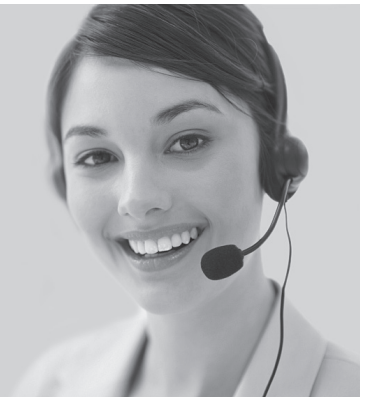


“It was great to talk with you.

Thank you for your interest in ‘Managing a Chronic Illness.’ I hope you find this tip sheet helpful.

Please give me a call if you have more questions about this or other topics.

As your UPMC Health Plan health coach, I am ready to help in any way I can.”



Do you or a loved one have a chronic health condition? You are not alone. Did you know...?

- A chronic health condition is one that can be managed but not cured.
- Almost one out of every two adults in the U.S. has at least one chronic condition.
- Some examples: anxiety, arthritis, asthma, cancer, depression, diabetes, epilepsy, heart disease, HIV/AIDS, kidney disease, liver disease (such as hepatitis), lung disease (such as COPD), nerve and muscle conditions, osteoporosis, obesity, stroke, substance abuse
- It is most common to have two or more of chronic conditions at the same time.

With a chronic illness, you need to see your doctor often. You also need to take care of yourself every day.

Check the self-care skills below that you would you like to learn more about or practice better:

- Make taking care of my health a priority in my life.
- Learn enough about my condition so that I know how to take care of it well.
- Be aware of my symptoms and any changes in them over time.
- Handle my symptoms well. Follow my doctor’s advice to treat the symptoms that can be controlled. Learn to accept and deal with those that cannot be well controlled.
- Do whatever I can to prevent future health problems related to my condition.
- Build and stick with the lifestyle habits that will help my condition. Examples:
- Healthy eating
- Being active
- Managing stress

(continued on next page)



A healthier life is on the line for you!

CMN13-0926-10(d)
UPMC_14_0039

UPMC HEALTH PLAN

- Not smoking
- Managing your weight
- Drinking less or no alcohol
- Getting enough sleep
- Drinking more water
- Solve problems that get in the way of my self-care. Face each problem. Keep trying possible solutions until I find one that works.
- Learn about resources that can help me afford to take care of myself as best I can. (Examples are community programs and pharmacies that give financial help.)
- Keep up with the doctor's visits and tests I need.
- Work as a partner with members of my health care team. Ask questions and make sure I understand how to take care of my health. Example team members:
 - Doctor
 - Specialist(s)
 - Nurse
 - UPMC Health Plan health coach
 - Dietitian
 - Physical therapist
 - Druggist (pharmacist)
 - Counselor or therapist
- Take my medicines when and how my doctor says to.
- Make decisions, such as which treatment options are best for me. Then follow through.
- Manage how my condition affects my feelings and social life. Examples:
 - Express difficult feelings (such as sadness, frustration, worry) to someone I trust.
 - Ask someone to listen without giving advice.
 - Ask for encouragement and praise for my efforts.
 - Share my successes and challenges with those I care about.
 - Join a support group.
- Find practical help when I need it. Examples:
 - Child or elder care
 - Transportation
 - Food
 - Help with household bills
 - Low-cost medicines or medical equipment
 - Home health care
 - Home delivery of medicines or medical equipment

(continued on next page)



A healthier life is on the line for you!

UPMC HEALTH PLAN

- Do not let my chronic illness keep me from enjoying my life. (Depression is very common in people with chronic illnesses. Talk with your doctor and health coach if you have symptoms of depression. UPMC has many resources and tools that can help. One option is an easy-to-use online program called Beating the Blues.)
 - Accept and adapt to any limits that are part of my condition.
 - Other:
-

The UPMC Health Plan has many programs and resources to help you manage a chronic condition. Talk with your health coach about what might be right for you.

Take Action

Choose one of the skills you checked above. Make a plan below to learn more about or practice that skill better this week. Be specific. See the example below.

Action Plan	Example	My Action Plan
I will ...	Start walking for exercise.	
I will do this when ...	For 10 minutes on Tuesday and Thursday at lunch time	
First I will ...	Ask Bill to walk with me.	
The hurdles that might come up, and how I will handle them, are ...	He might not be able to come. If so, I will plan to go alone.	
I will do this to make my success more likely ...	Bring a book on tape to listen to if I walk alone. Borrow one from the library on Sunday.	
My UPMC Health Plan health coach can help me by ...	Helping me with a plan to build up slowly to 30 minutes of walking on most days of the week	
My reward will be ...	A long bubble bath on Friday	

Follow your plan. After one skill becomes a habit, focus on building another skill you need. Be patient and persistent. Many others have learned to manage a chronic condition well. So can you!



A healthier life is on the line for you!

UPMC HEALTH PLAN