

Focus on life. Focus on health. *Stay focused.*

Achieve Your Best Health

Health Coaching for Migraines



Blue OptionSM

BlueChoice HealthPlan of South Carolina is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



What Is Health Coaching?

Health coaching is a voluntary program for members diagnosed with certain health conditions. We take a personalized and tailored approach that helps you manage your condition and cope with everyday issues so you can meet your health goals.

You'll have a personal coach to support, guide and motivate you to make healthy lifestyle changes at your own pace. Your coach can:

- Help identify barriers to reaching and maintaining your health goals.
- Personalize your plan for better health.
- Help you find a physician if you don't have one.
- Help you get the most out of your health benefits.

Is health coaching for me?

Health coaching is especially helpful to members who:

- Want to know more about managing their health condition(s).
- Make frequent emergency room visits.
- Use multiple medications for their health condition(s).
- Experience frequent hospitalizations.

Your personal health coach

Your coach will work with you to establish goals for your health, then help you work toward achieving your goals. Each health coach is a health care professional with extensive training and knowledge. Your personal coach is a partner who can guide and support you to make positive lifestyle changes to better manage your health.

We are here for you

We know it's not always easy to make a lifestyle change and stick to it. Our health coaches will ensure you have the information and tools to make the transition to a healthier lifestyle. We also understand that managing a health condition can be complicated. You can feel confident knowing your coach is there to support you each step of the way. Also, your personal information is safe. Your health coach is a professional who respects your privacy and will keep the details of your action plan confidential.

Our health coaches care about you and want to help you reach your health goals. Your coach can provide the encouragement, support and education you need. He or she can help you identify the barriers that keep you from reaching your health goals, adopt healthy habits that fit your lifestyle and connect you with other helpful resources.

As you take steps to manage your health, you may face challenges. But you can overcome them with the help of your friends, family and our health coaching team!

What Do You Need To Know About Migraines?

A migraine is more than just a bad headache — it can make you sick and affect your quality of life. Migraines can cause moderate to severe throbbing on the sides and back of your head, face, nose, eyes and around your sinus cavities. There are two types of migraines: a classic migraine (ones with aura) and a common migraine (ones without aura). Aura refers to feelings and symptoms you notice about an hour before the headache begins.

Symptoms

Migraines can cause:

- Vomiting
- Dizziness
- Sensitivity to light

Signs of aura include:

- Bright, flashing dots or lights
- Temporary vision loss
- Changes to your sense of smell, taste or touch





What Can You Do To Keep Your Migraines Under Control?

Migraines can feel unbearable. But with proper treatment and lifestyle changes, you can reduce the frequency and severity of your migraines.

Keep a migraine diary. A diary can help you identify your triggers and the types of treatments that provide relief. It can also help you collect information about the frequency, duration and intensity of your headaches.

Know your triggers. Common emotional, physical and chemical triggers include:

- Stress
- High blood pressure
- Skipping meals
- Certain medications
- Hormonal changes
- Caffeine
- Certain odors
- Alcoholic beverages

Take medications as prescribed. Your doctor may prescribe certain medications to help you manage your migraines. There are two types: preventive and rescue. Preventive medication is taken daily, while rescue medication is for migraines that have already started.

Medications can help

Only use rescue medicines occasionally. You should talk to your doctor about using preventive medications if you:

- Get more than two migraines per month
- Get recurring migraines that interfere with your daily routine
- Use rescue medication more than once a week

Types of preventive medications

Cardiovascular drugs: Traditionally used to treat high blood pressure, these medications reduce the frequency and severity of headaches by improving blood flow. Examples include:

- Calan®
- Isonit®
- Prinivil®
- Zestril®
- Atacand®

Antidepressants: These are commonly prescribed for migraine prevention. They work by regulating serotonin levels, a chemical in the brain that influences migraines. Examples include:

- Pamelor®
- Vivactil®
- Elavil®

Cyproheptadine: This is an antihistamine drug typically prescribed to treat allergies. It also affects serotonin levels, which can make it effective for migraine treatment.

Botox: Botulinum toxin type A (Botox) is only approved for people who get migraines more than 14 days per month. Injections are made to the muscles of the forehead and neck. Treatment is repeated every three months and can be very expensive if your current health plan does not cover the treatment.

Don't Neglect Your Emotional Health

Manage stress

Individuals with certain health conditions may be more likely to feel down or depressed, and stress can make any of us feel worse. Take time for yourself, identify ways to minimize your stress and talk to your doctor if you have feelings of depression or anxiety. Here are some tips:

Exercise. Even moderate exercise can help reduce stress and relieve depression.

Relaxation and breathing exercises. Relaxation exercises, such as yoga, are proven to help relieve stress.

Relax and communicate. When you feel tired, take a break. And when you feel stressed, talk it out. Sharing your thoughts with others can help.

Think positively. Be mindful of your “self talk” — the mental images you create for yourself.

Don't depend on alcohol, tobacco or other drugs to cope with stress. If you think you may be dependent on any of these substances, contact your doctor right away for help.



“I am so glad we have a program available to us and that I can call with any questions. I think I am doing a good job, but it is nice to know that I can call when I need to.”

– Health coaching participant

Tackle the blues

When you have a health condition, you may be more likely to feel down or depressed. Depression is common, but treatable. To see if you may need additional support, look over these statements and think about how you’ve felt in the last two weeks. Check if you have:

- Felt sad or down.
- Not cared about things you liked before.
- Been eating more or less than usual.
- Felt tired.
- Felt anxious.
- Not been able to think or make up your mind.
- Felt like you are not worth much.
- Been sleeping more or less than usual.
- Thought about dying or killing yourself.

If you checked five or more, talk to your health care provider or your health coach about whether you might be depressed. If you are, it’s important to get help so you can get back to enjoying life.

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Your Relationship With Your Health Care Team Is Important

The best thing for managing your migraines is to develop a good relationship with your health care team, which may include your primary care physician, a neurologist, a health coach and others. Keeping open communication with your health care team is important and helps you play an active role in your care.

During your visit

Questions for your health care team may include:

- Do you have any tips to help me identify my migraine triggers?
- Could any of my medications cause my migraines?
- Is there any chance my migraines could eventually go away? How?
- Are there any side effects of my medications? If so, is there anything I can do about them?
- Should I make any changes to my diet or lifestyle?
- When should I come back for a follow-up appointment?



Participant's Bill of Rights

Health coaches respect the wishes of participants and their family members and recognize that participants have RIGHTS and RESPONSIBILITIES, including the:

- Right to know the philosophy and characteristics of the health coaching program.
- Right to have personally identifiable health information shared by the health coaching program only in accordance with state and federal law.
- Right to identify a staff member and his or her job title, and to speak with a supervisor of a staff member, if requested.
- Right to receive accurate information from the health coaching program.
- Right to receive administrative information about changes in or termination of the health coaching program.
- Right to decline participation, revoke consent or disenroll at any time.
- Responsibility to submit any forms necessary to participate in the program, to the extent the law requires.
- Responsibility to give accurate clinical and contact information, and to notify the health coaching program of changes in this information.
- Responsibility to notify their treating providers of their participation in the health coaching program, if applicable.
- Understand when disease management information will be disclosed to third parties.

Health coaches inform members of these rights and uphold them at all times during the program. All members receive a written copy of these rights and responsibilities within 30 days of program enrollment.

“Thank you for being there for me. The combination of having you and my doctor has really turned my life around.”

– Health coaching participant

You Make The Choice

Health coaching is completely voluntary and free.

Your decision to participate will not affect your health benefits in any way. If you decide that having a personal health coach is not for you, you can opt out of the program at any time by calling 855-838-5897. If you have a problem or complaint during your health coaching experience, you can call 855-838-5897 and ask to speak to the program manager. In an emergency, please contact your doctor or call 911.

Additional Resources

These resources can provide additional information about living well with migraines. These are independent organizations that provide health information that you may find helpful.

American Headache Society

www.AcheNet.org

Migraine Research Foundation

www.MigraineResearchFoundation.org

National Headache Foundation


www.Headaches.org

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

www.ninds.nih.Gov/Disorders/Migraine

These links lead to third party websites. Those companies are solely responsible for the contents and privacy policies on their sites.

The information contained in this brochure is for educational purposes only. It does not represent a standard of care. Your physician must determine the appropriateness of the information in light of all your circumstances. It is important to discuss options with your physician when deciding on the best treatment for you.



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