

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

## Achieve Your Best Health

*Health Coaching for Diabetes*



**Blue** Option<sup>SM</sup>

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 Diabetes?

Having diabetes means you have too much glucose, or sugar, in your bloodstream. Diabetes occurs when your body does not process glucose correctly, causing it to build up in your bloodstream. There are two types of diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2.

## Type 1

Usually diagnosed in children and young adults. Only 5 percent of people with diabetes have Type 1. People who have Type 1 diabetes no longer produce the insulin needed to turn sugar, starches and other food into energy and must use daily insulin therapy or a continuous insulin pump to help manage their blood glucose.

## Type 2

The most common form of diabetes. In Type 2 diabetes, the body doesn't properly use insulin. This is called insulin resistance. Over time, your body may not be able to produce enough insulin to control blood sugars.





# What Can You Do To Keep Your Diabetes Under Control?

**Monitor your blood glucose.** Knowing the goal ranges for your blood sugar is important. One of the best ways to manage your diabetes is to keep track of your blood glucose levels. People who check their blood sugar regularly generally have better control of their diabetes.

Your doctor should also check your blood sugar using an A1C test every three to six months. The American Diabetes Association (ADA) suggests an A1C of less than 7 percent. More or less stringent goals may be appropriate for certain individuals. Talk to your provider about your target A1C goal. The ADA is an independent organization that offers health information that you may find helpful.

**Eat smart.** Be sure to eat a heart-healthy diet that is low in sodium and rich in whole grains, fruits, vegetables and lean protein. Eating the right amount of carbohydrates for your body can help you manage your blood sugar. Make wise carbohydrate choices (for example, choose whole grain bread instead of white bread) to get the most nutritional value and manage your blood sugar.

**Take medications as directed.** Your doctor may prescribe medicines to help manage your risk factors. Medicines can help treat unhealthy cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and high blood glucose.

**Type 1 diabetes.** People with Type 1 diabetes require insulin therapy through multiple injections or through an insulin pump. Your doctor will work with you to determine the appropriate dose of insulin you should receive, based on your carbohydrate intake, pre-meal blood glucose and physical activity.

**Type 2 diabetes.** Some people with Type 2 diabetes can control their diabetes with lifestyle changes like healthy eating and exercise. However, your doctor may prescribe oral diabetes medications (pills), injectable medication and/or insulin to help you meet your target blood sugar goals.



## Move more each day

Did you know that exercise can help lower your blood sugar? Your body turns the food you eat into glucose, a type of sugar. When you exercise, your body uses sugar. This helps keep it from building up in your blood and results in lower blood sugar and better control of diabetes.

Don't let the thought of exercising intimidate you. You don't have to be an Olympic athlete or run marathons to make a difference in your health. Small steps — like taking a brisk walk or doing yard work — can lead to big results for your health. Be intentional about moving more each day, and you'll see the results in no time.

Start where you are, not where you want to be.

# 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

To reduce the risk of complications with diabetes, develop a good relationship with your health care team, which may include your primary care physician, a dietitian, an ophthalmologist, 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:

- Should I test my blood sugar? How often?
- What is my goal range? What should I do if it is too high or too low?
- How can I use my glucose information to better understand and manage my diabetes?
- What diet and lifestyle changes should I make?
- Is medicine necessary? If so, do I need to take my medicine at a certain time of day?
- Are there any side effects to my medicine? Is there anything I can do about them?



# 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 case 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

Here are some resources for additional information about living well with diabetes. These organizations are independent companies or agencies that offer health information you may find helpful.

American Diabetes Association

[www.Diabetes.org](http://www.Diabetes.org)

Juvenile Diabetes

Research Foundation

[www.jdrf.org](http://www.jdrf.org)

Mayo Clinic

[www.MayoClinic.org/diabetes](http://www.MayoClinic.org/diabetes)

National Institute of Diabetes and

Digestive and Kidney Diseases

[www.niddk.nih.gov](http://www.niddk.nih.gov)


U.S. Department of

Agriculture's MyPlate

[www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

These links lead to third party websites. These organizations 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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[BlueOptionSC.com](http://BlueOptionSC.com)

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