



BENEFITS INSIDER

A PUBLICATION OF THE OHIO CONFERENCE OF TEAMSTERS & INDUSTRY HEALTH AND WELFARE FUND

Lower your blood pressure with Hello Heart.



We help you take control of your heart health.

- Track your blood pressure with a free monitor shipped directly to you.
- Get insights by tracking your cholesterol, medication, and activity.
- Share private reports with your doctor.



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What impacts your heart health?

		
 Medication	Taking your meds as prescribed	Not taking your meds
 Sodium (Salt)	Consuming less than 2,300 mg a day	Eating processed or canned foods often
 Food	Following a high-potassium diet rich in fruits & vegetables	Diets high in saturated fat (e.g. red meat)
 Exercise	Regular moderate exercise, 30 minutes a day	No physical activity
 Alcohol	Limiting alcohol to 2 drinks a day for men and 1 drink a day for women	Overindulging
 Awareness	Tracking your blood pressure at home	Not knowing your numbers



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Scan the QR code or text* OHTEAM to 75706 to create an account.

You can also visit join.helloheart.com and enter Ohio Conference of Teamsters & Industry Health & Welfare Fund to create an account.



Meet Thrive Pad: Recovery just got smarter

Pain care has been broken for decades. It relies on medication, sporadic doctor visits, and one-size-fits-all treatments that fail to address the root cause. Too often, people are left to figure out their recovery alone, without the tools or support they need to heal.

At Sword Health, we refuse to accept that. Pain is debilitating, isolating, and expensive—not just for individuals, but for the entire healthcare system. We build solutions that go beyond managing pain to eliminating it. Today, we are making that solution even better.

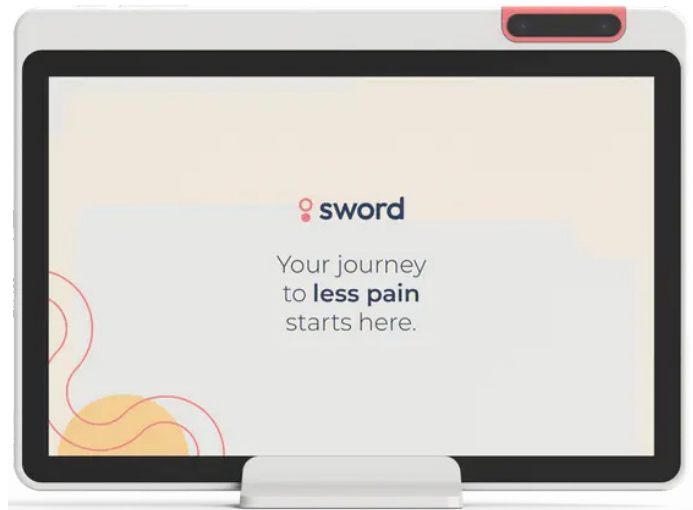
Introducing the new Thrive Pad, the next evolution in digital physical therapy.

The new Thrive Pad is smarter, more intuitive, and built for real-world recovery. It integrates seamlessly with Thrive, our flagship digital therapy program, unlocking the full power of Phoenix, our AI care agent. With Thrive Pad, members get the most advanced, accessible, and effective pain recovery experience available.

Designed to Keep People Moving Every Day

The Thrive Pad builds on the success of our first-generation device. It has already powered millions of therapy sessions and over 500 million minutes of recovery time. That scale gave us real-world insights into what works—and what could be even better.

The result is a more powerful, engaging experience that keeps people on track, builds confidence, and strengthens their progress.



What's New in the Thrive Pad?

- A bigger, better screen. A 10-inch high-brightness display (previously 8 inches) for improved visibility and engagement.
- Dual wide-angle cameras and smarter motion tracking to capture full-body movement with more precision, even at close range.
- Dual microphones and advanced echo cancellation for crystal clear audio for seamless interaction with Phoenix, even in noisy home environments.
- A stand that just works. Redesigned for stability and ease, making setup effortless.

We invested 63% more per device because we prioritize members over margins. While some competitors are cutting physical devices to save costs, we doubled down on innovation—because better tools mean better care.



Walking brings benefits to your mind and body

“Let’s go for a walk.”

It’s a phrase we hear hundreds of times over the course of our lives. It can evoke memories of time spent with babies in strollers, walking the family pet, stretching our legs after a big meal and jaunts through local parks and green areas.

However, walking lowers our risk of depression and heart disease, improves our overall health and stimulates our brains.

Simply taking a 20-minute walk every day—adding up to 2.5 hours a week—will bring those benefits and more.

Take your first step

Walking is something almost everyone can do. It doesn’t require special clothes or gear other than comfortable, sturdy shoes. The investment is simply your time and your effort. But the physical return on investment is off the charts. Regular walking helps:

- Maintain a healthy weight and lose body fat
- Prevent or help manage various conditions, including heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, cancer and type 2 diabetes
- Strengthen your bones and muscles
- Increase energy levels
- Improve your mood, cognition, memory and sleep
- Improve your balance and coordination
- Strengthen your immune system
- Reduce stress and tension



People who walk 2.5 hours weekly reduce their risk of depression by 25%

Mental rewards

Generally, what’s good for the body is good for the brain.

What’s more, walking in green spaces—parks, nature trails, forests or even suburban wooded areas—bumps up the benefits. Time spent walking in nature can reduce stress and negative thoughts and may help prevent burnout.

Another surprising benefit is a boost to your creativity and focus. It’s been shown that creative thinking and concentration improve while you are walking outdoors and continue thereafter. There really is truth to the idea of taking a walk to clear your mind and find inspiration. It’s no wonder that walking meetings are on the rise.

Now grab a friend, colleague or your pet and get walking!





Bite-sized actions for better mental health

There is more to being healthy than exercise or eating your vegetables. Think about getting healthy from the top down. What's good for your brain is good for your body and vice versa.

Tackling your mental health may feel like a giant task. Does it involve seeing a therapist or taking prescription medications? Will it be expensive and take all your extra time? It doesn't have to.

Simply acknowledging you want to work on your mental health is a step in the right direction.

Whether you're struggling with stress, feelings of anxiety or depression, or just want to feel better emotionally, you can take bite-sized actions toward mental well-being.

Start anytime

It doesn't matter when you start working on your mental well-being, only that you do. Taking baby steps toward feeling better can help. Try these simple actions as a start:

Check in with yourself

Step away from distractions and just be still. Pay attention to your inner voice. If you're hearing negative self-talk, change the conversation. The same goes for anything that is worrying you. Try to clear this mental clutter.

Get some sleep

Rest and mental health are intertwined. If you're not getting a solid seven to nine hours nightly, try:

- Limiting screen time
- Relaxing before bedtime
- Going to bed a little earlier

Eat with intention

Sometimes, we use food as consolation when we're feeling stressed or sad. Before you eat your first bite of a meal or snack, ask yourself, "Am I hungry?" If not, look at what need you're trying to satisfy. Work to be more mindful of physical or emotional cues.

Reach out

Seeing family and friends on social media may feel like a catch-up, but it's no substitute for the real thing. Pick up the phone and chat for a few minutes. Getting support and making connections are healthy steps to take.

Breathe

Rather than screaming at the top of your lungs or bottling up your feelings, take some deep breaths. Try these breathing tips:

- Gently close one nostril with a finger while you breathe, forcing yourself to inhale and exhale more slowly.
- Lie flat on your back. Since this is a position we normally reserve for sleep, it can naturally signal your brain to slow down your breathing.
- Breathe deep into your belly. This turns off your stress response, telling your body that everything is going to be OK.

Improving your mental health and feeling better about yourself isn't out of reach when you break it down into simple steps.

Activate your benefit and schedule your visit today

Visit TeladocHealth.com

Call 1-800-835-2362

Download the app

Secrets for living healthier longer

Longevity is a hot topic these days. Living better and longer is the goal. However, physical ailments, especially chronic conditions, often catch up with many people in their elder years.

With more Americans becoming senior citizens than ever before, the data is growing on what habits could keep you in better shape longer. Much of the focus is on how to extend your health span, not just your lifespan, to promote more healthy years of life.

Studying those who are living longer, more active lives has uncovered five factors for a longer health span. They include:

Healthy eating

Follow meal plans that can lower the risk of hypertension, memory loss and other chronic conditions. The Mediterranean, DASH and MIND diets include whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean proteins and healthier fats from nuts, olive oil and fish.

Regular exercise

Increased activity benefits your whole body and mind.

Limiting alcohol

People who drink moderately can have a lower risk of early death from cardiovascular disease.

Maintaining healthy weight

Speak with your doctor to understand what a healthy weight is for you considering health conditions, body type and family history.

Not smoking

Smoking harms nearly every organ in your body.

10,000 people turn 65 every day in the U.S. By 2040 the senior citizen population will increase by about 20.5 million.

“SuperAgers” are people 80 or older who have the cognitive function of people half their age. While these people could be naturally long-living, they follow the habits mentioned, plus:

Challenging themselves mentally

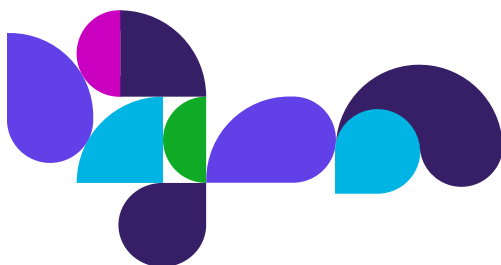
Exercising your mind is just as important. Read, take classes or learn a new game to stimulate your brain.

Being social

Social relationships help keep your brain active. Creating new memories can improve cognitive function. Social interaction requires a heightened level of attention. Social connections also help prevent loneliness and isolation, which can lead to physical and mental decline.

Choosing to live a healthy lifestyle at any age can impact your health span. However, earlier is always better. In a multiyear Harvard study, women at 50 who practiced four or five of these healthy habits lived about 10 more years free of diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer than women who did not.

For men, it offered another seven years free of chronic disease.





Your anytime, anywhere healthcare benefit

Access your healthcare by phone, video or app.

24/7 Care

Need care for non-urgent and common conditions? Get same-day appointments with a certified provider from wherever you are. Teladoc Health providers diagnose, treat and even prescribe medicine if needed.

- Allergies
- Bronchitis
- Flu
- COVID-19
- Pink eye
- Rashes
- Sinus infections
- Sore throats
- And more

\$20/visit

Dermatology

Dealing with a skin issue? Start an online skin review with a dermatologist by uploading images and details of your concern. Get a treatment plan and prescription if needed in 24 hours or less.

- Acne
- Eczema
- Psoriasis
- Skin infections
- Rashes
- Rosacea

\$20/online review

Mental Health

Find support that works best for you. You can connect with a therapist 7 days a week and get a personalized plan and online content designed for you.

- Anxiety and depression
- Sleep issues
- Relationship conflicts
- Trauma and PTSD
- Medication management

Therapy \$20/visit

Psychiatry \$20/first visit

Psychiatry \$20/ongoing visits

Activate your benefit and schedule your visit today

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PCP Checklist

Partnering with your provider to improve your health

Your primary care provider (PCP) is your first stop for medical care. Here are some important tips and reminders of what to discuss at your checkup.

Make note of these important things to talk to your doctor about:

- Any health or life changes since your last visit
- Any recent hospitalizations or visits to the emergency room (ER) or urgent care
- Any symptoms you are experiencing
- Any specialists you see to help manage your care (including mental health practitioners)
- All medications you are taking (including prescription, over the counter, and supplements)
- Any interactions between supplements and over-the-counter or prescription medications
- Any barriers or concerns you might have to get your prescriptions filled
- Options to use a mail-order pharmacy or obtain three-month supplies for maintenance medications

Questions to ask about my physical health

Weight

- ☐ What is my weight and Body Mass Index (BMI)?
- ☐ Are these numbers at a healthy level?

Blood Pressure

- ☐ What is my blood pressure and is it healthy for me?
- ☐ How often should my blood pressure be checked?
- ☐ Should I check my blood pressure at home?

Vaccinations

- ☐ Am I due for any vaccinations?
- ☐ Any other questions related to vaccines?

Cancer Screenings

- ☐ Am I due for any cancer screenings (e.g., cervical, breast, colorectal)?
- ☐ How often do I need them?

Blood Tests

- ☐ Do I need a cholesterol check?
- ☐ Should I be screened for diabetes?

Other Tests

- ☐ What other test(s) do you recommend based on my medical history?

Activity

- ☐ How much and what type of exercise is right for me?

Sleep

- ☐ How many hours of sleep should I get each night?
- ☐ What can I do to address any sleep problems?

Items to share about my emotional health

- ☐ Feeling down or depressed
- ☐ Feeling anxious or irritable
- ☐ Changes to energy level
- ☐ Changes to stress level (e.g., personal, family, work related)
- ☐ Substance use for myself or a loved one (e.g., tobacco, vaping, drugs or alcohol)
- ☐ Am I feeling safe?

List for people with diabetes

- ☐ Hemoglobin A1c test (HbA1c)
- ☐ Kidney monitoring test
- ☐ Cholesterol check
- ☐ Eye exam to detect diabetes related changes
- ☐ Foot exam
- ☐ Depression screening

Information about your next appointment

Remember to plan ahead. It may take up to 30 days for a routine or preventive care appointment and up to 48 hours for an urgent visit. At your next appointment, ask your doctor if another provider in the office can be an appropriate back up for you. If you've been hospitalized or treated in the ER, be sure to notify your PCP and schedule a follow-up appointment.

Additional resources

Telehealth

Ask your provider if a telehealth appointment is right for you. To find more information about telehealth appointments, visit My Health Plan and click Health Awareness under the Healthy Living Tab.

NurseLine

Call 1-888-912-0636 to speak with a specially trained nurse anytime you have a health concern. The service is available 24 hours a day — at no charge.

Smoking Cessation

Want to kick the tobacco or vaping habit for good? We've partnered with Pivot to offer a free program that can help. Pivot includes the SmartSensor, 12 weeks of free nicotine replacement therapy (NRT), an easy-to-use mobile app, a personal health coach, access to Pivot's supportive community, and so much more.

Visit Pivot.co/MedMutual to learn more.

Need help?

If you need help finding a PCP or are having trouble getting an appointment, Medical Mutual can help. Please call Customer Care toll free at the number on your ID card (TTY: 711 for hearing impaired).

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partner in your health.

Upgraded Access to Your Health Benefits

The re-designed MedMutual Mobile App

Review your claims and EOBs

You can even see a breakdown of each claim to help you clearly understand your benefits and responsibilities.

View your ID cards

Email or fax your ID card to a provider right from your mobile device.

Keep track of costs

View your deductible, coinsurance, copays, and maximum out-of-pocket costs.

Find care and estimate costs

Locate providers in your network, view their ratings and compare costs for tests and procedures.

Manage your prescriptions

Instantly check, order, and track all your prescriptions with fast home delivery.

Pay your premium

If your monthly premium isn't automatically deducted from your paycheck, experience secure and hassle-free payments through the mobile app.

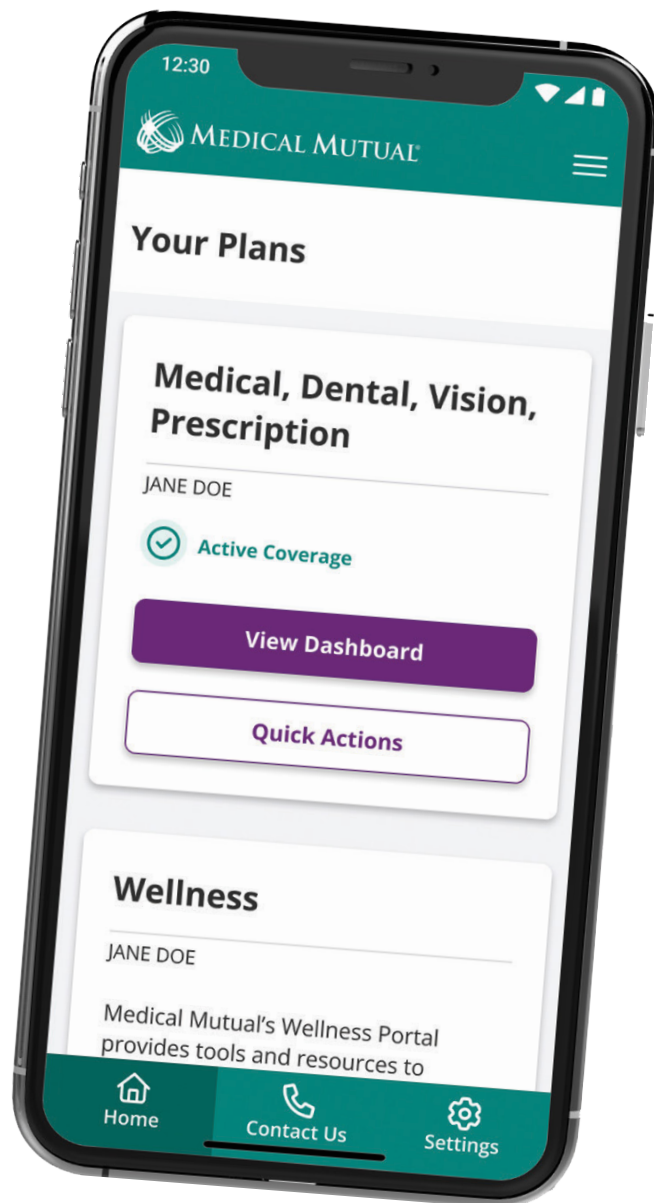
Engage with your wellness

Our wellness portal includes an array of articles, videos, and online courses to help you maintain or achieve better health.

Download & sign up today!

Search MedMutual in the Apple App Store® or Google Play® and easily create an account with our step-by-step instructions.

We've made managing your Medical Mutual health plan simpler and more convenient with our re-designed and re-imagined MedMutual mobile app.



Be Smile Smart

Your smile is the first thing others notice about you!

When it comes to your mouth, the choices you make as a teenager are more important than you think. Taking care of your mouth now will give you a beautiful smile today and in the future. Read up on these facts and tips to bring your oral health A-game, then download the entire Smile Smart brochure for more information about healthy teen smiles.

Think twice when it comes to:

- **Drink choices.** Drinks like pop, sports drinks, energy drinks and juice are all loaded with sugar. Unless you want a mouth full of cavities, load up on water when you're thirsty.
- **Oral piercings.** They may seem cool, but piercings in and around your mouth can make it hard to talk, chew and swallow. You can even lose your sense of taste and drool excessively. Plus, infections are common and can even be life threatening.
- **Eating habits.** We all know candy is bad for our teeth, but other foods like bread and breakfast cereals stick to our teeth and can damage them. Also, remember that eating disorders like anorexia, bulimia and binge eating can damage teeth. If you are battling an eating disorder, reach out and seek help—maybe start with talking to an adult you trust.
- **Drugs.** Don't even think about trying illegal drugs. They destroy your body, mind and teeth. You don't want to know what "meth mouth" looks like.
- **Tobacco.** Surely oral cancer isn't on the list of things you want in life. Almost 90 percent of people who have oral cancer have used tobacco. All products put you at risk—cigarettes, pipe tobacco, smokeless tobacco and cigars.



10 Smart Ways to Sneak in a Sweat Session

No time to get to the gym—or even into your gym shoes? One of the main reasons people don't exercise is that they think they don't have enough time. The truth is, you don't need an uninterrupted hour to reap the many benefits of physical activity. The American College of Sports Medicine recommends getting at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week (and up to 50 minutes for people who need to lose a significant amount of weight), but that can be spread out across multiple mini-sessions.

So why not squeeze in a few moments of activity throughout your entire day? Imagine the payoff this small change could have!

1. Make the kids' activity time your activity time.

Do you find yourself with time on your hands waiting at basketball practice, dance rehearsals or another activity? Turn that down time into exercise time. Instead of reading or scrolling through Facebook, get in 45 minutes of walking or jogging—outside if weather permits, or up and down the halls of the school if not.

2. Burn calories during conference calls. Next time you're stuck on a conference call—particularly if you're doing more listening than speaking—put it on speaker, stand up and get moving. There are plenty of exercises you can do in your office, such as lunges, squats or planks.

3. Work while you watch. Who says exercise isn't entertaining? During your next Netflix binge, hit the floor or the mat for some crunches, leg lifts or lunges. If you have free weights handy, incorporate some biceps curls, shoulder presses and triceps extensions. Before you know it, you'll have done a full-body workout and caught up on your favorite shows.

4. Ignore the elevator. Whether you're at work, a doctor's appointment or the mall, bypass the elevator and hit the stairs instead. You can burn more than 100 calories just by climbing the stairs a few times a day. Plus, it helps to strengthen your muscles while boosting cardiovascular health.

5. Weigh yourself down. Burn more calories while running errands or walking by wearing a weighted fitness vest. There are thin-profile styles available that can be worn under your regular clothes.



6. Turn social hour into power hour. Instead of meeting your friends for coffee or cocktails, catch up while walking at a local track or park. You'll reconnect while logging some serious mileage—and there's no tab to pay at the end.

7. Get lean in line. Next time you're stuck in line or find yourself standing for a few moments, do some calf raises. You'll burn a few extra calories while working toward shapely legs.

8. Play. It's easy for busy parents to get into an "all work, no play" mentality—but resurrecting a childlike spirit is a great way to get moving. The next time your kids are playing tag, riding their bikes or jumping on the trampoline, join them. They'll love watching you have fun, and you'll benefit from the quick cardio boost.

9. Clean. You have to do it anyway, so you might as well give yourself some extra exercise credit. A 150-pound person will burn almost 300 calories from one hour of heavy house cleaning. Grab the vacuum and make those calories disappear!

10. Sit down to work out. With seated workouts, you can tone up and burn calories right from your chair. Search online to find exercises you can do right in your chair to not only add movement to your sedentary day, but also boost energy levels when you need a little something extra. Speaking of sitting, consider trading your desk chair for a stability ball. Sitting on the ball works the muscles in your abdomen, lower back and hips, so you'll get a core workout while catching up on emails. Using a standing desk also burns more calories than sitting.

Dark chocolate may boost your eyesight

Dark chocolate has been touted as having a number of health benefits given the level of flavonoids they contain. Flavonoids, a type of phytonutrient, are powerful antioxidants that have been tied to:

- Improved blood flow
- Reduced inflammation
- Improved heart health
- Better cognitive function
- Improved immune function

Now, in addition to the aforementioned benefits, researchers believe we can include short-term vision improvements to the list. According to researchers at the University of the Incarnate Word Rosenberg School of Optometry in San Antonio, Texas, dark chocolate can boost visual clarity and contrast sensitivity within 2 hours following consumption.



Based upon their clinical study on the consumption of dark chocolate versus milk chocolate, they were able to determine that:

- Visual clarity improved after consumption of dark chocolate vs. milk chocolate
- Ability to read small letters at differing contrasts was significantly higher after participants ate dark chocolate vs. milk chocolate
- Ability to read large letters at differing contrasts was slightly higher after participants ate dark chocolate vs. milk chocolate

However, studies which compare two foods have their limitations; it's not easy to keep the type of chocolate "under wraps" when the participant can determine the type by taste. Because of such limitations, more studies are required in order to determine the duration of the benefit and their effect in a real-world environment. Nonetheless, the initial findings of this study seem reason enough to further support the consumption of dark chocolate...and that's okay by us!



National Vision Administrators, L.L.C.

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Nutritional Info

Servings Per Recipe: 1

Amount Per Serving

Calories: 140.8

Total Fat: 5.8 g

Cholesterol: 1.3 mg

Sodium: 695.4 mg

Total Carbs: 18.7 g

Dietary Fiber: 2.2 g

Protein: 4.0 g

HEALTHY LIVING RECIPE:

Low Cholesterol Scalloped Potatoes

Number of Servings: 6

INTRODUCTION

A low-fat, heart healthy version of this traditional comfort food.

INGREDIENTS

4 cups thinly sliced raw potatoes

1 onion

1 tablespoon chopped parsley (optional)

3 tablespoons whole grain flour

1/8 teaspoon pepper

1 1/2 teaspoons salt

3 tablespoons low cholesterol margarine

1 1/2 cups skim milk

DIRECTIONS

1. Layer potatoes and onions in casserole, sprinkling flour between each layer.
2. Heat milk and margarine and season with salt, pepper, and parsley. Pour sauce over all layers.
3. Bake 1 hour covered at 350° F. Remove cover and bake additional 30 minutes.