



WHOLE you

2023 | Q1 BULLETIN



Welcome

We welcome you to another edition of *Whole You*, a newsletter from Peach State Health Plan.

We have plenty of helpful tips to help you continue the year strong. You'll learn more about key information on heart disease, healthy alternatives to your favorite snacks, and why wellness visits are so important.

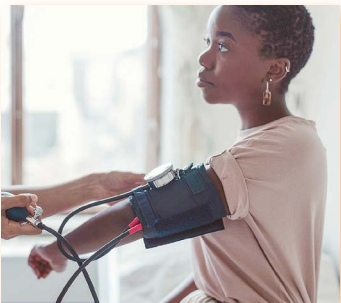
And remember to look at the Peach State Health Plan [events calendar](#) to keep up with things happening in your community.

Don't forget about your Medicaid redetermination. It's the eligibility process you must go through to keep your Medicaid coverage. You may need to act to keep your coverage.

Please visit [Georgia Gateway](#) to see if you still qualify for Medicaid. If you no longer qualify, don't worry — our [Marketplace](#) plans could be an option. Read more about it in our [article](#) in this edition.

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The Importance of Wellness Visits

In the past, people only went to the doctor when they, or someone they knew, was sick. But as time has gone on, we know that even if you seem healthy it doesn't mean that you are.

And if we can stop illnesses early, we can reach better outcomes. That's why preventive care has become a big part of healthcare today, and why checkups with your doctor are key.

Making yearly checkups, often called wellness visits, a habit is always recommended.

But why are they so important? As stated earlier, these visits allow doctors the chance to catch diseases sooner. In turn, that allows for an increase of successful treatments and reduces your healthcare costs. Another benefit of regular visits is that your doctor can assess your overall health. Your care provider can review prescriptions, check vaccination statuses, examine your body with screenings, and give lifestyle advice to improve your health. Finally, wellness visits help establish a relationship with your doctor. The more your doctor knows about you and your history, the better your treatment can be.

But wellness visits aren't just for your doctor, they're for you, too. Visits are a great time to ask questions, raise concerns, and learn more about how to care for your health. And with My Health Pays® rewards and transportation benefits, there's never been a better time to make a trip to the doctor. Consider bringing these questions with you to your next checkup.



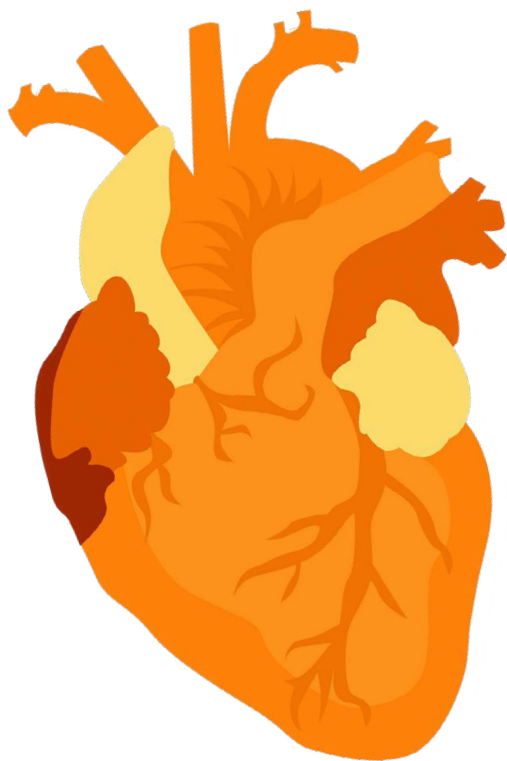
QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- ***Am I due for any vaccinations?***
- ***Are there any screenings you think I should get?***
- ***Does my family history put me at risk for any illnesses?***
- ***Are there lifestyle changes I should make?***
- ***Do I need any changes to my prescriptions?***
- ***Can you explain my test results?***
- ***Are the symptoms I'm experiencing normal?***
- ***Do I need a specialist? And will I need a referral?***
- ***Will I need a follow-up visit?***

Keep Your Heart Pumping

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. About 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. The term “heart disease” can describe a range of conditions such as coronary artery disease, heart rhythm problems, heart defects from birth, heart valve disease, and heart infections.

With lifestyle changes, and in some cases medicine, you can prevent and reduce your risk for heart disease.



Here's some key info to remember:

RISK FACTORS:

Major factors that can lead to developing heart disease are high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and smoking. About half of people in the United States have at least one of these three risk factors. But that's not the only thing that can put you in danger of heart disease. You can be at a higher risk if you have diabetes, are overweight, have an unhealthy diet, are physically inactive, and/or use alcohol excessively.

WARNING SIGNS:

When it comes to heart disease, it can be tough to watch for symptoms. Signs range depending on the type of heart disease that person has, and it can take a heart attack, heart failure, or an arrhythmia to get a diagnosis. Symptoms may include chest pain, upper body pain, indigestion, heartburn, nausea or vomiting, extreme fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, fluttering feelings in the chest, or swelling of body parts.

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SEXES:

Men and women experience heart disease in different ways. For example, men typically feel chest pressure with a heart attack, while women experience nausea, sweating, and body pain. Men also generally develop heart disease at a younger age and have a higher risk of coronary heart disease than women. Women, in contrast, are at a higher risk of stroke, which often occurs at an older age.

STAYING HEALTHY:

Some causes of heart disease can't be prevented. But there are things you can control to reduce your risk. Keep an eye on high blood pressure and cholesterol, make sure to exercise, and eat a diet that's low in salt and saturated fat. Ask your doctor about more ways you can stay healthy.

Preparing for Spring Weather



Spring is the time of year when many things change including the weather. Temperatures can swing from balmy and frigid. Sunny days may be followed by a week of stormy weather.

Thunderstorms cause a lot of the severe spring weather. They can bring lightning, tornadoes, and flooding. Whenever warm moist air meets with cool dry air thunderstorms can occur. This most commonly occurs in the spring and summer. When severe weather hits unexpectedly, the risk of injury and death increases.

Often by the time we are aware of an approaching storm we have little if any time to prepare. Take the surprise factor out of severe weather. Prepare yourself, your family, and your home. If thunderstorms, tornadoes, and floods do occur, you'll be ready for them.

Keep an emergency kit on hand. Some items to include are:

- A battery-operated flashlight, a battery-operated radio, and extra batteries for both.
- An emergency evacuation or shelter plan of your home.
- A list of important personal information like: telephone numbers of neighbors, family and friends; insurance information; and medical information.

According to the American Red Cross a first aid kit may include:

Non-latex gloves	Assortment of adhesive bandages
Antibiotic ointment	Sterile gauze pads in assorted sizes
Absorbent compress dressings	Tweezers
Scissors	Adhesive cloth tape
Aspirin packets (81 mg each)	First aid instruction booklet
3-5 day supply of bottled water and non-perishable food	Personal hygiene items
Blankets or sleeping bags	Emergency Kit for your car

Prepare your family members for the possibility of severe weather.

- Tell them where to seek appropriate shelter as soon as they are aware of an approaching storm.
- Practice your emergency plan for every type of severe weather.
- Show family members where the emergency supplies are kept.
- You may also need to make sure they know how to turn off the water, gas, and electricity in your home.

Switching it Up: Tips for Healthier Snacking

We all know the feeling of cravings. There are those delicious snacks and meals out there that we would do anything to get our hands on. But oftentimes the food we crave can be unhealthy for us. And if we eat that food too often, it can lead to bad health outcomes for our bodies. But if certain snacks and meals are so unhealthy, why does our body crave those foods?

Despite what some believe, our bodies do not crave certain foods because we're lacking the nutrients found in them. Our food cravings are caused by a multitude of factors, but mainly we crave food because our body seeks serotonin — the hormone commonly associated with making people feel happy. When we experience things like stress and anxiety, our brain chemistry gets messed up. Ingredients in

snacks, such as refined carbohydrates, give us a short-term surge in serotonin that helps our body balance our brain chemistry.

It may not be easy, but there are ways to substitute junk foods for delicious and healthier alternatives. Here are some good snacks you can try the next time you're feeling a craving.

Healthier Snacks:

- Fresh Fruit
- Greek Yogurt
- Dark Chocolate
- Plantain Chips
- Trail Mix
- Oatmeal or Cream of Wheat
- Hummus With Vegetables
- Sweet Potato Fries
- Baked Tortilla Chips
- Cottage Cheese



Year-Round Checklist

As we move into spring, many of us have are still working on our resolutions and hopes for the coming months. Often people say they'll start heading to the gym or begin that new healthier lifestyle. But a lot of us end up forgetting or losing interest as time goes on. That's why we've created this handy checklist and calendar for you to track your goals and maintain a healthy lifestyle!

RESOLUTION	COMPLETE BY	DONE?
		<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N
		<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N
		<input type="radio"/> Y <input type="radio"/> N
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NOTES

JANUARY 	FEBRUARY 	MARCH 	APRIL 	MAY 	JUNE
JULY 	AUGUST 	SEPTEMBER 	OCTOBER 	NOVEMBER 	DECEMBER

Staying Safe with Safe-Sex Habits

Pleasure is important, but keeping yourself protected is, too.

Sex can come with some risks and life-altering consequences if you're not prepared for them. Here are some helpful tips so you can have fun and stay safe:

TALK FIRST: Before engaging in sexual activities, think twice about your new partner. Consider discussing your sexual histories. And whether you have one or multiple partners, be sure to set some boundaries and clear expectations as well. Don't forget to be aware of you and your partner's body. Look out for sores, blisters, rashes, or other symptoms, and talk to your doctor about any concerns.

USE CONDOMS: If you aren't looking to start a family, every time you have sex you should use a condom. It can protect you from STDs, STIs, and help to prevent pregnancy. Condoms are widely accessible, hormone-free, come in male and female varieties, and can easily be carried with you wherever you go. Just make sure you get the right condom for you, as improper sizes can lead to condoms failing and materials like latex can cause issues for those who are allergic.

CONTRACEPTIVES: Along with a condom, there are other ways to prevent an unplanned pregnancy. Women can take oral contraceptive pills, use an intrauterine device (IUD), a hormonal implant or injection, or an emergency contraceptive pill. Talk to your doctor about what's best for you.

AVOID SUBSTANCES: Before engaging in sex, avoid using drugs or alcohol. These substances can alter your state of mind and might lead you to participate in higher-risk sex.

SEX MYTHS: A key part of having safe sex is knowing what not to do. Some common myths are that condoms protect against all STDs and that the pull-out method won't get a woman pregnant. Although very effective, condoms do not work 100% of the time against all diseases, and the pull-out method is not an approved form of birth control. All men secrete fluid during sex and studies have shown that these fluids do contain active sperm. Make sure to stay informed on best practices so you can be wary of other false sex myths.



3 Ways to Stay Informed About Your Medicaid Coverage

Medicaid Redetermination is coming soon.

By law, Georgia will soon be redetermining everyone's eligibility.

Here are 3 reliable ways to update your contact information before it's too late!



Online

HOW: You can log in and update your contact information at [Georgia Gateway](#).

Available 24/7. This is the fastest way to stay informed.



In-Person

HOW: You can schedule an appointment at your local Division of Children and Families Office (DFCS) and they'll help you get updated.

Case managers are available by appointment only.



By Phone

HOW: You can update their contact information by calling **1-877-GA-DHS-GO (1-877-423-4746)**

Or dial 711 if you are deaf, hard-of-hearing, deaf-blind, or have problems with speech.

Available for those who need extra support.



Take advantage of these options to stay informed about your Medicaid status now and in the future.

Once you have updated your contact information, **be sure to check your mail and email for information from the State of Georgia about coverage and renewal requirements.**

Every eligible Georgia Medicaid member has a right to continue receiving uninterrupted health benefits. However, you must respond to requests for required information in a timely manner to avoid a gap in coverage.

For more information, you can visit [staycovered.ga.gov](#) and [Georgia Gateway](#)

For your privacy and security, only update your contact information on the official DHS Gateway site, at a DFCS office or through the official DHS phone system. Services, including interpreters are free. If you are deaf, hard of hearing, deaf-blind or have difficulty speaking, you can call us at the number above by dialing 711.

Stay connected and more:

Your [online member account](#) is a great way to not only stay up to date with important plan information but also to help improve your health!

Look at everything you can do:

- Manage your **myhealthpays**® rewards
- Find or change your doctor
- Get care through our virtual health services
- Join our Start Smart for Your Baby®
- View your claims status and more!



pshp.com • 1-800-704-1484 (TDD/TYY 1-800-255-0056)

Peach State Health Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex

Do you need help understanding this? You can get information in another language, large print, braille or audio. Call: 1-800-704-1484 (TTY/TDD 1-800-255-0056).

Si usted, o alguien a quien está ayudando, tiene preguntas acerca de Peach State Health Plan, tiene derecho a obtener ayuda e información en su idioma sin costo alguno. Para hablar con un intérprete, llame al 1-800-704-1484 (TTY/TDD 1-800-255-0056).

Nếu quý vị, hay người mà quý vị đang giúp đỡ, có câu hỏi về Peach State Health Plan, quý vị sẽ có quyền được giúp và có thêm thông tin bằng ngôn ngữ của mình miễn phí. Để nói chuyện với một thông dịch viên, xin gọi 1-800-704-1484 (TTY/TDD 1-800-255-0056).