



CHOICE
Health Plans

Member News

VNSNY CHOICE Total (HMO D-SNP) Member Newsletter

Winter 2020



IN THIS ISSUE

2

See Your Doctor In Person
Using Your OTC and Grocery
Card Benefit

New in 2021 –
Healthy CHOICE Healthy You

3

Protecting Your Health
during a Medical Crisis
Physical Activity Does
a Body Good!

You Can Prevent Falling This Winter

Chances are you know someone who has fallen, and it probably happened at home, perhaps causing a broken hip or head injury. The good news is that you can take steps to prevent a fall.

Pay attention to balance and vision.

- Talk to your doctor about whether any of your medications can affect your balance or cause dizziness.
- Use a cane or walker for extra support if you have arthritis or knee pain.
- See your optometrist (eye doctor) once a year to ensure that you can see well.
Good vision helps you avoid tripping or missing a step that can cause you to fall.

Fall-proof your bathroom.

- Install grab-bars and a non-slip rubber mat in your shower or tub.
- Remove clutter and clear a path from your bedroom to the bathroom.

Keep everyday items handy.

- Keep things that you use frequently like your phone, TV remote, list of emergency contacts and glasses in easy to reach places.

ncoa.org/healthy-aging/falls-prevention/

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1 in 4 older Americans falls every year. Falls are the leading cause of injuries for people aged 65+. (National Council on Aging).

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See Your Doctor In Person

During the ongoing COVID-19 emergency, seeing your doctor in person for important medical tests is still sometimes recommended.

When Only an In-Office Visit Will Do!

If you have chronic conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure, it's important to see your doctor in person to have certain blood tests and screenings (based on your doctor's recommendations). These include:

- Hemoglobin A1c (3-month average blood sugar)
- Blood Pressure
- Spirometry (breathing test)
- Cancer Screenings, including breast and colon
- Flu Shot
- A routine visit with your dentist and eye doctor

Staying Safe During COVID-19

The doctor's office may require you to:

- Wait until you're called to come into the office
- Get your temperature checked
- Wear a face covering for the entire visit

An in-office visit is also the time to discuss any issues around managing your chronic conditions and whether your medications are working well.

Telehealth Is Also Available

Telehealth may be the right choice for a behavioral health issue or a minor medical ailment like a sore throat when you can't get to the doctor. Telehealth allows you to use your phone, computer or tablet (with or without video) to speak with your doctor.

Using Your OTC and Grocery Card Benefit

Great news! **Starting January 1, 2021**, your over-the-counter (OTC) card benefit increases to **\$132 a month** and can be used to buy eligible OTC and grocery items. There is no out-of-pocket cost to you, up to the maximum monthly benefit amount. For details of this program and how to use this benefit, refer to the **2021 Over-the-Counter (OTC) and Grocery Program Catalog** or call Member Services at 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711), 8 am – 8 pm, 7 days a week.



Healthy CHOICE Healthy You

As of January 1, 2021, members are automatically enrolled in **Healthy CHOICE Healthy You**, a program that rewards you for making your health a priority.

You can earn \$25 for each health activity you complete. Below are the qualifying activities:

- ✓ Annual wellness visit and flu shot
- ✓ Retinal eye exam for diabetes
- ✓ Mammogram
- ✓ Colon cancer screening
- ✓ Blood Pressure reading for hypertension
- ✓ Hemoglobin A1c for diabetes
- ✓ Statin treatment for cardiovascular disease

Be on the lookout for the details of the Healthy CHOICE Healthy You program in the mail.

Protecting Your Health during a Medical Crisis

COVID-19 continues to be a major health concern. Combined with the flu season, we are facing a serious health emergency.



This year, more than at any other time in recent history, it's important that you get your flu vaccine. Getting a flu shot is a critical step in protecting your health and those around you.

The symptoms of COVID-19 and the flu are very similar, including fever, body aches, cough and difficulty breathing. If you get both at once, you can get very sick and may need to be hospitalized.

Protect yourself by:

- Washing your hands often
- Wearing a mask when around others who don't live in your household
- Getting your flu shot

The flu shot is available at no cost to you. For help finding a location near you with vaccines, call Member Services at 1-866-783-1444, 8 am – 8 pm, 7 days a week.

Physical Activity Does a Body Good!

Make exercise a daily habit. Walk inside or outside, lift your arms over your head, flex your legs up and down, side by side, whether you're sitting or standing. It all counts.

Moving your body can:

- Help you get or stay at a healthy weight.
- Improve your immune system so that you can better fight off disease.
- Strengthen your heart and keep your arteries clear.
- Lower blood pressure and blood sugar.
- Lower the risk of falling by improving strength and flexibility, which also can help improve balance.
- Improve your sleep and boost your mood.

thegreenfields.org/



You May Receive a Call from a CHOICE Representative

VNSNY CHOICE Total uses a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) questionnaire to screen you for current and future health risks and check your health status over time. An HRA allows us to know what your health risks are so that we can offer ways to improve your physical and mental well-being.

You may receive a call from CHOICE to conduct an HRA that will take under 15 minutes.

If we can't reach you by phone, we'll mail you the HRA questionnaire and ask that you complete it and send it back in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided. Your responses are confidential, and will not affect your benefits, but can help us help you live a healthier life.

VNSNY CHOICE Health Plans complies with Federal civil rights laws. VNSNY CHOICE Health Plans does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, religion, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)。

Help Us Help You Better!

We're committed to being the best CHOICE for you. That's why, we wanted to let you know ahead of time, that beginning in late December, you may be asked to complete a Member Satisfaction Survey by mail.

What is it? The Member Satisfaction Survey measures your experience and satisfaction with the services you receive from the long term care part of your health plan.

Who sends the survey? Island Peer Review Organization (IPRO), on behalf of the New York State Department of Health.

Why is it important? We want to hear from you because we value your feedback. Our goal is to be the best possible CHOICE for you.

Is the survey anonymous? Yes. We won't know who completed the survey and filling it out will not impact your benefits in any way.

We thank you in advance for completing the survey and for being a member of VNSNY CHOICE Total (HMO D-SNP). If you have any questions about your health plan, call Member Services at the number below.



CHOICESM
Health Plans

Member Services:

Call 1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)

7 days a week, 8 am – 8 pm

VNSNY CHOICE Total is an HMO D-SNP plan with a Medicare contract. The plan is also a Medicaid Advantage Plus plan, with a contract with the New York State Department of Health. Enrollment in VNSNY CHOICE Total depends on contract renewal.



CHOICE
Health Plans

VNSNY CHOICE

220 East 42nd Street, 3rd Floor
New York, NY 10017

www.vnsnychoice.org

Member Services:

1-866-783-1444 (TTY: 711)
8 am – 8 pm, 7 days a week

Transportation Reminder

To schedule your transportation, please call **LogistiCare** at least 48 hours in advance at:
1-877-718-4219 (TTY: 711), 8 am – 8 pm, Monday – Friday.

If Something Seems Wrong, Tell Us.

VNSNY CHOICE is committed to finding and stopping fraud, waste or abuse in our health care plans.

Anonymous Reporting

VNSNY CHOICE Compliance Hotline: 1-888-634-1558.
File an online report at: vnsny.ethicspoint.com.
Learn more at: www.vnsnychoice.org/compliance-program



CHOICE
Health Plans

Healthy Veggie Soup



This easy, veggie-packed soup comes together in no time, but tastes like it took hours.
Serves 6

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp olive or vegetable oil
- 1 medium onion and zucchini and 4 medium carrots (diced)
- 2 stalks celery (diced)
- 1 garlic clove (minced)
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp salt and ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 14 oz can diced tomatoes
- 4 cups vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 ½ cups (14 oz can) beans (kidney, cannellini, black or pinto beans)
- ½ cup chopped parsley or 1 tsp dried
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar

Instructions

1. In a large pot heat olive/vegetable oil over medium heat.
2. Add the onion, carrots and celery and cook until softened, about 5 minutes.
3. Add the zucchini, garlic, thyme, salt and black pepper and cook 1 minute.
4. Add tomatoes, broth and beans. Bring to a boil, simmer uncovered until the zucchini is tender, about 5 minutes.
5. Stir in parsley and simmer for one more minute.
6. Remove from heat and stir in red wine vinegar. ENJOY!

Inside... *Protecting Your Health during a Medical Crisis*