



Enjoying Life

Aetna Better Health® of New York - Fall 2022

Keeping up with vaccinations

We know there is a lot of information out there on COVID-19. The CDC recommends updated COVID-19 boosters from Pfizer-BioNTech for people ages 12 years and older and from Moderna for people ages 18 years and older. Updated COVID-19 boosters add Omicron BA.4 and BA.5 components to the current vaccines, helping to restore protection that has decreased since previous vaccination by targeting specific variants. You can always talk to your doctor about booster shots.

Monkeypox

Signs to look for.

People with monkeypox get a rash that may be located on or near the genitals, anus, hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth. The rash can initially look like pimples or blisters and may be painful or itchy. Symptoms usually start within 3 weeks of exposure to the virus. The illness typically lasts 2-4 weeks. Monkeypox can be spread through contact with bodily fluids and direct or close contact from a person with monkeypox. This includes touching scabs, rashes, objects (clothing, bedding, or towels), and surfaces that have been used by someone with monkeypox. Anyone, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, who has been in close, personal contact with someone who has monkeypox is at risk.

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Influenza

Be safe, get your flu shot.

It's flu season and because the virus changes all the time, it's important to get your flu shot every year. Flu vaccines have been updated for the 2022-2023 season. For most people who need only one dose for the season, September and October are generally good times to get vaccinated. While it is recommended to get vaccinated by end of October, it is important to know that vaccination after October can still provide protection during the peak of flu season.

Health Care Proxy

A Health Care Proxy (HCP) allows you to choose someone you trust as your representative to make health care decisions for you. If you cannot make medical decisions for yourself, a Health Care Proxy lets your health care providers know who you want making care decisions for you. If you have not yet filled out a Health Care Proxy form or if you have changes you want made, speak to your Care Manager to find out how to obtain a HCP form or go online to www.health.ny.gov/publications/1430.pdf. Just download a blank copy.

Sources:

www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2022/s0901-covid-19-booster.html
www.cdc.gov/flu/
www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html



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Taste of Autumn Tea (serving size: 1 cup)

Get festive with fall and share this recipe for a seasonal beverage!

Ingredients:

- 4-5 tea bags.
- 5 cups of boiling water.
- 4-5 cups of unsweetened apple juice.
- 1/2-2 cups of cranberry juice.
- 1/3-1/2 cup of sugar (depending on preference).
- 1/3 cup of lemon juice.
- 1/4 teaspoon of pumpkin pie spice.

Instructions:

1. Place the tea bags in a heat proof container.
2. Add boiling water.
3. Cover and steep for 7 to 10 minutes depending on preference.
4. Discard tea bags, add remaining ingredients to tea and stir until sugar/spice is dissolved.
5. Enjoy warm or over ice.



Our Member Service team is here for you.

If you have questions, call us at **1-855-456-9126 (TTY: 711)**. We're here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You can also go to our website at **AetnaBetterHealth.com/NewYork**.

This newsletter is published as a community service for the friends and members of Aetna Better Health® of New York. This is general health information and should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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Depression and suicide are significant public health issues for older adults. Depression is one of the most common mental disorders experienced by elders. Did you know older adults have the highest rates of suicide of any age group? It's also more common among men than women.

Suicide can touch anyone, anywhere, and at any time but it is not inevitable. There is hope. If you are feeling alone and having thoughts of suicide—whether you are in crisis or know someone who is, don't remain silent. Talking with someone about your thoughts and feelings can save your life. There are steps you can take to keep yourself safe through a crisis such as: finding a therapist/support group, building, and using a support network and making a safety plan for yourself.

What are the signs?

- Talking about wanting to die or kill oneself.
- Talking about being a burden to others.
- Increasing the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Anxious, agitated, or reckless behavior.
- Sleeping too much or too little.
- Withdrawing or feeling isolated.
- Displays of extreme mood swings.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is now: 988

Providing 24/7, free and confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress works. The Lifeline helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day. The **988** Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) offers 24/7 call, text and chat access to trained crisis counselors who can help people experiencing suicidal, substance use, and/or mental health crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress. People can also dial **988** if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.

Need support now?

If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text **988** or chat **988lifeline.org**.

Sources:

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>
<https://www.samhsa.gov/suicide>



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