



Healthy Connections



WHOLE you

SUMMER 2025



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Welcome to Whole You! A newsletter from Absolute Total Care

Spring has sprung and with it comes a vibrant new edition of our health newsletter, designed to help you flourish. This month, we're diving into four exciting topics to boost your well-being.

Beat Seasonal Allergies:

As the flowers bloom, so do seasonal allergies. We have practical tips and strategies to help you manage and alleviate allergy symptoms, ensuring you can enjoy the beauty of spring without the discomfort.



Pharmacist Health Management: Ever wondered how your pharmacist can be a game-changer in your health journey? From personalized medication advice to expert health tips, discover how these healthcare heroes can make a significant impact on your wellness.

Benefits Enhancement: Explore the improvements to your health benefits designed to help you access better care and support. We'll walk you through the enhancements and show you how to take full advantage of them.

Foods to Fight Stress: Stress can take a toll on your health, but the right foods can help combat it. We'll introduce you to some stress-busting super foods that can boost your mood and overall well-being.

We hope you enjoy this issue and that it helps you take care of the **whole you**.

Be sure to check out the calendar on page 9 for upcoming local events happening near you. Did you miss our last newsletter? Take a look [here](#) at our last edition.

Tips to Beat Seasonal Allergies

Allergy season has arrived! And with it comes pollen and allergens leaving many people longing for relief. Here are a few tips to help you get through allergy season more comfortably.

Consider allergy testing.

Ask your primary care provider (PCP) about the benefits of allergy testing. Testing helps your provider to pinpoint the triggers and the severity of your reaction. Allergy testing has come a long way. Your results will help you and your provider make a plan to help you best manage your allergies.

Adjust your outdoor time.

If it's dry and windy outside try to spend more time indoors. After it rains, pollen build-up is less on outdoor surfaces. That's a better time to enjoy the outdoors. The time-of-day matters, too. Pollen counts are at their high during morning hours. So do your outdoor activities when counts are lower in the evening.

Breathe easier inside.

Open windows expose you to allergen triggers. Make your air conditioning even more effective by using high-efficiency air filters. Change them often for the best quality air flow. Keeping your carpets and floors clean will lower allergy inducing pet dander and dust. Take a bath or shower before going to bed. This will lessen pollen buildup on your sheets.

You can visit the official website of the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) [here](#). They offer a wealth of information and resources for managing asthma and allergies.



Be in the know.

Monitor the allergy index in your area with an app or weather website. Most TV stations broadcast allergy forecasts during weather segments. Check the night before so you know how pollen will affect your day before you even step outside.

You are what you eat.

Many people don't realize that certain foods can increase allergic responses and inflammation. If you notice your allergy symptoms getting worse, take note of the food you ate. Sugars, wheat, dairy, and processed foods can increase the onset and intensity of allergic reactions. Drink plenty of water to flush and hydrate your system.

Boosting Your Coverage with Valuable Benefits

Absolute Total Care members get added benefits along with medical coverage. These extra benefits, tools, and services are at no cost to you.

myhealthpays™ Rewards Program

Earn reward dollars for completing healthy behaviors. Use reward dollars for everyday items at Walmart or to help pay for utilities, transportation, telecommunications, childcare services, education, or rent.

Diaper Rewards Program

Receive one package of diapers and wipes after completing each of these visits: 6-week postpartum visit; 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9 and 12-month infant well visits.

Breast Pump

Receive an electric breast pump when you are due to deliver within 12 weeks, have delivered within the past 30 days, or had a NICU baby in the last 90 days.

Sports Activity Fee

Members ages 5-18 can receive up to \$50 annually per member through the My Health Pays program to cover the program activity/registration fee.



Car Seat, Stroller, Portable Playpen

Members who complete six prenatal visits can choose one reward: a convertible car seat, stroller, or portable playpen. Limit: one per pregnancy.

24-Hour Nurse Advice Line

Connect with a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Call 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) and select “Member Services” then “Nurse Advice Line” at the prompt to reach a nurse.

Postpartum Meals

Qualifying birth parents can receive free home-delivered meals.

Reading Skills Development Program

Improve reading skills with a membership in our reading skill enhancement program for eligible members in prekindergarten to fifth grade. Program provides books and tutoring sessions.



Call Member Services at
1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) or
visit **absolutetotalcare.com**
for more information.

NEWS: Deaf History Month

Enhancing Your Coverage With Additional Benefits (continued pg. 3)

General Educational Development (GED) Testing

This program is offered at no cost to our members aged 16 and over who are not currently enrolled in high school or did not graduate from high school.

Reading Skills Development Program

Offered at no-cost to our members aged 16 and over who are not enrolled in high school or did not graduate from high school.

Start Smart for Your Baby®

Get support throughout your pregnancy and after delivery to give your baby a good start to life. Receive tips and resources to help you, your new baby, and your family get off to a great start.

Sports Physical

Receive one sports physical per year for members 5-18 years old.



Deaf History Month is a time to celebrate and honor the rich history and contributions of the deaf and hard of hearing community.

First introduced by the National Association of the Deaf (NAD) in 1997, Deaf History Month is symbolized by the color dark blue, representing deaf people and deaf hood. Join us in celebrating the achievements and culture of the deaf community throughout this special month!



Absolute Total Care offers a range of services to support members with suspected hearing impairment. Here are some key offerings:

Services Provided:

Newborn Hearing Screenings conducted in inpatient hospital settings to detect hearing issues early.

Audiology Services:

Includes diagnostic, screening, preventive, and corrective services to identify hearing disorders, provided by or under the direction of an audiologist.

Hearing Aids and Accessories:

Available for members aged 0-20 years with prior authorization.

TTY Access:

Members who are hearing impaired can access services through 711.

In-Person Interpreter Services:

Available with scheduled appointments to ensure effective communication. Advanced notifications are required for a positive encounter, while telephonic services are available for urgent/emergent situations and non-urgent/emergent appointments as requested.

For more information, please visit absolutetotalcare.com.



Renewing Your South Carolina Medicaid Benefits



Keep Your Family Covered

Don't lose Your South Carolina Medicaid Benefits! Renewing your benefits is not automatic. To keep your Absolute Total Care benefits, you need to renew them every year. Absolute Total Care is dedicated to helping you stay healthy and maximize your benefits.

Check your mail.

- South Carolina Healthy Connections will mail your annual review form. Be sure your mailing address is up to date with South Carolina Healthy Connections by visiting [Apply.scdhhs.gov](https://apply.scdhhs.gov).
- For Medicaid coverage questions, contact **Absolute Total Care**. Keeping your information current ensures uninterrupted access to essential services and avoids delays in Medicaid coverage.



Absolute Total Care's Secure Member Portal

It's a convenient and secure tool to help you manage your health care. Create your free account today by visiting absolutetotalcare.com!

Complete and return your form to SCDHHS.

There are several ways to do this:

- Complete an online form at [Apply.scdhhs.gov](https://apply.scdhhs.gov)
- Upload your form online. Use the Document Upload Tool at [Apply.scdhhs.gov](https://apply.scdhhs.gov).
- Email your form to 8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov
- Fax the form to [888-820-1204](tel:888-820-1204)
- Bring the form to your [local county Medicaid office](#)
- Mail your form to:

SCDHHS Central Mail
P.O Box 100101
Columbia, SC 29202-3101

Drug/medicine updates

As of July 1, 2024, the state of South Carolina's Medicaid program moved to a single Preferred Drug List (PDL). This PDL became known to Medicaid health plans as the Comprehensive Drug List (CDL). All South Carolina Medicaid health plans began following the CDL. If your prescription(s) are affected, talk to your provider to move to a state-preferred product. You can find a direct link to the CDL at absolutetotalcare.com.



Ways Your Pharmacist Can Help Manage Your Health

Your pharmacist is more than just the white coat behind the counter when you pick up prescriptions. They are a valuable resource if you have questions about your medications or your overall health. Here are five ways you can look to them for help.



If you're not sure where to go for the care – ask a nurse! You have access to a nurse 24/7 as part of your benefits. Call the 24/7 nurse advice line and they can help with your symptoms and give you next steps. Call 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) and select “Member Services” then “Nurse Advice Line” at the prompt to reach a nurse.

1

Identify Side Effects.

Knowing what to expect from your medicine is important. Your pharmacist can help you learn early signs of side effects. This is important for a new medication and when adding it to other medicine you take.

2

Recommend Relief.

Ever get to the pharmacy and with all the options don't know what to choose? Your pharmacist can help! Describe your symptoms and let them know any other medications you are taking. They can help pick the best over-the-counter option for your symptoms.

3

Give Routine Vaccines.

Part of staying healthy is prevention. Your pharmacist can explain the benefits and side effects of routine vaccines. Routine vaccines include seasonal ones like flu, COVID-19, and RSV. At many pharmacies, you do not need an appointment and can get these vaccines to help you fight off illness.

4

Coordinate Change.

Your pharmacist can talk to your provider if you would like to switch or stop one of your medications. They can walk you through the pros and cons of making a change. This will help you understand how it will impact your overall health.

5

Determine Diagnosis.

Many pharmacies have clinics. The clinics are typically staffed by pharmacists and other healthcare professionals. They can diagnose and prescribe medications for ear infections, rashes, and cold and flu symptoms. It's convenient and easy! Most pharmacies can also check blood pressure and heart rate. Ask them to check if you have concerns.

Volunteer Spotlight: Harvest Hope



Harvest Hope Food Bank

Harvest Hope is South Carolina's largest food bank, providing over 25 million meals on average to neighbors in need across the Midlands, Pee Dee, and Upstate.



Recognizing Volunteer Contributions

This month, we're shining a light on Absolute Total Care's volunteer efforts with Harvest Hope. They've dedicated countless hours to help combat hunger in our community through activities like sorting food donations, distributing supplies to families in need and raising awareness about food insecurity. This partnership showcases their shared commitment to positively impacting lives, providing essential resources and nurturing a sense of community and hope.

Who We Help

Harvest Hope provides food for organizations across the state who serve families in need with special allocations for our most vulnerable residents, including children, seniors, and people in rural areas without access to grocery stores.

Food Rescue

Harvest Hope gathers food items that would typically end up in a land fill for various reasons. This is NOT food that is expired...it is safe and edible food that hasn't reached someone's plate yet.



Get Involved

Harvest Hope relies on volunteers to keep operations running smoothly. You can volunteer for individual or group volunteer shifts at any of their branches. Volunteers help with various tasks, including sorting and packing food, assisting with distribution, and more. You can **sign up** to volunteer with Harvest Hope by visiting their [volunteer page](#).

Fight Stress with Delicious Super Foods

Sometimes life can be stressful. And staying healthy can help you fight the side effects of stress. Did you know certain foods can help? **Check out these five foods that may help you reduce some of the tension you're feeling.**

1 Add Avocado. Adding B-rich avocados to your diet can help elevate your mood. Avocados contain mono-saturated fat and potassium, which can help lower blood pressure. They have also shown to ward off hunger making you less likely to grab a sugar-filled treat instead. Try it on a tasty turkey sandwich or on top of your salad!

2 Bring Blueberries. These tiny berries pack a powerful punch. Their high levels of phytonutrients and antioxidants have been linked to improved thinking. They're also rich in vitamin C – another natural stress buster. Toss a few in your morning yogurt or pack in your lunch for dessert for that daily boost!

3 Nibble on Nuts. Many nuts, like almonds, walnuts and pistachios, may boost your immune system because of their concentration of vitamin E and zinc. Nuts also contain B-vitamins that help your body combat stress. Try spreading almond butter on a piece of whole wheat toast for a morning treat! Or simply package up a serving size of your choosing for an afternoon snack.

4 Feed on Fatty Fish. A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids helps keep your cortisol and adrenaline levels from rising when you're feeling tense or anxious. Fish like salmon, herring, and albacore tuna are good choices. Pair a grilled or baked fillet with your favorite green vegetable and you'll have a stress-fighting, nutritious meal.

5 Fill Up on Oatmeal. This complex carbohydrate helps your brain produce serotonin. This feel-good chemical can help you overcome stress. Go with thick-cut instead of instant oatmeal to get soluble fiber that keeps you fuller for longer. Then you'll be less likely to grab a sugary treat. Make a big batch on the weekends, then heat it up during the week for a quick and easy meal or snack.



You have rights and responsibilities

Members of Absolute Total Care hold both rights and responsibilities.

Rights are things you can expect from your health plan. They include:

- Getting all the services we provide
- Being treated with respect
- Having your medical information kept private
- Getting a copy of your medical record

Responsibilities are things your health plan expects from you. They include:

- Asking questions if you don't understand your rights
- Keeping your scheduled appointments
- Having your member ID card with you at appointments
- Telling your doctor if you had care in an emergency room

You can find more rights and responsibilities in your Member Handbook. Read it online at absolutetotalcare.com. Call 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) to ask for a paper copy.

Calendar of Events

The **Absolute Total Care Community Relations team** is actively giving back to our community by participating in a variety of community events. Their involvement demonstrates a strong commitment to supporting and enriching the lives of those around us.

Below is a list of the **upcoming events** where they will be making a positive impact:



Absolute Total Care | 1-866-433-6041 (TTY: 711) | absolutetotalcare.com

Community & Program Events

May 29, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Sandhills Medical Health Fair

30 Cuttino Rd.
Sumter, SC 29150

May 31, 9 a.m. - noon

FHC Community Health Fair

N 3656 Tee Vee Rd.
Santee, SC 29142

August 16, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Women's Empowerment

State Fair Grounds
1200 Rosewood Dr.
Columbia, SC 29201

May 30, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

**Santee Wateree Mental Health
Awareness Day**

3801 N Pike West
Sumter, SC 29150

June 5, 12, & 15, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Music on Main

100 W. Main Street
Spartanburg, SC 29306

September 20, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**Jubilee: Festival of Black
History and Culture**

Mann-Simons Site
1304 Marion St.
Columbia, SC 29201