

HEALTHY LIVING

Avoid the sugar rush this holiday season

From Halloween to Valentine's Day, this time of year is full of tempting sweets. Learn easy ways to cut sugar without cutting the joy out of eating.

Winter holidays often come with candy, cookies and other rich desserts. It's OK to enjoy your favorite treats. But too much sugar can cause health problems.

Good news: You don't have to skip the sweets entirely. Here are some simple ways to enjoy treats without overdoing it.

1 Keep sweets special

Pick your favorite holiday treats and enjoy them mindfully.

2 Watch your drinks

Soda, juice and other sugary drinks are a top source of added sugar. Swap them for water. It's a quick way to make room for holiday treats.

3 Save some for later

Baking at home? Freeze half the batch right away to save for later. Or, give away some of what you bake to your neighbors, coworkers, mail carrier or others.

4 Eat smaller portions

Split a cookie or slice of pie with your kids. If you bake cookies at home, try making them bite-size.

5 Cut back on sugar elsewhere

Check nutrition labels in your pantry for added sugars. Next time you shop, choose products with less added sugar.

Quick sugar-saving swaps

- **Instead of frosting:** Top sugar cookies or cupcakes with colorful fruit slices or jam.
- **Instead of store-bought candy:** Dip fruit slices or pretzels in dark chocolate.
- **In baked goods:** Replace some or all the sugar with mashed banana or apple-sauce. Or try cutting ¼ cup sugar (or more) from a recipe.
- **Make your own whipped cream:** Whip heavy cream until it's light and fluffy. Add sugar to taste.



Soothe kids' dentist fears

Going to the dentist can be scary for kids. But early checkups are key to having a healthy smile for life. Learn why, plus tips to make the visit less scary.

Did you know that by age 9, about half of kids have had at least one cavity? Even in baby teeth, cavities and tooth decay can lead to long-term problems in adult teeth. Plus, cavities hurt.

Seeing the dentist early — and often — can help stop cavities. Kids should see a dentist within six months of their first tooth coming in, or no later than their first birthday. After that, they should continue to see the dentist every six months.

How to help your child feel comfortable

- **Use positive words.** Instead of saying, “Don’t worry,” try, “You’re going to do great” or, “The dentist helps keep teeth strong.” Avoid words like “hurt” and “pain.”
- **Play dentist at home.** Take turns being the dentist and the patient. Use a toothbrush and mirror. Let kids practice on a stuffed animal to make it fun.
- **Read books or watch videos together.** Choose ones made for kids that show a dentist visit in a friendly way.
- **Bring a favorite toy or blanket for comfort.** Ask your dentist ahead of time if it’s okay to bring something.
- **Share your own good experiences.** Tell your child how the dentist helped you and how you felt better afterward. Help them understand that going to the dentist is a normal and positive experience.



We've got you covered. We work with LIBERTY Dental Plan to provide you with dental and oral health care. You don't need a referral to see a dentist or dental specialist in the network. Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/dental-benefits.html](https://www.aetna.com/betterhealth/newjersey/dental-benefits.html) to learn more.

Winter wellness: Tips for lung health

Winter can take a toll on your lungs. Kids and adults with asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) are at an even higher risk. A cold, flu or other lung irritants can cause a flare-up. It can even lead to a trip to the hospital.

The best way to stay healthy? Avoid getting sick in the first place. Here's how.

✔ **Get vaccinated.** Everyone 6 months or older should get a flu shot every year. You can get a flu shot from your provider or at a local pharmacy. Your provider may recommend other vaccines, too, like:

- RSV
(Respiratory Syncytial Virus)
- Pneumonia

✔ **Wash your hands often.** Use soap and hot water and scrub for at least 20 seconds. Can't get to a sink? Use hand sanitizer in a pinch.

✔ **Keep your distance from people who are sick.** If you can't keep your distance, a mask may protect you in crowded places. If you're sick, wearing a mask can keep you from spreading it to others.

✔ **Take your medicines.** Keeping COPD and asthma under control can help your



lungs fight off germs better. Keep taking your medicines as directed to stay healthy.

✔ **Stay away from tobacco.** If you smoke or vape, talk to

your doctor about quitting. It's one of the best things you can do for your health. Your doctor can recommend tools to help. Steer clear of second-hand smoke, too.

Should I take antibiotics?

Antibiotics can be a powerful treatment for certain illnesses. But using them too often can be harmful. Antibiotics don't treat viruses. Colds and flu are almost always caused by a virus. So, antibiotics won't help.

Antibiotics can only treat bacterial infections. That includes strep throat and some pneumonias. Your provider can run a test to figure out what kind of infection you have. If they prescribe an antibiotic, be sure to take it exactly as directed.



Lean more about asthma at [AetnaBetterHealth.com/health-wellness/asthma.html](https://www.aetna.com/health-wellness/asthma.html)

Learn more about COPD at [AetnaBetterHealth.com/health-wellness/copd.html](https://www.aetna.com/health-wellness/copd.html)

Get more tips for healthy living.

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/education](https://www.aetna.com/education) to browse our health and wellness library. You'll find articles packed with info to help you feel your best.



Brighten your winter blues

The darker months can take a toll on our mood and energy. But small changes can make a big difference. Here are simple ways to boost your spirits and bring joy to the people around you.

Reach out to friends and family. A simple phone call, text or video chat can make a big difference.

Embrace holiday cheer. Hang twinkle lights, listen to festive music or make a batch of your favorite holiday cookies. Get involved in local activities, too.

Give back. Volunteering can help you feel connected and needed. Find a cause you care about and look for ways to help.

Finds ways to stay active. If it's too cold outside, take a brisk lap around the mall while you shop or work out at home with a free online video.

Take care of yourself. Make time for things that relax and refresh you. Read a good book, do some gentle stretching or enjoy a quiet moment with a cup of tea.

Need help with a health condition?

Explore the Krames Online library. You'll find info on a variety of topics including:

- Children's care
- Chronic conditions, like diabetes or heart disease
- Medications
- Mental health care
- Nutrition
- Pneumonia
- Preventive care
- Seizures
- Substance use disorders
- and much more

Go to aetna.kramesonline.com to get started. Search any topic to help you take charge of your health today.

See how we're doing. Every year, we ask our members about their experience with their health plan. You can see the results of our latest survey at AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/quality-improvement-program.html



How to have less pain all day

Do you wake up stiff and sore? Or does your pain get worse as the day wears on? These tips can help ease and prevent pain from morning to night.

In the morning	During the day	At night
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Do some simple stretches. Try this stretch while you're still in bed: Gently hug your knees to your chest and rock them from side to side. Then straighten your legs upward and bend them back in a few times. ✔ Go for a morning walk. ✔ Take a warm shower. ✔ Eat a good breakfast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Take breaks. Do short breathing or mindfulness exercises to ease stress and tension. ✔ Cut back on high-fat, high-sugar foods. They can cause inflammation, which may make pain worse. ✔ If you sit most of the day, get up at least once an hour. Walk around for a few minutes or do some gentle stretches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✔ Switch up your sleeping position. Try sleeping on your back with a pillow under your knees. Or on your side with a pillow between your knees. ✔ Keep your bedroom cool — around 65 degrees. ✔ Try an over-the-counter topical cream to relieve pain. <p>Talk to your doctor or Care Manager for more help with pain management.</p>



The dangers of opioid use

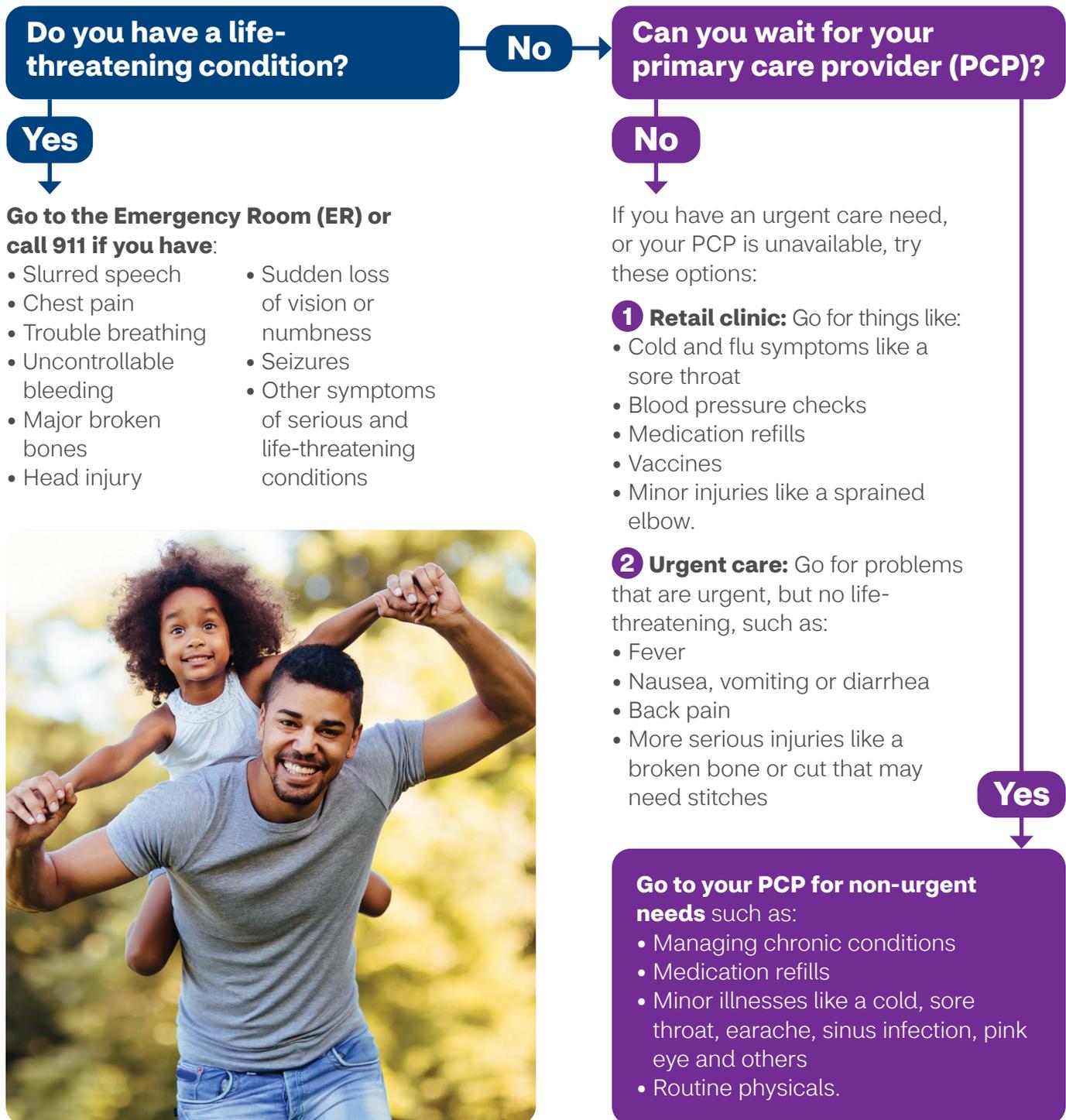
Opioids are powerful painkillers. They're often used for short-term pain relief for things like injuries or surgery recovery. But they're also highly addictive. Take these steps to lower your risk of addiction or overdose:

- Use the lowest dose for the shortest amount of time.
- Never take more than prescribed.
- Don't take opioids with alcohol.
- Store opioids in a safe and secure place.
- Never share your medicine with others.
- Throw away any unused pills. But don't throw them in your household trash. Ask your pharmacist how to safely dispose of opioids.

We want to hear from you. You can join the Community Health Education and Advisory committee to share your opinions and help us improve our care and services. Go to AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/member-advisory-committee.html for more info.

Find the right care fast

Not sure where to go for care? Use this flowchart to decide if you should go to your primary care provider, urgent care or emergency room.



Your mental health matters. Need help finding a mental health provider? Call **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)** anytime, day or night. You can also ask to speak with our Care Management team for help with medical, emotional, and social needs.

Getting care when you need it

You deserve to get care quickly — whether it's an emergency, an urgent need, or a regular check-up. Here's when you can expect to get an appointment for different health needs.

Type of care	When you should get an appointment
Emergency care	Go to the ER right away
Urgent care (with your primary care provider (PCP), specialist or OBGYN)	Within 24 hours
Non-urgent care (with your PCP, specialist or OBGYN)	Within 72 hours
Routine or follow-up visits (with your PCP, specialist or OBGYN)	Within 28 days
Physical exams	Adults: Within 180 days Children (under 21): Within 90 days
Pregnancy care	Your first appointment should be within three weeks after you find out you are pregnant. If you are high-risk, you should have your first appointment within 3 days

Help after hours

You can call your doctor's office any time. If the office is closed, a doctor, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant should answer your call. If you get an answering machine, you should still have the option to talk to a provider. Calls should be answered quickly, so you get the help you need anytime.

Aetna complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ENGLISH: ATTENTION: If you speak a language other than English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card or **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**.

SPANISH: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número que aparece en el reverso de su tarjeta de identificación o al **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**.

CHINESE: 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電您的 ID 卡背面的電話號碼或 **1-800-385-4104 (TTY: 711)**。

Learn more about your plan with your member handbook.

Go to [AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/member-materials-forms.html](https://www.aetna.com/newjersey/member-materials-forms.html) to view it online. Or call Member Services to have one mailed to you.



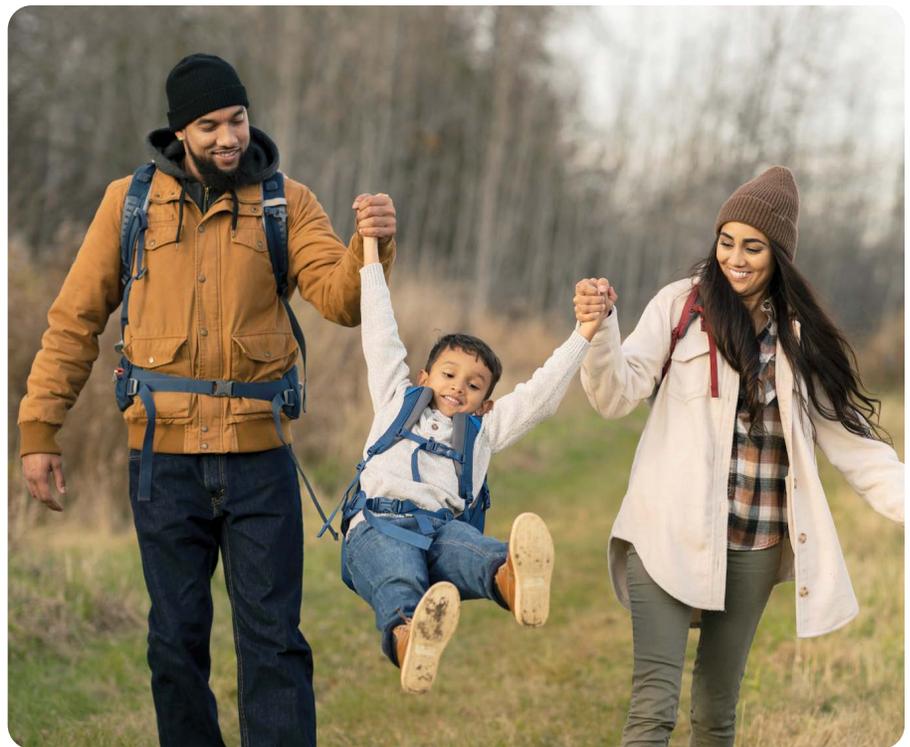
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To sign up for email, call Member Services at **1-855-232-3596 (TTY: 711)** and tell us your email address.



Need to renew your coverage?

You must renew your coverage every year. Look for your renewal notice in the mail. Visit [AetnaBetterHealth.com/newjersey/medicaid-renewal.html](https://www.aetnabetterhealth.com/newjersey/medicaid-renewal.html) to learn more.