

Member news



Pay Attention to Your Mental Health

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many of us to have open conversations about our behavioral and mental health.

Knowing how to spot behavioral health issues can help you and others get the care and resources you need to feel better.

The top five signs and symptoms of mental illness:

- Feeling sad or down most of the time
- Confused thinking or not being able to concentrate
- Feeling very fearful, worried, or guilty
- Extreme mood changes of highs and lows
- Withdrawal from friends and activities

Other factors like stress and trauma in your personal life, lack of sleep, and poor nutrition can all impact your mental state.

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Reach out if you have any concerns about your behavioral health

1. Your Care Team

If you have signs of mental distress, or trouble getting mental health or substance use treatment, speak with a member of your SelectHealth Care Team for help (866-469-7774). You might start with your Care Manager or primary care physician. They are there to listen, give support and will refer you to the right specialists or community support.

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2. Warmlines

Warmlines is a free and confidential peer-run hotline that offers callers emotional support and is staffed by volunteers who are in recovery themselves. If you can't reach a friend or family member, don't wait, call **Warmlines**. You'll be connected to an objective, kind listener who can provide support.

In New York here are "Warmline" connections:

The Empowerment Center in NY –
(800) 643-7462, 24/7

Phone Link – (516) 489-0100, press 1
M – F, 9 am – 9 pm

NYC Well – (888) 692-9355, press 2 then 1, 24/7

3. 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline

Sometimes, you need professional help right away. If you are having a crisis, especially if suicide crosses your mind, even once, call the **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline**. Note that on July 16, 2022, the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline changed to the three-digit code, 988**.

Your health plan includes many services for behavioral health and substance use issues. Call your Care Team or go to the SelectHealth website, Member Benefits section (selecthealthny.org), for more information.

PrEP to Prevent HIV and Promote Sexual Health

PrEP, or **pre-exposure prophylaxis**, is a safe, daily pill for people at risk for HIV that can prevent them from getting HIV from sex or injecting drugs. It's a powerful tool for helping to end the HIV epidemic, as well as for helping you take control of your sexual health.

When taken as prescribed, PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by about **99%** and from injecting drugs by at least **74%**.

If you are HIV-negative, talk to your doctor to see if starting PrEP is right for you. Most health insurance plans cover PrEP, including SelectHealth from VNS Health.

Sources: health.ny.gov/publications/9930.pdf

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis | [HIV.gov](https://www.hiv.gov)



For details on the Affordable Connectivity Program, a government funded service that helps you pay for Internet costs, see the enclosed insert.

Flu Shot Myth Busters

MYTH: You can get the flu from the vaccine.

Truth: The flu shot is made from a dead virus that can't make you sick. If you happen to get sick after getting a flu shot, it's probably by chance. Remember, the flu vaccine takes two weeks to take effect.

MYTH: The flu shot only protects against a few strains so there is no point in getting one.

Truth: The effectiveness of the vaccine ranges from 70 to 90%. It protects against the most common strains expected for the upcoming season. Even if you get the flu, you won't get as sick.

MYTH: If I miss getting the flu vaccine in October, it's too late to get it later in the year.

Truth: Getting vaccinated later in the flu season will still raise your immunity and lower your risk of spreading influenza. The CDC says you can even get the flu shot into January or later.

MYTH: Having the flu is like having a bad cold.

Truth: The flu is far worse than a bad cold, which usually resolves in about a week. Flu symptoms come on suddenly and sometimes severely. They include fever, chills, headaches, aching muscles, a cough and a sore throat. According to CDC, the 2019-20 flu season led to 410,000 hospitalizations and 24,000 deaths.

MYTH: You don't need to get a flu shot every year

Truth: The flu changes (mutates) each year. So, getting vaccinated each year is important to make sure you have immunity to the strains most likely to cause an outbreak.

health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/10-flu-myths

If you haven't already, get your flu shot. Please call us if you need help finding a location.



Attention: Members who are covered by both SelectHealth and Medicare (because of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency) should use their Medicare card to access services.

SelectHealth from VNS Health ("SelectHealth"), complies with Federal civil rights laws. SelectHealth does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATENCION: si habla español, tiene a su disposicion servicios gratuitos de asistencia linguistica. Llame al 1-866-469-7774 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-866-469-7774 (TTY: 711)。

Easy Dark Chocolate Bark



Dark chocolate is a nutritious treat that is rich in antioxidants. This recipe is easy and makes enough for 6 people in 5 minutes!

Ingredients

- 2 cups of dark chocolate chips (you can also use milk, semi-sweet or white chocolate chips)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- Various toppings – nuts, dried fruit, raisins, crushed candy canes, pretzels, peanut butter cups, etc.

Instructions

- Line a 10 x 15-inch pan or cookie sheet with wax or parchment paper.
- Place chocolate chips in a microwave safe bowl. Add the oil. Heat on 50% power stirring in between, until melted and smooth. No microwave? Place the chocolate in a large heat-proof bowl over a pot of gently boiling water, until the chocolate is melted (stirring frequently).
- Spread chocolate into an even layer on the prepared pan and immediately top with desired toppings.
- Chill quickly in the refrigerator (30 minutes) or for a couple of hours on the counter top to set then break into pieces.

Enjoy!

If Something Seems Wrong, Tell Us.

SelectHealth is committed to finding and stopping fraud, waste, or abuse in our health care plans.

Anonymous Reporting

Health Plans Compliance Hotline: 1-888-634-1558.
File an online report at: vnsny.ethicspoint.com.
Learn more at: selecthealthny.org/compliance-policy.

SelectHealth Care Team

1-866-469-7774 (TTY: 711)

Monday – Friday, 8 am – 6 pm

SelectHealthNY.org/member



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