



# Health & Wellness Newsletter



August 2020

## You can manage your chronic condition

Chronic conditions, such as arthritis or diabetes, can have multiple causes and symptoms that vary over time. One of the most important steps to manage your condition is to understand as much about it as you can and make choices that help you manage your health, such as:

### Take your medicine as ordered by your doctor.

Read the label on your prescription to make sure you take your medicine correctly. It is important to know how much medicine to take and take the medicine as long as ordered by your doctor. If you are confused about your medicine, call your pharmacy or talk with your doctor.

### Questions to ask your doctor or pharmacist:

- Why do I need to take this medicine?
- When should I take it?
- What is my dose?
- What if I forget to take my medicine?
- Does this medicine have any side effects?
- Are there any foods I should not eat while I take this medicine?

It may help to use a chart to keep track of your medicines. A pill box or daily alarm can help you remember to take your medicine each day.

### Make healthy choices each day.

Your diet can make a big difference in managing your chronic condition. Try to add one fruit and one vegetable at each meal. Fruits and vegetables are packed with nutrients that help you maintain a healthy weight, gain energy, and help prevent additional chronic conditions.

*(continued on back)*

## Don't let the fear of falling stop you

The fear of falling can lead a person to avoid activities that they can otherwise do. People who fall (or nearly fall) may become less active or stop doing activities they enjoy, thinking that will keep them safe from falls. While being aware of your falls risk is important, limiting yourself because you are afraid of falling puts you at higher risk of falling.

Gaining confidence is one of the best ways to reduce the fear of falling. One important way you can become more confident is to improve your strength and balance. Starting an exercise routine at home, finding a program or class, or simply going for a walk are all ways that will help improve balance and increase strength. Feeling stronger and steadier on your feet will help to decrease your fear of falling.

Some other ways you can reduce your risk of falling - and your fear - is by paying attention to the "Three H's:" your home, health, and habits.

**Home:** Most falls happen in the home, so falls prevention begins there. Start with small changes. Try to keep walkways and stairs clear of clutter and store food, dishes and equipment within easy reach in your kitchen.

**Health:** A healthy body is a steady body. As we age, our bodies change. Make healthy choices and talk with your health care team about your falls risk and any history of falls.

**Habits:** The things you do every day can affect your risk of falls. Choose safe and healthy habits to keep you steady on your feet. For example, sit to get dressed instead of standing. Do not balance on one leg when you put on pants, socks or shoes. Ask for help with tasks that you are not

**Stay hydrated.**

Water helps to keep your body working well. It is important to drink plenty of water each day. Drink at least 8 cups of water each day, unless your doctor tells you otherwise. Try to switch out one of your other beverages, such as soda pop or juice, for a cup of water this week.

comfortable doing or that you feel you are unable to do safely.

Visit [www.steadyu.gov](http://www.steadyu.gov) to find more falls prevention tips and resources.

**Easy Exercise - Marching**

- Stand with your back straight and knees slightly bent;
- Hold onto something sturdy, like a chair or countertop;
- Slowly lift your feet slightly off the floor to march in place;
- March 20 steps with each leg one to two times each day.

As you grow stronger, you also can try to:

- Close your eyes as you march to challenge your balance; or
- Raise your knees higher as you march.

**Partner Information**

**Announcements**

**10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls:** For the last five years, we have celebrated Falls Prevention Awareness Day (FPAD) by hosting our 10 Million Steps to Prevent Falls campaign. Due to the current health crisis and our intention to promote the safety of all Ohioans who participate, the traditional FPAD event will look different this year.

While we will be unable to have large groups walk in the name of falls prevention, we will have another campaign to recognize FPAD and promote the importance to raise awareness about falls prevention. Stay tuned for more information on our FPAD activities and how you and the older adults you serve can participate.

**Program Spotlight**

**Diabetes Self-Management Program**

The Diabetes Self-Management Program (DSMP) consists of small group interactive workshops, 2 1/2 hours a week for six weeks. Each workshop is facilitated by a pair of leaders, one or both of whom live with diabetes. DSMP is designed to enhance regular treatment. It gives participants the skills to coordinate all the things needed to manage their diabetes, as well as to help them keep active and maintain their health.

During the COVID-19 crisis, DSMP has been approved for remote implementation.

To learn more about how you can offer the Diabetes Self-Management Program, contact your [area agency on aging](#) at 1-866-243-5678.