

Healthy Workplace

Your monthly Anthem wellness newsletter



CT Pipe Trades



How to Manage Treatment Costs for Chronic Conditions

Almost 90 percent of all health care spending is for people with chronic conditions, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fact, half of all American adults have at least one chronic condition and nearly one out of three has multiple chronic conditions, meaning the condition is persistent or long lasting.

It's expensive to treat chronic conditions such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, asthma, and COPD. Consider these simple but effective ways to lower your out-of-pocket costs for these and other chronic conditions.

Make Positive Changes

First, you have the power to change lifestyle behaviors that negatively affect your health. If you don't get enough exercise, have poor nutrition habits, drink too much alcohol or smoke, you put yourself at risk for chronic conditions. Talk to your doctor about how you can start to make changes that help you get healthier and lower your medical costs.

Get Preventive Care

If you have a chronic condition, it's especially important to take care of your overall health. Annual screenings, vaccinations, checkups, and other preventive services can help detect or delay the onset of serious diseases, and may be free or cost very little. If you have a health insurance plan, be sure to find out what services are available to you. Remember that staying healthy always saves you money, compared to costs you'll incur if you're injured or sick.



Use Providers in your Plan

If you already have a health plan, keep costs down by using doctors and health providers in your plan. These doctors, hospitals, labs, clinics, etc. have a contract with your insurer to provide your care at agreed-upon prices. If you decide to go outside your plan, you'll pay more. Never just assume that a provider you've chosen is in your plan. You can ask the provider, but also contact your health plan to make doubly sure.



How Anthem can help

Join Anthem's ConditionCare Program

We'll be there every step of the way!

Living with a chronic condition can be challenging — especially without the right tools and resources.

That's where ConditionCare comes in. If you or a covered family member has diabetes, asthma, coronary artery disease, heart failure, or heart disease, this no-cost health and wellness program can connect you to nurse care managers for condition-management support.

ConditionCare provides:

- 24/7, toll-free phone access to nurses who can answer health questions
- Guidance from nurse care managers, pharmacists, dietitians, doctors and other health care professionals to help you reach your health goals
- Educational guides, electronic newsletters and tools to help you learn more about diabetes and your health
- You might get a call from us to see whether the program is a good fit for your needs. Before talking about your health on the phone, we'll check your address or date of birth to be sure we're speaking only with you and protecting your privacy. Any information you share is confidential.

Butternut Squash Soup

'Tis the season for warm, comforting soups! This butternut squash soup is an easy way to bring comfort and flavor to your dinner without the heaviness of cream.

Yields: 6 servings



Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 fresh sage leaves
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 medium canned tomatoes
- 1 medium butternut squash (about 2 pounds), peeled, halved, seeded, and diced
- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth or water
- 1 teaspoon balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons freshly grated parmesan cheese

Directions

1. Heat the olive oil in a soup pot over medium heat. Add the onion, garlic, sage, 1 teaspoon of the salt and season with pepper, to taste. Cook, covered, stirring occasionally, until soft and fragrant, about 15 minutes. Raise heat to medium-high, add the tomatoes, and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, until the tomatoes break up and the onions brown slightly, about 7 minutes.
2. Add the squash and the remaining teaspoon salt, and continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the squash is tender, about 12 minutes. Add the broth, bring to a simmer, and cook, uncovered, until the vegetables tender, about 20 minutes. Set aside to cool slightly.
3. Working in batches, puree the soup in a blender, or with an immersion blender.
4. Return the soup to the pot and reheat over medium heat. Stir in the vinegar. Serve the soup in warm bowls with a touch of parmesan cheese if desired.

Added flavor: Sprinkle toasted pumpkin seeds on top of the soup for some crunch!



Surviving the Holidays

As we enter the (sometimes dreaded) holiday season, we can sometimes be on edge when we think about spending time with certain loved ones. My best tip—**keep a sense of humor.**

As **George Burns** once said:

“Happiness is having a large, loving, caring, close-knit family in another city.”

1. Discuss your plans before you visit

Communicate how you envision your time with your family before you arrive. For example, if you are traveling to a hometown you don't visit often and want to see a childhood friend, make sure your family know yours plans.

2. Take care of your needs

If you have dietary restrictions, ease food stress and plan to bring a dish of your own. If you struggle with sleep in places outside of your home, bring your pillow, download a white noise app, or bring ear plugs to be sure you try and get some rest.

3. Let go of differences

You aren't going to convince your aunt or uncle to vote for your preferred political candidate and vice versa. Agree to disagree and look for common ground. Remember that your



relative's "advice" typically comes from a place of love. Can't take it any longer? Volunteer to run an errand and get some breathing space.

4. Manage your expectations

Know your exit strategy. Start to fight with your mom after two full days together? Perhaps plan events and alone time to keep your time together special and happy. Tired of Aunt Margaret asking "when are you having kids"? Create a private game of "dysfunctional bingo" and give yourself a small self-care prize each time you win.

5. Set boundaries

When all else fails, know when to create healthy boundaries. Sometimes the healthiest and most loving thing we can do for ourselves is to not go home at all.

6. Playing host doesn't mean doing it all

If family is coming to your house, ask for help to be sure you don't get stuck cooking, cleaning, and shopping. Assign meal preparation to different families. Focus on quality time together instead of exhausting yourself over dinner. If you have standing commitments (ex. exercise class, book club, or a weekly night with friends), let your family know so they can plan their own exploration while visiting.

7. Show your gratitude while being true to yourself

Choose three most important things that you want for your visit, be firm about your plan to do them, and then let the rest go. Compliment your family on the things you appreciate and be sure to spread positive feelings to heighten the holiday spirit.



Wellness Bites for your Quick Wellness Needs!



What is the difference between a cold and the flu?

Flu and the common cold are both respiratory illnesses but they are caused by different viruses. Because these two types of illnesses have similar symptoms, it can be difficult to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. In general, flu is worse than the common cold, and symptoms are more intense. Colds are usually milder than flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems, such as pneumonia, bacterial infections, or hospitalizations. Flu can have very serious associated complications.



How can you tell the difference between a cold and the flu?

Because colds and flu share many symptoms, it can be difficult (or even impossible) to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Special tests that usually must be done within the first few days of illness can tell if a person has the flu.

What are the symptoms of the flu versus the symptoms of a cold?

The symptoms of flu can include fever or feeling feverish/ chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue (tiredness). Cold symptoms are usually milder than the symptoms of flu. People with colds are more likely to have a runny or stuffy nose. Colds generally do not result in serious health problems.

Who is at high risk for flu complications?

Most people who get sick with the flu will have mild illness, will not need medical care or antiviral drugs and will recover in less than two weeks. Some groups of people however can have increased risk of complications from the flu. For example, people with asthma may experience asthma attacks while they have flu and people with chronic congestive heart failure may experience a worsening of this condition triggered by the flu.

High risk groups:

- Adults 65 and older
- Pregnant women
- Young children
- Those with asthma
- Those with heart disease or a history of stroke
- Those with diabetes
- Those with HIV/AIDS
- Those with cancer
- Children with neurological conditions



Take Three Actions to Protect Against the Flu

1. Take Time to Get Vaccinated—everyone 6 months of age and older should get a flu vaccine, especially people at high risk.

2. Take Preventive Steps

- Stay home when you are sick
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing (use the ‘crook’ of your elbow, not your hands)
- Wash your hands frequently
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Practice good health habits— get enough sleep, be physically active, manage stress, drink lots of fluids, and eat nutritious foods.

3. Get Treatment

There are prescription medications called “antiviral drugs” that can be used to treat flu illness.



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IS IT A COLD OR FLU?		
Signs and Symptoms	Cold	Flu
Symptom onset	Gradual	Abrupt
Fever	Rare	Usual
Aches	Slight	Usual
Chills	Uncommon	Fairly common
Fatigue, weakness	Sometimes	Usual
Sneezing	Common	Sometimes
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Chest discomfort, cough	Mild to moderate	Common
Headache	Rare	Common

#FIGHT FLU