



**FIRST CHOICE:
Tried and True,
Time to Renew!**

Healthy NOW

2026 ISSUE 2

www.selecthealthofsc.com



**Healthy ways
to reset
your routine**



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@firstchoicebyselecthealth



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First Choice by Select Health

Know where
to go for
health care
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Access the digital version of *Healthy Now* with links to click on at:
www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/info-for-you/healthy-now

Daily medicine helps prevent asthma attacks

Many people with asthma need to take control medicine every day. The American Lung Association (ALA) explains that people with asthma have some swelling in the airways of their lungs. Controller medicine reduces this swelling and helps prevent asthma flare-ups.

Avoid emergencies

Asthma is common in South Carolina and can lead to emergency room (ER) visits if it is not well controlled. Many adults and children with asthma go to the ER each year because of breathing problems that could often be prevented. The good

news is that there are steps you can take to stay healthy:

- Take your asthma medicines exactly as your doctor prescribes, even when you feel well.
- Know your triggers, such as smoke, pollen, dust, or illness. Try to avoid them.
- Work with your doctor to create an asthma action plan so you know what to do if symptoms start.
- If breathing problems begin, use your quick-relief inhaler right away. Contact your doctor if symptoms do not improve.

Managing asthma every day can help both children and adults

breathe easier, have fewer missed days of work or school, and stay out of the ER.

Get extra support

First Choice offers the Breathe Easy program at no cost to members with asthma. To learn more, visit www.selectthehealthofsc.com/member/benefits/breathe-easy-program.

Better breathing is a team effort

Smoking and vaping are not good for anyone's health. If you have asthma, the ALA warns they can:

- Cause more severe asthma flares that happen more often.
- Keep your asthma medicine from working as well as it should.
- Make it harder to breathe during physical activity.

Even secondhand smoke or residue on surfaces can make asthma worse. For resources to help you or your teen quit, visit www.smokefree.gov or call the South Carolina Tobacco Quitline at **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)**.



Know where to go for health care

Use this as a guide. Your individual care needs may be different.

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN (PCP) Routine, nonemergency health care.

Some examples are:

- Annual physical.
- Exams.
- Management of worsening symptoms of your COPD, CHF, or diabetes.
- Fever, 100.4 without severe symptoms.
- Immunizations (routine shots).
- Minor illness or injury.
- Prenatal care.
- Well visits.

Your PCP may also offer **TELEHEALTH** visits.

Some examples are:

- Allergies and sinus problems.
- Constipation or diarrhea.
- Cold or flu symptoms.
- Earache.
- Pink eye.
- Rash.
- Respiratory issues.
- Stomachache.
- Urinary tract infection.

URGENT CARE Quick care when it is not an emergency.

Some examples are:

- Sore throat.
- Fever, 100.4 or more over 24 hours.
- Flu or cold.
- Earache.
- Minor cuts and burns.
- Rashes.
- Sprains.
- Vomiting or diarrhea.

Not sure where to go?

Call your PCP to help you decide. If you can't reach your PCP, call our 24/7 Nurse Call Line: **1-800-304-5436**.

EMERGENCY ROOM CARE When you need medical help right away.

Some examples are:

- Bleeding that will not stop.
- Broken bones.
- Chest pain or pressure.
- Shortness of breath or not breathing.
- Choking.
- Drug overdose.
- Head, neck, or spine injury.
- Fever, infant under 3 months: 100.4 or higher rectal temp.
- Fever, infant 3–6 months: 102 or higher rectal temp.
- Fever, older than 6 months: 103 or higher.
- Poisoning.
- Seizure.
- Severe burn or cut.
- Severe dizziness.
- Any serious accident.

Reminder:

Always follow up with your PCP and mental health care provider based on your discharge instructions.

CALL 911 IF YOU ARE HAVING AN EMERGENCY.

CALL 988 IF YOU ARE HAVING A MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCY OR ARE THINKING ABOUT HURTING YOURSELF.



Your First Choice: Extra benefits to help you get and stay healthy!

As a First ChoiceSM Medicaid health plan member, you keep your standard Healthy Connections benefits and get certain **extra benefits* at no cost to you!**

Hygiene kits

Provided at no cost to qualifying First Choice members:

- **NEW Hygiene kits** for all members in foster care. Limit 1 per quarter.
- **Feminine hygiene kits** for members ages 10 to 18.



Maternity support

- **Access to online parenting classes** that help with sleep, potty training, and more.
- **Electric breast pump** for qualifying members.
- **Keys to Your Care[®] program** that offers helpful text messages and reminders during and after your pregnancy.
- **NEW Maternity Peer Support Program.**
- **Meals** for qualifying new moms.
- **Prenatal and postpartum doula services** and lactation (breastfeeding) support provided for qualifying members. Learn more about doula services and how our Bright Start team can support you on page 5.
- **Regional baby showers** with choice of car seat, portable crib, or stroller.
- **Transportation vouchers** for qualifying pregnant members.*

Education support

- **Back-to-school events** with school supplies and haircuts for grades K through 12 (while supplies last).
- **College scholarships and GED vouchers** for selected qualifying members.*

Youth sports

- **Youth sports program/YMCA swim lessons voucher.***
- **Sports physicals for children.** Members who get their sports physical at the same time as their well visit will receive a \$25 gift card.*

More to explore!

- **\$25 gift card for new members who complete a new member orientation** within 30 days of enrollment with First Choice.**
- **Adult vision care** that includes an eye exam and glasses every 2 years.*
- **Emergency kits** that include road hazard tools, first aid supplies, and a flashlight.**
- **Fresh Produce Box** and Meal Program.
- **Regional member appreciation events.**
- **State-of-the-art community center.**
- **Transportation for parents and guardians of members in foster care** to visit their foster child or youth in psychiatric residential treatment facilities (PRTFs) within South Carolina.

Questions? Call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**).

*Conditions apply; see website.

**Note: For certain benefits, there is a limit of 1 per household, per lifetime.

Preeclampsia:

A guide for moms-to-be

Preeclampsia is a health problem that can happen during pregnancy. The American College of Obstetricians & Gynecologists (ACOG) says it often starts after week 20. It can also start after your baby is born, known as postpartum preeclampsia. It causes high blood pressure and can affect organs like your kidneys or liver.

Your doctor should check your blood pressure at every visit to help catch problems early. Pay close attention to your body and how your baby is moving.

Why it matters

If it is not treated, the Preeclampsia Foundation (PF) says the condition can affect blood flow to the placenta, which gives unborn babies oxygen and nutrients. This

can lead to babies being born too early or with a low birth weight.

For the pregnant person, the PF says preeclampsia can raise the risk of seizures and blood clotting problems. After pregnancy, people who had preeclampsia also have a higher risk of heart disease later in life.

What raises your risk?

Preeclampsia can happen to anyone. Your risk may be higher if you:

- Have high blood pressure, high blood sugar (diabetes), or obesity.
- Have kidney disease or lupus.
- Had preeclampsia or an early birth in the past.
- Have a family history of preeclampsia.
- Are pregnant for the first time.
- Are having twins or more.
- Are over age 35.

Symptoms to watch for

The PF warns that preeclampsia does not always cause symptoms you will notice. Call your doctor if you have these symptoms:

- Severe headaches.
- Vision changes, like spots or flashes.
- Pain in the upper right belly.
- Sudden swelling in your face or hands.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Shortness of breath.
- Pee less than usual.
- Fast weight gain.

Treatment and care

The only cure for preeclampsia is giving birth. Until then, your doctor should help you manage it. You may need more rest, medicine, or time in the hospital.

To protect your health and your baby's health after you give birth:

- Stay informed.
- Keep your appointments.
- Speak up about symptoms.

Bright Start®: Pregnancy support made simple

First Choice can help you access services through the Bright Start program. This includes prenatal care, transportation, and doula services. For members who qualify, doula services include:

- 4 prenatal (before birth) visits with your doula.
- 4 postpartum (after birth) visits with your doula.
- Live chats with certified doulas.

Have questions or want to join the Bright Start program?

- Call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.
- Visit **www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/benefits**. Click on **Special health programs — Care Management**, then **Pregnancy**.

Learn about maternity extra benefits on page 4.



Well visits can help with your back-to-school checklist

Well-child visits are part of your benefits as a First Choice member. These visits offer you and your child time with their primary care provider (PCP) when they are not sick. The American Academy of Pediatrics says working together in this way helps support your child's physical, mental, and social health. To learn more, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/staying-healthy/women-and-children. Click on **Well-child visits**.

During a well visit, you can take care of many things that help them with school, including:

Shots (immunizations)

to prevent illness. Some shots are needed before going to school or day care. Your PCP can guide you on what shots your child should have and when to have them. Many schools ask for a vaccine history to keep in their records.

Sports physical. If your child plans to play sports, tell your PCP. They can include related screenings and counseling in your well visit. That way, you will not need 2 appointments. Kids in high school may need state forms to be completed before taking part in school sports.

Vision and hearing checks. Basic checks are often part of the exam. Your PCP can tell you if you should see an eye doctor or hearing specialist.

Medicine and care plans.

Does your child take medicine for asthma, allergies, ADHD, or other conditions? This is a good time to get school forms filled out and make updates to the school's action plan.

School-based mental health services

Children who need mental health care can receive it in a school setting through grade 12. Telehealth may also be used. Services include diagnostic assessment and therapy services (crisis, individual, family, and group).

What is measles?

You may have seen the phrase measles outbreak in recent headlines. Measles is a preventable disease caused by a virus that lives in the nose and throat. It spreads through the air when an infected person coughs or sneezes. To learn about the measles outbreak that started in 2025, visit www.dph.sc.gov.

Signs to know

Symptoms of measles include:

- Cough.
- High fever.
- Rash.
- Red, watery eyes.
- Runny nose.

Why it matters

Measles can become a serious health problem, especially for children younger than age 5. In severe cases, measles can lead to:

- A lung infection (pneumonia).
- Death.
- Hearing loss.
- Intellectual disability.
- Swelling of the brain (encephalitis).

How to protect kids

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) warns that almost everyone who is exposed to the measles virus will get sick if they have not had the MMR vaccine. This vaccine helps protect people from measles for a long time, as well as mumps and rubella.

The CDC says having 2 doses of MMR is about 97% effective at preventing measles.

They recommend 2 doses:

- Dose 1 between ages 12 and 15 months.
- Dose 2 between ages 4 and 6 years.

Some older children and adults should also have MMR shots. And remember, **MMR shots are needed to attend day care and school in South Carolina.** Talk with your child's doctor about what shots your child needs.



Join us at a Jump-Start Back-to-School event

Children in grades K through 12 can get health screenings, haircuts, and backpacks filled with school supplies at no cost to you.*

For more information, visit www.selecthealthofsc.com/community. Click on **Jump-Start Back-to-School events every year.** To register, call **1-888-676-9588**.

**One per child while supplies last.*



Follow-up care for kids and teens with ADHD

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) affects how a child focuses, manages energy, and controls impulses.

About 1 in 10 children ages 3 to 17 in the United States has been diagnosed with ADHD, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

After a child receives an ADHD diagnosis, their care often includes:

- Behavior therapy.
- Medicine.
- Support at home and school.

Doctors, teachers, parents, and caregivers all play a role.

Regular follow-up care with their provider is important to help them succeed at home, in school, and in daily life. These visits give families and providers time to check how a child is doing and see if the care plan is working. Over time, doctors may review symptoms, adjust treatment, and support families as the child builds skills, confidence, and healthy routines.

Here are ways to make the most of their follow-up care:

1 Stay in touch with your child's doctor.

If your child starts ADHD medicine, the doctor will want close follow-up at first. This helps you find the right medicine and

dose. The goal is to support your child's focus and daily success while limiting side effects.

You may start with weekly check-ins, either in person or by phone. Once a routine is working well, visits may only be needed a few times a year. Ask your child's doctor how often visits should take place.

2 Track growth and celebrate progress.

Set clear, realistic goals based on your child's strengths. Goals might include improving homework habits, building friendships, or growing independence. Small steps matter.

You can use behavior charts or rating forms to track progress. Ask teachers to share updates, too. Your child's doctor may give you tools to use at home and school. You can also find your own. To download one from the National Institute for Children's Health Quality, go to www.nichq.org. Enter **Vanderbilt Assessment Scales** into the **Search** box.

3 Be patient and flexible.

Growth takes time. Adjusting a child's plan along the way is common. If goals are not being

met, talk with their doctor about next steps. Sometimes goals need to better match your child's needs and learning style.

If school support is needed, ask whether your child qualifies for a 504 Plan or an Individualized Education Program (IEP). Learn more at www.familyconnectionsc.org/education/iep-504-plans.

4 Take care of yourself, too.

Parenting a child with ADHD takes energy and teamwork. It's okay to ask for help. Support groups, parent training, or care management services can make a big difference.

Ask your First Choice Care Manager about options that may be available to you through Family Enrichment Courses. Families with children younger than 18 can attend virtual classes.

First Choice members can visit www.selectthealthofsc.com/member/staying-healthy/adhd for more information.



Cyberbullying: Keeping kids safe

Today bullying can mean many things. It includes sending cruel or threatening messages or pictures via text, instant messages, or other platforms. Posting information in chat rooms or on social media and other websites to embarrass someone is a problem, too.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) says that *cyberbullying* feeds anxiety and depression, just like its offline counterpart. You can learn more at www.stopbullying.gov.

How it is different

Online bullies can't see their victim's reactions. They may not be able to tell when they have crossed the line from teasing to torment.

Cyberbullying can happen fast and anywhere at any time. This makes targets feel vulnerable day and night. Yet kids who are bullied may hesitate to tell their parents because they are afraid to lose their devices.

How to help

Set rules about how to use computers, cell phones, and other technology. To help keep your kids from becoming



targets or bullies, the HHS suggests you tell them:

- Do not send messages online you would not say in person.
- Do not respond to hurtful messages. Remove the sender from your friends list and block them.
- Tell a trusted adult about what took place.

Parents and caregivers can also:

- Look at programs to install on devices that help you monitor and manage kids' online habits.
- Save screenshots, emails, or text messages that can be used to report cyberbullying.
- Call the police when someone threatens violence.

For Teens: The dos and don'ts of social media

Here are tips from the American Psychological Association to help make social media more positive and safer.

DO	DO NOT
Build positive connections. Only follow and message people who support you and share your interests.	Go online alone if you are under 15. Adult guidance can be helpful. They should know what apps you use and talk with you about staying safe.
Pay attention to how it makes you feel. If you can't stop scrolling, feel stressed, or hide your use from adults, it may be time for a break.	Engage with harmful content. Skip posts that promote self-harm, dangerous dares, hate, or bullying. Report it and tell a trusted adult.
Set time limits. Make sure social media does not cut into sleep, school, sports, or time with friends and family. Breaks help your brain recharge.	Compare your real life to other people's highlights. Most people only post their best moments. Likes and comments do not measure your worth.

5 ways to stay well in the heat

Summer in South Carolina often brings high temperatures and heavy humidity. When

heat and humidity combine, it can make the air feel even hotter and increase the risk of overheating. Knowing the early signs of a heat-related illness can help you act quickly to stay safe. They include dizziness, headache, heavy sweating, and nausea.

To avoid problems when temperatures are high, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) says to:



1 Drink plenty of water.



2 Schedule outdoor activities in the morning or evening when possible.

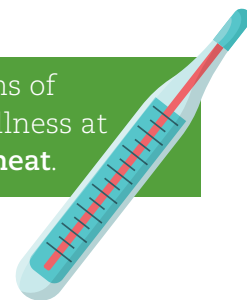


4 Wear loose, lightweight materials in light colors.

3 Take breaks and seek shade when outside.



5 Learn the signs of heat-related illness at www.ready.gov/heat.



Start today: How to prepare for a hurricane

Gather supplies

Every household should have an emergency kit before there is a storm. Learn more at www.ready.gov/kit.

To start, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** to claim a personal safety emergency kit at no cost to you.

Limit of 1 kit per household, per lifetime.

FEMA says you should also store key items in an airtight plastic container.

The kit contains:

- Handheld flashlight.
- Hand sanitizer.
- 2 emergency ponchos.
- First aid kit.

Key items include:

- Water.
- Food that will not go bad (nonperishable).
- Can opener, if needed.
- Whistle, to signal for help.
- Radio with batteries or a hand crank.

Make a plan

Every household should have a plan and practice it before there is a storm warning. Learn more and learn about evacuation zones at www.scemd.org.

Include:

- A checklist of what to do before leaving (evacuating) your home like turning off power and covering windows.
- How your family members will contact each other if you are not in the same place.
- What you will do with pets.

Could a Care Management program help you?

Our Care Managers call you to help you get and stay healthy.

They can support you with pregnancy, long-term illness, injuries, and mental health. We offer programs for asthma, heart problems, diabetes, and pregnancy at no cost to you.

Some people qualify for both Medicaid and Medicare

These people are sometimes called “dual eligible.” A type of plan exists that can cover both Medicaid and Medicare in one place. These plans are available from First Choice and other health plans.

Beginning January 1 in South Carolina, changes to how some dual-eligible care is coordinated may affect certain members. If you have both Medicaid and Medicare and have questions about your coverage, call Healthy Connections at **1-888-549-0820** or First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.

After you join a program, we can help you:

- Get covered medicines and medically needed supplies.
- Set up rides to your appointments.
- Find specialists and more.

How to join

You can ask your primary care provider (PCP) to enroll you. Or you can sign up yourself:

- Call **1-888-276-2020**. Choose the options for **Rapid Response/Care Management**.
- Send a secure email from our website’s **Contact** page.* We will reply within 24 hours, Monday through Friday.
- Log in to the Member Portal. Choose **Enroll in a special program**.

Have more than 1 health need?

If you feel you would benefit from a Complex Care Management program, you can



call **1-888-276-2020**. Select the options for **Rapid Response/Care Management**. Or you can ask 1 of the people below to refer you:

- Your PCP.
- A caregiver.
- A discharge planner.
- Your Care Manager from 1 of our programs.

Members who are in foster care and their foster parents are automatically enrolled in a Care Management program and must participate. All other members can choose not to participate and opt out of any Care Management program by calling Member Services or their Care Manager.

**The secure email inbox is not monitored 24 hours per day and should not be used to report a medical emergency. In the event of a medical emergency, call 911.*

If your primary language is not English, language services are available to you, free of charge. Call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.

Llame al **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**.

First Choice is here for you! This newsletter and other materials are translated into Spanish and can be found on our website at www.selecthealthofsc.com. If you need help with translations of other documents, or in other languages, please call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.

Disponibilidad de traducción

¡First Choice está aquí para usted! Este boletín informativo y otros materiales están traducidos al español, y se pueden encontrar en nuestro sitio de Internet en www.selecthealthofsc.com/es/member. Si necesita ayuda con traducciones de otros documentos, o en otros idiomas, llame a Servicios al Miembro al **1-888-276-2020**.

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Sweet taco magic

Fresh fruit-filled snacks that kids can help you make!

Ingredients

- 1 cup Greek vanilla yogurt
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1 medium banana, sliced into rounds
- ½ cup Mandarin orange slices
- 8 mini whole-grain tortillas

Directions

1. Combine the yogurt, maple syrup, and cinnamon in a bowl.
2. Divide the fruit into 8 servings.
3. Spread some yogurt onto each tortilla.
4. Arrange 1 serving of fruit on top of the yogurt on each tortilla.
5. Fold tortillas and enjoy!



Per serving

Makes 8 tacos. Each taco has about: 107 calories, 2 g total fat (less than 1 g saturated fat), less than 1 mg cholesterol, 130 mg sodium, 22 g carbohydrates, 3 g fiber, and 4 g protein.

What is an Explanation of Benefits (EOB)?

It is not a bill. An EOB is sent to you to show that First Choice by Select Health has received a claim from your doctor for a recent visit or service. Think of it as a summary that tells you what services were covered and how the claim was processed. It is not a request for payment.



Access this issue of *Healthy Now* — with links you can click on — at www.selecthealthofsc.com/member/info-for-you/healthy-now.



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