



Healthy and Connected Member Newsletter - April 28, 2021

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.

Make Sure Your Infant is Caught up on Their Shots

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) began April 24. Shots help children live long and healthy lives. It is important to make sure your child's vaccines are given on time. Below shows the recommended ages for regular vaccinations for children. Any shot not given at the suggested age should be given at the child's next visit.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommended schedules are below:

- [Birth – 6 Years](#)
- [7-18 Years](#)

[NIIW Overview](#)

National Women's Health Week: Making Women's Health a Priority

The [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' \(HHS\) Office on Women's Health \(OWH\)](#) leads National Women's Health Week (NWHW). This year, NWHW is May 9-15.

It is important for all females to take care of themselves. It is especially important for those with other health conditions. Taking steps for better



health is not always easy. Every woman has her own way and is on her own personal health journey.

OWH says, “physical activity can help your mental health. Getting regular physical activity is one of the best things you can do for your health.” It also says regular physical activity can help:

- Lower your blood pressure and cholesterol
- Lower your risk of dying early
- Help you lose weight (if you combine it with cutting calories) or keep your weight where it is as you get older
- Improve depression
- Improve sleep
- Lower your risk of diseases such as breast cancer, colon cancer, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.

[Visit OWH's Website](#)

Five Plays for Men's Health

[Men's Health Month](#) in June encourages males to make healthy living decisions. The CDC says, “men in the United States, on average, die five years earlier than women and die at higher rates from the three leading causes of death, heart disease, cancer and unintentional injuries.” Take control of your family's health by teaching healthy habits when kids are little.

HHS' Office of Minority Health has developed the ["Five Plays for Men's Health:"](#)

1. **We will protect this heart:** Heart disease is the number one killer of men. Healthier food choices build a healthier heart – make fruits and vegetables half of your plate.
2. **Bro, you do not even have to lift:** Getting just 30 minutes of exercise each day can help you live longer and healthier.
3. **Preventive maintenance:** Getting regular check-ups can catch small problems before they become big problems.
4. **Quitting time:** Smoking causes cancer, heart disease, stroke, and...a greater risk of erectile dysfunction.
5. **Hey man, you good?** Life can get tough and thinking things through with a mental health professional can help.

Alcohol Awareness

April is National Alcohol Awareness Month. The [National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence](#) started this awareness effort “as a way of increasing outreach and education regarding the dangers of alcoholism and issues related to alcohol.”

The South Carolina Department of Mental Health (DMH) and Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services (DAODAS) joined to start [SC Hopes](#) for people with mental health or substance use disorders because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you are concerned you may have a drug or alcohol problem, addiction experts will assist you in finding the help you need. Their experienced team of mental health and addiction counselors are available day or night. Call SC Hopes anytime toll-free: 1-844-SC-HOPES (724-6737).

[SC Hopes Flyer](#)

How is Your Mental Health?

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Millions of Americans are affected by mental health issues. The [National Alliance on Mental Illness](#) (NAMI) says, “one in five adults in the U.S., 51.5 million people, experienced mental illness in 2019.”

Healthy Connections Medicaid members are covered for many mental and behavioral health services. The South Carolina chapter of NAMI also has many ways to support. These services are offered across the state. Click below to learn more from NAMI.

If you, or someone you know, is having a mental health emergency, DMH has a statewide crisis response team. You can call them anytime at 833-364-2274.

[Learn More from NAMI](#)

Practice Safe Sun to Avoid Skin Cancer

May is Skin Cancer Awareness Month. As you head outdoors remember to “practice safe sun.” Skin cancer is the most common cancer in the U.S. The [American Academy of Dermatology](#), says “one in five Americans will develop skin cancer in their lifetime.”

Sunscreen can help lower the risk of skin cancer. It is an important tool in the fight against skin cancer, including melanoma, the worst kind.

[Learn More About Skin Cancer](#)

Autism Awareness Month

April is Autism Awareness Month. Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a developmental disability that causes many challenges. ASD can usually be diagnosed before a child's third birthday. People with ASD usually do not look different than other people. People with ASD may communicate, interact, behave or learn in ways that are different from others. Some people need a lot of help in their daily lives. Others do not.

The [CDC says](#) some children or adults with ASD might:

- Not point at objects to show interest (for example, not point at an airplane flying over)
- Not look at objects when another person points at them
- Have trouble relating to others or not have an interest in other people at all
- Avoid eye contact and want to be alone
- Have trouble understanding other people's feelings or talking about their own feelings
- Repeat or echo words or phrases said to them, or repeat words or phrases in place of normal language
- Have trouble expressing their needs using typical words or motions
- Repeat actions repeatedly
- Have trouble adapting with routine change

Healthy Connections Medicaid covers many ASD services. Call the Member Contact Center at (888) 549-0820 to learn more. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is used to treat ASD. To be eligible for ABA, a person must:

- Be a Healthy Connections Medicaid member;
- Be between ages 0-21; and,
- Have been diagnosed with [ASD](#) after a full report.

Contact an ABA provider to ask for an authorization for ASD program services. The [ASD provider list](#) can be found [here on SCDHHS' autism website](#).

[Learn More from the CDC](#)

June is Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month

Alzheimer's and Brain Awareness Month focuses on making Alzheimer's disease more known. The Alzheimer's Association's South Carolina Chapter says, "more than 95,000 South Carolinians are living with Alzheimer's disease, and more than 318,000 family and friends are providing care for them."

The Alzheimer's Association lists [10 Warning signs of Alzheimer's](#). Warning signs include:

1. Memory loss that disrupts daily life
2. Challenges in planning or solving problems
3. Difficulty completing familiar tasks
4. Confusion with time or place
5. Trouble understanding visual images and spatial relationships
6. New problems with words in speaking or writing
7. Misplacing things and losing the ability to retrace steps
8. Decreased or poor judgment
9. Withdrawal from work or social activities
10. Changes in mood and personality

Thank you for reading Healthy and Connected, the next edition is scheduled for June 2021. 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.