

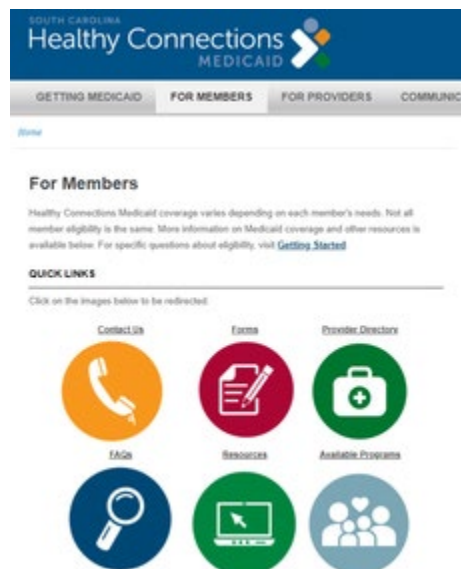
## Healthy and Connected Member Newsletter - April 29, 2022

Healthy and Connected is the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services' (SCDHHS) member e-newsletter. Healthy and Connected features tips and tools to help you and your loved ones connect to resources and live healthier lives.

## New Website Section for Healthy Connections Medicaid Members

SCDHHS recently improved our website to better serve our existing Healthy Connections Medicaid members. When visiting the [Healthy Connections Medicaid website](#), you will now find a "For Members" tab at the top left of the home page. Through this new tab you can easily access Medicaid forms, FAQs, useful contact information, the Medicaid Member Handbook, appeals information and other helpful resources. You can also find a link to [Community Connections](#), an online tool where you can search for jobs, food aid, training, housing help and other community support services in your area.

Visit [SCDHHS.gov](https://www.scdhhs.gov) to view the For Members tab.



## Annual Reviews After the Public Health Emergency

SCDHHS typically does annual eligibility reviews for all Healthy Connections Medicaid members. Since the federal COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE) was put in place March 2020, all reviews have been paused. Medicaid coverage will continue for anyone receiving Medicaid benefits during the PHE. There is currently no end date set for the PHE.

When the PHE ends, annual reviews will start to be sent out about 60 days ahead of the review date to members whose eligibility can't be confirmed electronically by Medicaid. To reduce your chance of a gap in your Medicaid coverage, make sure your contact information is up to date. If you get a form in the mail to update your contact information, please fill it out and return the form. It is also important to read and respond to any mail that comes from Medicaid or your managed care plan. If you receive an annual review form, please complete it within 30 days. Any members who do not return their completed forms within 30 days will receive a notice their Medicaid coverage will end if they do not return the form by the due date.

If you have questions about annual reviews and your Medicaid benefits or need to report a change of address, call the Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday.

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## Coverage for New and Expecting Mothers



Full benefits Medicaid coverage for new and expecting mothers has been extended. Coverage previously ended 60 days after the birth of the child. Now, coverage will continue through 12 months postpartum. The extension applies to women who qualify for Medicaid because they are pregnant.

About 80% of pregnancy-related deaths in South Carolina happen between the mother giving birth and one-year postpartum. The extension will help SCDHHS support a healthy start for babies across the state.

Anyone with questions can call the Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820. The center is open from 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday.

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## Alcohol Awareness

Many adults drink alcohol in moderation, but alcohol-related conditions are one of the biggest public health issues in the nation. April is Alcohol Awareness Month. It's a good time to think about our drinking habits and the role alcohol plays in our lives.

Learning about alcohol use disorder (AUD) is one way we can learn if drinking has become a problem for ourselves or a loved one. If you cannot control your urge to drink, even though it causes problems, you might be suffering from AUD. You might notice withdrawal symptoms if you stop drinking. Ask yourself, "How is my drinking affecting myself and others I care about?" When drinking is causing troubles with family or friends, it is a sign you may have a problem.

There are many types of treatments for AUD like medical, behavioral and support groups. Learn more about the risks, signs and treatments of AUD on the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's [website](#).

### Understanding AUD

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## National Foster Care Month

There are about 4,000 children in South Carolina in foster care. Those who welcome foster children into their homes provide support until the child can safely go back to their birth parents. May is National Foster Care Month, a time to recognize what we can do to better the lives of children and youth living in foster care.



Healthy Connections Medicaid provides benefits to people up to 26 years old who were previously in the South Carolina foster care system. Those who may qualify for this program must have been a Medicaid member when they aged out of foster care. The person is eligible through the end of the month of their 26th birthday if they live in the state.

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## Taking Care of Your Mental Health

It's important to stay healthy physically, but your mental health is also important. Mental health affects how we feel, think and act. May is Mental Health Awareness Month. There are some easy ways to look after your mental health that don't take much time and can make a big difference. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a few tips to help you cope with daily stress.

Try to do one small thing each day to care for yourself, like:

- Take breaks to unwind through yoga, music, gardening or new hobbies
- Share your feelings by connecting with family and friends
- Take care of your body and get moving to help with anxiety or sadness
- Treat yourself to healthy foods
- Get enough sleep

Remember, a person's mental health can change over time. It depends on many factors. If you are going through more than you can handle from your job, family life or a financial hardship, your mental health may be affected. Learn about different ways to cope and stay mentally healthy on the CDC's [website](#).

### Managing Stress

## Ways to Identify PTSD



your daily life, you should seek help.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) develops in some people who have experienced a scary or dangerous event. It is okay to feel, think and act differently after trauma. Many people will start to improve after a few weeks. However, if your symptoms last longer than a few months and disrupt

June is PTSD Awareness Month. If you're unsure if you have PTSD after something upsetting or traumatic, you may want to learn more about the signs. The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) has a list of symptoms some people experience when they have PTSD.

1. Nightmares about the event or thinking about it when you don't want to
2. Avoiding places or things that remind you about the event
3. Feeling numb, guilty or detached from activities/other people
4. Being easily scared, angered or having trouble sleeping

If you've been feeling three or more of these symptoms, you should talk with a mental health care provider. Early treatment for PTSD is best, but it is also never too late to get treatment. Learn more about what kind of events can cause PTSD and ways to improve your symptoms on the NAMI [website](#).

[Do I have PTSD?](#)

## Staying Fit as a Family

Staying active is just as important for children as adults. Family Health and Fitness Day is June 13, and there are ways to make the day fun for the whole family. Parents can encourage fitness by joining their kids.

A few ideas for the family include:

- Going for a walk, run or bike ride together
- Running through a sprinkler
- Playing a game of catch or basketball
- Hiking at a local park
- Holding a hula hoop or jump rope contest
- Turning on music and having a dance party



Planning a time for physical activity with your kids doesn't have to be just for special occasions. There are easy ways to add fitness into your family's daily routine. Set goals and schedule times together. View ideas for every season at [eatright.org](http://eatright.org).

[Family Exercise Ideas](#)

## Free Over-the-Counter COVID Tests

Healthy Connections Medicaid members can get over-the-counter COVID-19 test kits at Medicaid-enrolled pharmacies for free.

Each member may get up to eight tests within a 30-day period. Prescriptions are not needed. Members should have their Healthy Connections Medicaid ID card with them at the pharmacy when getting the tests.

Thank you for reading Healthy and Connected. Follow SCDHHS on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) pages for regular updates. You can also view the Medicaid Member Handbook [here on SCDHHS' website](#) to learn more about what is covered, where to go to ask questions and more.

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