in protein and healthy fat. This recipe replaces mayo with plain yogurt, reducing unhealthy fats but keeping the creamy texture. Add whatever seasoning you love to make it yours!

Ingredients

- » 1 can tuna packed in water (not oil)
- » ½ cup of plain low-fat or Greek yogurt
- » 1/4 cup chopped celery
- » 3 Tbsp each of chopped pickle, onion, and radish
- » 1 tsp lemon juice
- » 2 tsp salt-free seasoning blend of your choice (Italian, Mexican, BBQ, Cajun etc.)
- » Pinch pepper and salt



Instructions

- » Drain the liquid from the tuna
- » Use a fork to separate and blend the tuna into the yogurt and seasonings in a bowl
- » Add all other ingredients and stir
- » Serve on a green salad, whole-wheat bread or tortillas, bell peppers, avocado halves, etc.

Word Search—Fruits and Veggies



A	V	O	C	A	D	O	G	B	R	O	C	C	O	L	I	U	D
V	M	A	N	G	O	P	C	O	R	N	Q	P	C	E	A	W	W
S	T	R	A	W	B	E	R	R	Y	J	X	T	P	T	R	Z	A
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ARTICHOKE

AVOCADO

BANANA

BEET

BLUEBERRY

BROCCOLI

CANTALOUPE

CARROT

CAULIFLOWER

CELERY

CORN

LETTUCE

MANGO

PINEAPPLE

RADISH

SPINACH

STRAWBERRY

TOMATO

WATERMELON

ZUCCHINI

Care Team Updates

To better serve our members, we recently made some changes to staffing some of our care teams. These changes were made to ensure that your care team has staff who are very familiar with your local community resources and providers. This change may mean that there is a new person on your current care team or you may be assigned an entirely new care team.

If the care team you work with is going to be impacted, we will notify you of the change during your monthly contact and let you know when the change will start. The newly assigned care team members will introduce themselves during next month's call, and will review three PHI (personal health information) identifiers to confirm the member's identity, including name, date of birth, and address. These identifiers must be obtained to ensure that a member's protected health information remains secure.

Who is on my care team?

Your care team includes a care coordinator, who handles many of the day-to-day member needs, and a care manager, who is a clinical professional overseeing your care.

The care coordinator provides non-clinical support for the member and care manager. A care coordinator is often the first level of contact for the member, answering calls and assisting the care manager in making monthly phone contacts to the members. Care coordinators assist members with transportation needs and submit authorizations for approved services. They call doctors' offices for important documents and orders. A care coordinator also follows up with service providers if a member has not received supplies or services as authorized. The care coordinator lets the care manager know about any important medical concerns or other information that requires their oversight and follow-up.



A care manager is a clinical support, either a registered nurse or a licensed social worker. They share responsibility for monthly calls, and contacts members at least every 6 months to check in with them and re-certify medically necessary services on their “person-centered service plan” (PCSP). The PCSP is then forwarded to their care coordinator teammate for processing. The care manager calls members that have complex medical needs that require clinical follow-up. They also assist with care transitions to the hospital or a skilled nursing facility. The care manager plays a pivotal role in coordinating necessary care with the member's medical providers, such as alerting them to a change in the member's condition or advocating for a home health referral, and they also coordinate care through other community resources.

Your care team takes pride in assessing, developing, and providing the care and resources needed to maintain our members' independence. If you need to reach a member of your care team, please reach out to them at (888) 477-4663.

Exercises to help you feel your best

We're used to measuring our age in time, celebrating milestones with birthdays and anniversaries. But it's even more important to focus on how well we care for ourselves and our bodies, no matter what age we are. One of the most successful ways to maintain your health and feel younger than your years is to treat yourself well, improving your body and mind through physical fitness.

Quality of life is so important and being more physically fit will help you feel your best.

As we age, we experience a progressive loss of muscle strength, often beginning in our 40s. This can make it harder to do common activities like walking up stairs, carrying heavy items, or rising from a chair. It can also lead to poor balance and lower endurance. Your balance can also get worse as you age because of muscle strength, a less active lifestyle, nutritional choices, and other biological changes in our bodies. The good news is that there are exercises you can do to help “roll back the clock” on age-related muscle weakness and balance issues if done safely and properly.

Always check with your doctor or nurse before starting any new exercise routine to make sure it is appropriate for you. Ask a qualified trainer or therapist to show you proper form so you don't hurt yourself.

Strength Exercises

Resistance training twice a week is very effective at building muscle. Do a set of six to twelve repetitions that really tire your muscles, then rest 1–2 minutes. Repeat 2 to 3 times.

Wall push-ups—stand with your feet about an arm's length from a wall and place both hands on the wall at chest level. Slowly bend your elbows to move your body toward the wall and then back out fully.

Squats—With a sturdy chair or sofa behind you, slowly lower yourself down as though you are going to sit, and then slowly stand back up without touching the chair. To make it easier, start in a sitting position and rise slowly to your feet before slowly sitting back down.

Lunges—Stand and take a large step forward with one leg and shift forward so you are on your toes on your back foot and your front knee is bent 90 degrees. Hold for a few seconds, then return to the starting position by straightening your front leg.



Member Advisory Committee

Nascentia Health Options has a Member Advisory Committee that meets twice a year. This committee gives our members a voice and an opportunity to meet with other MLTC members and leadership to discuss the health plan and share your thoughts about being a member of Nascentia. We are a strong, growing plan and your feedback is important to us!

The next Member Advisory Committee meeting is June 8, at 2:00 both in person and by phone. We hope you will join us! If you or your family member or representative are interested in joining the Member Advisory Committee meeting, please contact June Misnik at (315) 477-9278 or jmisnik@477home.org.

New Providers Jan 2022—March 2022



Please join us in welcoming the newest members of our provider network. A complete list of providers is available by calling (888) 477-4663 or by visiting nascentiahealthoptions.org/member-materials.

Provider	Service	Counties Served	Address/Phone
Bridgewater Health Supplies	Durable Medical Equipment	All 48 Counties	116A South Street Oyster Bay, NY 11771 516-802-0233
Binghamton Meals on Wheels	Meals on Wheels	Broome	85 Walnut Street Binghamton, NY 13905 607-778-6206
Medical Guardian	Personal Emergency Response System	All 48 Counties	1818 Market Street Suite 1200 Philadelphia, PA 19103 800-872-4209
Yesteryears	Social Adult Day Care	Broome	24 Isbell Street Binghamton, NY 13902 607-778-2947 2801 Wayne Street Endwell, NY 13760 607-785-0494
Upstate Taxi	Transportation	Herkimer, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga	418 Quentin Road Utica, NY 13502 518-360-7761
Loving Care and Medical Transportation	Transportation	Monroe	58 Citation Drive Henrietta, NY 14467 585-404-0027
Skyy Homes Transport	Transportation	Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Monroe, Niagara	80 North 4th Street Allegany, NY 14706 716-806-1102
Zoom Ride, Inc	Transportation	Erie, Niagara	81 Botsford Place Buffalo, NY 14216 716-466-966

New York Health Care Proxy Form

Who will speak for you?

The New York Health Care Proxy Law allows you to appoint someone you trust, such as a family member or close friend, as a health care agent to make health care decisions for you, if you lose your ability to do so.

Why should I choose a health care agent?

It's important to choose someone to speak for you in case you become unable to communicate for yourself because of a drastic change in your health, such as being in a coma from an illness or injury, being in a persistent vegetative state, or experiencing dementia or Alzheimer's.

Is having a health care proxy the same thing as having a living will?

No. A living will is a document that has your specific instructions about health care choices and requires that you know in advance all the decisions that may arise. While you may put instructions on your health care proxy form, the health care proxy is a person appointed by you to make health care decisions on your behalf and interpret your wishes as medical circumstances change.

How do I appoint a health care agent?

All competent adults, 18 years of age or older, can appoint a health care agent by signing a form called a health care proxy. You do not need a lawyer or a notary, just two adult witnesses. Note: your health care agent cannot sign as a witness.

What if my health care agent is not available when decisions must be made?

You may appoint an alternate agent, or secondary health care agent, to make decisions for you if your primary health care agent is unavailable, unable, or unwilling to act when decisions must be made. Otherwise, health care providers will make health care decisions that follow the instructions you gave while you were still able to do so. Any instructions that you write on your health care proxy form will guide health care providers under these circumstances.

You should name both a primary and a secondary health care agent. That way, if the primary health care agent isn't able to make decisions, you and/or your family will not have to worry about naming a new agent or completing a new health care proxy form.

Where should I keep my health care proxy form after it is signed?

Give a copy of the form to your health care agent, your doctor, your attorney, and family members or close friends who you choose. Keep a copy in your wallet or purse or with other important papers, but not somewhere that it can't be accessed, such as a safe deposit box.

Get a health care proxy form at health.ny.gov/forms and scroll down to Health Care Proxy.

Adapted from the New York State Department of Health: health.ny.gov



Health_eConnections

What is Health_eConnections?

HealthConnections manages a health information exchange (HIE), governed by regulations and policies established by the New York State Department of Health for the Statewide Health Information Network of New York (SHIN-NY).

Why do I need to need sign a consent to Health_eConnections for Nascentia?

By consenting to access, you authorize your care manager to view your personal health information (PHI) contributed to HealthConnections. This allows your care manager to view your medical information and use it to improve the quality of your care and help you transition your care between your primary care provider, specialists, the emergency room, hospitalizations, and short-term and long-term care stays.

How do I sign a Health_eConnections consent?

Speak to your care manager or care coordinator today and they will send you the authorization form for completion. Simply check the box:

- » “I give consent” is an affirmative consent that allows that provider organization’s authorized users to access and view your personal health information (PHI) that has been contributed to HealthConnections.
- » Sign and date the form and return it to Nascentia.

Please reach out to your Nascentia care team with any questions!



Don't Skip Important Preventive Care

Preventive care is important to help maintain and improve your overall health. Certain exams and vaccines are increasingly important as we age:

Flu Vaccine Every Year	Pneumococcal Vaccine Every 5 Years	Dental Exam Every Year
Eye Exam Every Year	Hearing Exam Every 2 Years	Mammogram (for Females) Every 2 Years

Be sure to communicate your preventive care appointments and needs to your care team and assessment nurse. You may also receive calls from your care team to verify the information we have on file for this care.

Transportation Reminder

When a member of your care team is at your home or speaking



with you on the phone, please let him or her know about any scheduled appointments for which you'll need transportation. This will reduce the number of calls to our Transportation Department and shorten your wait time when you need to call for a ride. If you need to make a transportation request after speaking with your care team, you can call 1-855-877-8868.

Member Handbook Update

Below is information regarding an update to the Conflict Free Evaluation and Enrollment Center (CFEEC), which will become the New York Independent Assessor (NYIA), and the implementation of a new initial assessment process. This update impacts initial assessments only; your services at this time with Nascentia Health Options will not change. If you have questions, please contact Nascentia Health Options at 1-888-477-4663.

Medicaid Managed Long Term Care Handbook Language

New York Independent Assessor—Initial Assessment Process

Starting May 16, 2022, the Conflict Free Evaluation and Enrollment Center (CFEEC) will become the New York Independent Assessor (NYIA). The NYIA will manage the initial assessment process, except for expedited initial assessments, which will begin on July 1, 2022. The initial assessment process includes completing the:

- » Community Health Assessment (CHA): The CHA is used to see if you need personal care and/or consumer directed personal assistance services (PCS/CDPAS) and are eligible for enrollment in a managed long term care plan.
- » Clinical appointment and Practitioner Order (PO): The PO documents your clinical appointment and indicates that you:
 - » Have a need for help with daily activities, and
 - » That your medical condition is stable so that you may receive PCS and/or CDPAS in your home.

The NYIA will schedule both the CHA and clinical appointment. The CHA will be completed by a trained registered nurse (RN). After the CHA, a clinician from the NYIA will complete a clinical appointment and PO a few days later.

Nascentia Health Options will use the CHA and PO outcomes to see what kind of help you need and create your plan of care. If your plan of care proposes PCS and/or CDPAS for more than 12 hours per day on average, a separate review by the NYIA Independent Review Panel (IRP) will be needed. The IRP is a panel of medical professionals that will review your CHA, PO, plan of care and any other medical documentation. If more information is needed, someone on the panel may examine you or discuss your needs with you. The IRP will make a recommendation to Nascentia Health Options about whether the plan of care meets your needs.