

# HEALTHY LIVING



## Protect yourself from sunburn

Did you know a sunburn is not immediately apparent? Symptoms usually start about four hours after sun exposure, worsen in 24–36 hours and resolve in three to five days. They can include red, tender and swollen skin, blistering, headache, fever, nausea and fatigue.

First aid for sunburn includes:

- Take aspirin, acetaminophen or ibuprofen to relieve pain, headache and fever
- Drink plenty of water to help replace fluid loss
- Comfort burns with cool baths or gentle application of cool wet cloths
- Avoid further exposure until the burn has resolved
- Use of a topical moisturizing cream, aloe or 1% hydrocortisone cream for additional relief
- If blistering occurs, lightly bandage or cover the area with gauze to prevent infection. Do not break blisters as this slows healing and increases risk of infection. When the blisters break, remove dried skin and apply antiseptic ointment or hydrocortisone cream.

Seek medical attention if any of the following occur:

- Severe sunburns covering more than 15% of the body
- Dehydration
- High fever (over 101 °F)
- Extreme pain that lasts longer than 48 hours

Stay safe this summer! Always use sunscreen and reapply often if in water or outside for long periods.

A wellness newsletter for MercyCare Health Plans members

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## DID YOU KNOW?

**About one in 10 people has had a seizure.**

Someone having a seizure may appear to stare blankly, have a loss of awareness, involuntarily blink, chew or make other facial movements, lose consciousness, cry out, fall to the ground or have muscle jerks.

**Important things to do if someone has a seizure:**

- Stay calm and speak reassuringly
- Guide the person away from dangers
- Block access to dangerous items, but don't restrain the person
- Stay a distance away if the person is agitated, but close enough to protect him until full awareness returns

**Important things NOT to do:**

- Do not hold the person down or try to stop her movements
- Do not put anything in the person's mouth. (Efforts to hold the tongue down can injure the teeth or jaw. A person having a seizure cannot swallow her tongue.)
- Do not attempt artificial respiration unless the person does not start breathing again after the seizure stops, which is unlikely
- Do not offer the person water or food until alert

Healthy Living is published by MercyCare Health Plans to inform its members of current health issues and improve the use of MCHP services. This publication should not replace the care and advice of your doctor. Always talk to your health care professional about your personal health needs.



## From the store to your table

Being healthy includes eating fruits and vegetables, which add nutrients to your diet, reduce your risk for heart disease, stroke and some cancers, and can help you manage your body weight.

Unfortunately, harmful germs such as salmonella, E. coli and listeria can sometimes live on fruits and vegetables and make you and your family sick. Fortunately, there are tips you can use to help keep you healthy—and your fruits and vegetables safe to eat—from the store to your table:

**Check for bruises.** Choose fruits and vegetables free of bruises or damaged spots, unless you plan to cook them.

**Keep precut fruits and vegetables cold.** Choose precut and packaged fruits and vegetables that are refrigerated or kept on ice. When at home, refrigerate your cut, peeled or cooked fruits and vegetables as soon as possible, or within two hours.

**Separate your food.** Keep fruits and vegetables away from raw meat, poultry and seafood in your shopping cart and grocery bags.

**Wash everything.** Wash your hands before preparing fruits and vegetables. Wash all produce under running water before eating, cutting or cooking. Always wash your cutting boards, countertops and utensils as well.



## Mercy offers new options for patients

Javon R. Bea, Mercy Health System President and CEO

Rock County residents will soon have access to a new hospital specially designed to serve women and children. Mercyhealth, the new system comprised of Mercy Health System and Rockford Health System, plans to build a facility at the intersection of E. Riverside Boulevard and I-90 in Rockford—just 20 minutes from Janesville.

The new E. Riverside Boulevard campus will have 188 inpatient beds in private rooms and expanded patient services. Other offerings include:

- State-of-the-art women's and children's hospital
- Neonatal intensive care unit (NICU)
- Pediatric and pediatric intensive care (PICU) units
- High-risk, state-designated perinatal care
- Pediatric emergency services
- Level I (highest level) trauma center
- State-of-the-art operating suites and surgical services to support a full range of inpatient and outpatient surgery, including minimally invasive surgery and image-guided surgery
- Comprehensive diagnostic center, with lab and imaging
- Outpatient primary and specialty physician care clinics

The new hospital will offer a full range of pediatric subspecialties, including pediatric cardiologists, endocrinologists, gastroenterologists, intensivists, neurologists, pulmonologists, surgeons and hospitalists—many of whom will be rotating to Rock County clinics.

The new health system plans to break ground on the new campus this June and will open in 2018. We are excited to offer these new specialists to meet the growing needs of our patients and MercyCare members.



## Why seniors need the shingles vaccine

Philip Bedrossian, MD, MercyCare Health Plans Medical Director

Every year you age, your risk of shingles increases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends people 60 years old and older get a shingles vaccine. Protection from shingles vaccine lasts about five years, so adults vaccinated before they are 60 years old might not be protected later in life when the risk for shingles and its complications are greatest. There is no maximum age for getting shingles vaccine.

Zostavax® is the only shingles vaccine currently approved for use in America. This vaccine reduces the risk of developing shingles by 51%. It is given in one dose as a shot and can be given in your doctor's office or your local pharmacy.

People 60 years of age or older should get the vaccine whether or not they recall having had chickenpox, which is caused by the same virus as shingles. Studies show more than 99% of Americans age 40 and older have had chickenpox, even if they don't remember getting the disease.

Even if you have had shingles, you can still receive a shingles vaccine to help prevent future occurrences of the disease. There is no specific length of time you must wait after having shingles before receiving shingles vaccine, but generally you should make sure the shingles rash has disappeared before getting vaccinated. The decision on when to get vaccinated should be made with your doctor.

Talk with your doctor if you have questions about the shingles vaccine.

## Changing up your exercise routine

Have you been exercising for an extended period and not seeing any progress? When you start becoming more physically active, you begin to see results in just a few weeks. You feel stronger, more energetic and may notice you can do things easier, faster or for longer than before—a signal that your body is getting used to a higher level of activity. This is the time to build on those benefits by adjusting your routine and doing more. These tips can help you change your routine:



- **Try your current activities more often.** Why not head over to the gym three times a week instead of two? Or, spend more time in your garden, or walk every day instead of every other day.
- **Make your current activities longer, farther or harder.** If you walk 30 minutes every day, make it 40 minutes. Or, pick up the pace so you walk faster and farther in the same amount of time. If you usually swim half a mile, build up to 3/4 of a mile.
- **Add new activities.** Try dance lessons, join a water aerobics class or check out exercise videos from the library and try different ones on different days.

## Why you should drink eight glasses of water each day

Getting enough water every day is important for your health. Most of your fluid needs are met through the water and beverages you drink, but you can get some fluids through food, including broth soups and foods with high water content (e.g., celery, tomatoes or melons), which all contribute to fluid intake.

**Why water?** Water helps your body:

- Keep your temperature normal
- Lubricate and cushion joints
- Protect your spinal cord and other sensitive tissues
- Get rid of wastes through urination, perspiration and bowel movements

Your body needs more water to stay healthy especially when you:

- Are in hot climates

- Are more physically active
- Run a fever
- Have diarrhea or are vomiting

You should drink eight glasses of water a day. If you think you are not getting enough water, try these tips:

- Carry a water bottle for easy access when you run errands
- Freeze some freezer-safe water bottles to take with you for ice-cold water all day long
- Choose water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages (this also helps you manage your weight)
- Choose water when eating out
- Add a wedge of lime or lemon to your water to help improve the taste and help you drink more than you usually do

# HELPING MEMBERS STAY HEALTHY.

## Surprising truths about prediabetes



It's real. It's common. And, most importantly, it's reversible. You *can* stop prediabetes from developing into type 2 diabetes with simple lifestyle changes.

**86 million American adults—more than 1 out of 3—have prediabetes. And, 90% of people with prediabetes don't know they have it.**

Could this be you? Read on to find out how to lower your risk of prediabetes.

### **Prediabetes is a big deal!**

Prediabetes is a serious health condition where blood sugar levels are higher than normal, but not high enough yet to be diagnosed as diabetes. Prediabetes puts people at increased risk of developing type 2 diabetes, heart disease and stroke. Without weight loss and moderate physical activity, 15-30% of people with prediabetes will develop type 2 diabetes within five years.

### **Prediabetes goes undetected**

People can have prediabetes for years but have no clear symptoms, so it often goes undetected until serious health problems appear. That's why it's important to talk to your doctor about getting your blood sugar tested if you have any of the risk factors for prediabetes, which include:

- Being overweight
- Being 45 years or older
- Immediate family with type 2 diabetes
- Being physically active less than three times a week
- Having gestational diabetes (diabetes during pregnancy) or giving birth to a baby weighing more than nine pound
- Race and ethnicity: African Americans, Hispanic/Latino Americans, American Indians, Pacific Islanders and some Asian Americans are at higher risk

### **Diabetes is harder to live with than prediabetes**

Though people with prediabetes are already at a higher risk of heart disease and stroke, they don't yet have to manage the serious health problems that come with diabetes. Diabetes affects every major organ in the body. People with diabetes often develop significant complications, such as kidney failure, blindness and nerve damage, which can lead to amputation of a toe, foot or leg. All can sharply reduce quality of life.

Think of prediabetes as a fork in the road: Ignore it and your risk for type 2 diabetes goes up. Lose weight and get regular physical activity and your risk goes down. Talk to your doctor about how you can stay on a healthy path!



## Keeping your cool in your cubicle

While you can't make your cubicle bigger or more private, you can still make it a place to call your own that you enjoy being productive in. Get started with these easy fixes:

- Create a space that makes you happy. Give it your personal touch. Put up your child's drawings, photos or a colorful calendar or other art.
- Organize your space. Post project plans, deadlines or phone lists on your walls to help you be your most productive.
- Take ergonomics (the study of efficiency in a work environment) seriously. Repetitive stress injuries can be disabling. Take advantage of your company's trainings and ask for what you need to work safely and comfortably.
- Find your own peace. A downside of a cubicle is that noise around you can make it hard to focus. If this is

an issue for you, talk with your manager about using ear plugs or headphones while you work.

Mind your manners and be considerate of others around you. Your office neighbors deserve a pleasant work environment as well, so remember:

- Set your cell phone to ring quietly or vibrate (or turn it off at work).
- Don't speak louder than you need to, either on or off the phone, and try not to use your speakerphone.
- Strong perfume and cologne—or even strong-smelling food—can irritate others. And, strong smells can trigger a range of allergic reactions—from asthma attacks to migraines.
- Whether you're chatting about work or weekend plans, think about moving to a meeting room or break-room. And remember, you don't really have any privacy in a cubicle.

### >> DON'T FORGET TO TAKE A BREAK

Rest your eyes for five minutes, stretch all of your muscles or take a walk outside for sunshine and fresh air. Even better, fit physical activity into your lunch hour or break. When under a lot of stress, exercise can be a big relief!

# monitoring tornadoes

Planning for tornadoes requires identifying a place to take shelter, being familiar with and monitoring your community's warning system, and establishing procedures to account for individuals in the building. Community warning systems include the following:

**Tornado watch:** Tornadoes are likely to occur in the watch area. Be ready to act quickly and take shelter and check supply kits. Monitor radio and television stations for more information.

**Tornado warning:** Imminent threat—a tornado has been sighted in the area or has been indicated by radar. Take shelter immediately.

Your local emergency management office can provide information about your community's tornado warning system.

For more information about tornado preparedness, contact your local Red Cross or visit [ready.gov](http://ready.gov).

## When there is a tornado while you're at work

Your company should have a tornado plan that includes the following:

### 1. Identify shelter locations

An underground area, such as a basement or storm cellar, provides the best protection from a tornado. If an underground shelter is unavailable, consider the following:

- Seek a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible
- Stay away from doors, windows and outside walls
- Stay in the center of the room and avoid corners because they attract debris
- Avoid auditoriums, cafeterias and gymnasiums that have flat, wide-span roofs

Personnel should also be aware of what to do if caught outdoors when a tornado is threatening. Make sure to seek shelter in a basement, a sturdy building or a ditch.

### 2. Accountability procedures

These are recommended to ensure the safety of personnel if a tornado occurs:

- Develop a system for knowing who is in the building in the event of an emergency
- Establish an alarm system to warn workers
- Test systems frequently
- Develop plans to communicate warnings to personnel with disabilities or who do not speak English
- Account for workers, visitors and customers as they arrive in the shelter
- Use a prepared roster or checklist
- Assign specific duties to workers in advance; create checklists for each responsibility

### 3. Training and exercises

- Ensure that all workers know what to do in case of an emergency
- Update plans and procedures based on lessons learned from exercises
- Designate and train workers' alternates in case the assigned person is not there or is injured

Check with your manager or supervisor about your company's tornado preparedness plan and where it can be found.

# Are you where you want to be?



June is here, which means we've made it through half of 2016 already! Remember those New Year's resolutions? Did you keep any of them?

New Year's resolutions are easy to make but easier to break. Why is it so hard to make the healthy changes that we know can help us feel better and live longer?

The challenge with New Year's resolutions is that we often set unrealistic goals. We can quickly become frustrated and give up. Any resolution to change needs to include small goals that are definable and accompanied by a solid plan to achieve that goal.

Common New Year's resolutions include losing weight, getting more physical activity, eating more nutritious foods, quitting smoking, cutting back on alcohol, reducing stress and sleeping better.

No matter your healthy resolution, research suggests that some common

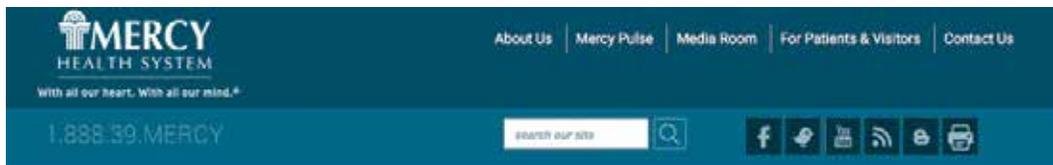
strategies can boost your chance of making the change a habit and a part of your daily lifestyle.

You're never too overweight, too unfit or too old to make healthy changes. The National Institutes of Health suggests the best way to make healthy changes is to:

- **Set realistic goals.** Write down steps that will help you achieve your goals.
- **Plan for obstacles.** Figure out how to overcome obstacles. Don't give up just because you've slipped!
- **Track your progress.** A journal is one of the best tools for helping you stay focused and recover from slip-ups.
- **Get help.** Ask friends and family for support. Consider enrolling in a class or program.
- **Reward yourself.** Get yourself a healthy treat or a massage when you've achieved a goal or milestone.
- **Add variety.** Keep things interesting by adding new activities or expanding your goals to make them more challenging.

# HELPING INDIVIDUALS STAY HEALTHY.

Did you know MercyHealthSystem.org has a complete health library online?



PHYSICIANS/PROVIDERS LOCATIONS SERVICES INSURANCE QUALITY CAREERS FOUNDATION

easy as 123

With MercyCare, choosing a group health plan is as easy as 1-2-3

1. Competitive rates
2. Over 550+ Mercy Health System and Rockford Health System doctors to choose from
3. All plans include a Worksite Wellness assessment, free flu shots and free biometric screenings for members.

Questions? Concerns? Call your MercyCare sales rep at (800) 895-2421.



With all our heart. With all our mind.

Helping you stay healthy is what matters most to us. That's why we make it easy to receive the care you need when it's convenient for you. From annual check ups and preventive care to specialty care like cardiovascular and orthopaedic surgery, we will do whatever it takes to make you feel better and keep you well.

PHYSICIAN FINDER

Visit [MercyHealthSystem.org](http://MercyHealthSystem.org) for more information today!

## LIVE WELL. WE'LL INSURE YOU DO.

### Easy Greek-style Chicken Wraps

Serves 6

2 cups shredded skinless, boneless, rotisserie chicken breast

3 T pitted Kalamata olives, chopped

6 (8") whole-wheat flour tortillas

1 cup grape tomatoes, halved

1 T chopped fresh oregano

2 T crumbled feta cheese

1 T olive oil

1-1/2 T fresh lemon juice

1/8 tsp ground red pepper

2 small cucumbers, chopped

6 T plain hummus

Place tomatoes, olives, feta, lemon juice, oregano, olive oil, pepper, chicken and cucumber in a large bowl; toss to combine. Spread 1 T hummus over 1 side of each tortilla. Top each tortilla with about 1/2 cup chicken mixture. Roll up wraps; cut in half and serve.





## How to choose the best pain reliever

### **Q: What can I take for pain relief without a prescription?**

**A:** There are three main types of pain relievers available over the counter (OTC). All of them act differently, treat different conditions, have different side effects, and might interact with other drugs. Always talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have concerns.

1. Acetaminophen (Tylenol<sup>®</sup>, Anacin 3<sup>®</sup>, Panadol<sup>®</sup> and others) is commonly used for mild-to-moderate pain and is an effective fever reducer. Acetaminophen does not affect inflammation or cause gastrointestinal problems, like NSAIDs can.
2. Aspirin (Bayer<sup>®</sup>, Ecotrin<sup>®</sup> and others) also relieves mild-to-moderate pain and reduces fever (it is not recommended for children). Aspirin is effective in treating headaches and migraines, and preventing heart attacks and strokes in at-risk individuals. It is generally ineffective at treating pain caused by muscle cramps, bloating and skin irritation. Aspirin is an NSAID.

3. Ibuprofen (Motrin<sup>®</sup>, Advil<sup>®</sup> and others) is effective in reducing fever, is an anti-inflammatory and is reported to be better for joint and muscle pain than other painkillers. It can be very helpful for pain arising from inflammation-related conditions, such as arthritis. It is an NSAID.

### **Q: What is an NSAID?**

**A:** NSAID stands for a nonsteroidal, anti-inflammatory drug. NSAIDs can reduce pain, fever, headache and inflammation. Inflammation causes redness, swelling and pain in arthritic joints. NSAIDs also can thin the blood. In this way, they can reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke.

### **Q. Do I need to take a brand-name pain reliever?**

**A.** Generic, OTC pain relievers are less expensive than their brand-name counterparts and work just as well. If you are still unsure how to relieve your pain, ask your doctor or your local pharmacist for advice.



## Don't fall victim to heat stress

Heat stress, either from over-exertion or a hot environment, can put you at risk for heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps.

**Heat stroke** occurs when your body becomes unable to control its temperature and can cause permanent disability or even death. Symptoms can include: high body temperature, confusion, loss of coordination, throbbing headache, seizures and hot, dry skin or profuse sweating.

### First aid tips:

- Request immediate medical assistance
- Move to a cool, shaded area
- Remove excess clothing and apply cool water

**Heat exhaustion** is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through sweating. Symptoms can include: a rapid heart beat, heavy sweating, extreme weakness or fatigue, nausea, dizziness, vomiting, irritability, fast and shallow breathing, or a slightly elevated body temperature.

### First aid tips:

- Rest in a cool area
- Drink plenty of water or other cool beverages
- Take a cool shower, bath or sponge bath

**Heat cramps** affect individuals who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. Sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture levels. Symptoms can include: muscle cramps, pain or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs

### First aid tips:

- Stop all activity and sit in a cool place
- Drink clear juice, a sports beverage or water (with food)
- Seek medical attention if you have the following: heart problems, a low-sodium diet or cramps that do not subside within one hour

Avoid heavy exertion, extreme heat, sun exposure and high humidity, when possible. If outside in these conditions, drink water frequently, find shaded areas and limit your activity when possible to stay safe.

## Know where sodium hides

*Did you know about 90% of Americans eat too much sodium?*

Regular table salt is made up of the elements sodium and chloride. Too much salt in your diet can raise your blood pressure, which can increase your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Watch out for hidden sources of salt, especially in packaged and restaurant foods, and these top 10 foods:

1. Bread and rolls
2. Cold cuts and cured meats
3. Pizza
4. Poultry
5. Soups
6. Sandwiches
7. Cheese
8. Pasta dishes
9. Meat mixed dishes, such as meatloaf with tomato sauce
10. Some snacks: Chips, pretzels, popcorn

### What can you do?

Check nutrition labels, ask for dressings and sauces on the side and no added salt when dining out, buy fresh, frozen or no-salt-added canned vegetables, and season your meals with herbs and spices.

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## The benefits of owning a dog

The Surgeon General recognizes the benefits of pet ownership and how regular walks help both people and animals.

Walking is a popular, easy form of exercise for most, offering proven health benefits and a low risk of injury.

### What's the best way to get going?

Studies show that a commitment to walking their dogs helps people put one foot in front of the other. They exercise for their pets' health as well as their own. As a bonus, they form a stronger bond with their furry friends—and often are inspired to eat healthier.

MercyCare Health Plans is a Qualified Health Plan issuer in the Health Insurance Marketplace.