



Welcome to the Sentara Quality Care Network (or SQCN, pronounced "sequin")

You are receiving this because your doctor or provider is in the SQCN network. They have chosen to come together to offer you seamless healthcare.

This month we are covering these important topics:

- Lung cancer, COPD, and smoking cessation
- How children and teens grieve
- Caregiver support resources
- Diabetes self-management tools
- When to use antibiotics

You have access to customizable, no-cost services. Find them [here](#). You can contact us at SQCN@sentara.com to get started. We look forward to serving you!

How Are We Doing?

We would love your feedback as we plan newsletter content for 2024. Please take this 10-question, anonymous survey. Tell us what you like, areas of improvement, and topics that will help you and your loved

ones.

2024 Healthy Tips Survey

Lung Cancer Screening: Who Needs One?

Ask your primary care team or provider about the lung cancer screening program, if eligible.

You are considered at high-risk if you:

- Are currently smoking cigarettes or quit smoking in the last 15 years **and**
- Have at least a 20-pack year smoking history **and**
- Are between 50-80 years old

The screening uses lower radiation dose chest CT scans to detect lung cancer at earlier stages, leading to earlier diagnosis and treatment.

Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) Who Should Be Screened for Lung Cancer?](#)

Take the Great American Smokeout Challenge

Each year, smoking causes 1 in 5 related deaths in the United States. Cigarette smoking is the number one preventable cause of disease and death. If you or a loved one is ready to quit, take the Great American Smokeout challenge on Thursday, November 16. The idea is to quit smoking for 24 hours. This can be the first try—or one of several—and a good start to a smoke-free life.

Watch this [one-minute video](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on how smoking quitlines really do work. It can empower you to take that next step away from cigarettes and other tobacco for good.



There are many no-cost support resources:

- 1-800-QUIT-NOW
- 1-855-DÉJELO-YA (Español)

Smartphone Apps/Text

- Text QUITNOW to 333888 (message and data rates may apply)
- [quitSTART app](#)

Web

- [Smokefree.gov](#)
- [Smokefree.gov \(En Español\)](#)
- [Quit Now Virginia](#)

If you are interested in connecting with the SQCN care management team on smoking cessation, please email SQCN@sentara.com.

Sources: [The Great American Smokeout](#)

[Quit Smoking](#) | [Smoking & Tobacco Use](#) | [CDC](#)

National Hospice and Palliative Care Month: Life Transitions Planning

You have probably heard the terms hospice and palliative care medicine. What are the differences? What are the similarities? Does hearing either or both words scare you?

Life transition planning is a great way to empower you and your loved ones should you need added care. Here is a [tip sheet to help with advanced care planning and understanding hospice and palliative care medicine](#).

If you are interested in connecting with the SQCN care management team to help with life transitions planning, please

What Matters Most

A Message on Behalf of Your Primary Care Team

Planning for life transitions can be tough. But it is much easier to think about before a medical crisis. Here are some important words to know.

Advance Care Planning (ACP)

This plans for a serious illness or when meaningful communication is gone. You can set up your preferences ahead of time and update as your circumstances or health status changes. This empowers your loved ones and healthcare team to advocate for you.

ACP includes legally binding documents for medical care, including:

- ✓ The **living will** covers medical procedures and organ and tissue donation preferences.
- ✓ The **medical power of attorney** (other terms are **healthcare proxy** and **surrogate decision maker**) assigns a person you choose to make healthcare choices for you when you are unable.

An additional care consideration is palliative care or hospice care. Both options include symptom relief and maximizing the quality of life.


Palliative Care Medicine works for people with:


- Serious illnesses like cancer, heart failure, COPD.
- Treatments to maintain or cure a serious illness.
- Multiple hospital visits within six months.
- Memory decline or severe distress from illness.

Hospice Care works well for:

- People who could possibly die within six months.
- Comfort care as the main focus of treatments.
- Supporting loved ones during the process and after death.

Your primary care team or specialist is working with a team of trained registered nurse care managers and care coordinators. Together, they can help you understand and begin life transition planning for you or a loved one. These are personalized services and do not cost you anything. Contact us at SQCN@sentara.com or to get started today.



 Sentara Quality Care NETWORK 11/2020

Children and Grief

Did you know kids grieve differently than adults? It depends on their age and if they have gone through a death or separation before. Children and teens grieve for deaths and major changes. This includes the loss of a loved one or pet, parents going through a divorce, or even a good friend moving.

It's important for parents or caregivers to speak with their children in clear terms appropriate for their age. Kids need to know what has happened so they can process what the change means to them. For example:

- **Preschool age kids** may believe that people that die will come back again, like in the cartoons.
- **Elementary age kids** know about death but think it won't affect them or anyone they know.
- **Teens** may become more isolated and choose negative activities to handle the loss.

Some children may act in aggressive ways. Or seem younger in actions like bedwetting and baby talk. They sometimes think they may be to blame and take on the guilt. Some ways to help the transition are to honor the person or event by creating a memory book, looking at pictures, and saying prayers or lighting candles together.

When do you seek help? The following are more serious signs of grief:

- A long period of depression.
- Trouble with sleep, eating, or being alone.
- Staying away from friends or activities once enjoyed.
- Decline in school performance or attendance.
- Acting like they are the person that passed or talking with them/seeing them.
- Suicidal ideations so they can be with the passed person.

There are many resources to help. Our community offers grief camps like the [Sentara Health Camp Lighthouse](#) program for both children and caregivers. There are also several [Virginia bereavement support groups available here](#) . These are wonderful opportunities for children of all ages to have fun and peer interaction with others who have lost loved ones. It also helps parents and caregivers deal with their own grief and age-appropriate ways to be there for their children.

Source: [American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry](#)

Caregiver Support: Don't Forget About You

November is National Caregiver Appreciation Month. Caring for your loved one can be a hard yet rewarding task.

Your primary care team is working with specially trained social workers. Together, they can help you through the caregiving journey. Read more about resources and support that can help you and your loved one.

If you are interested in connecting with the SQCN care management team for social work services, please email SQCN@sentara.com.

Caregiver Resources

Here are some additional resources to help you on your caregiving journey.

Senior Services of Southeastern VA Supports seniors with advocacy, education, and services. 757-461-9481	Office for Aging Services of the Division for Community Living (DARS) Programs to help older Virginians. 800-552-3402
VA Lifespan Respite Voucher Program Information and application for caregiver relief funds. 800-552-3402	Dementia Capable Virginia Resources for those impacted by loved ones with dementia. 800-552-3402
National Institute on Aging Caregiver education and resources. 800-222-2225	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Caregiver support program and more. 855-260-3274

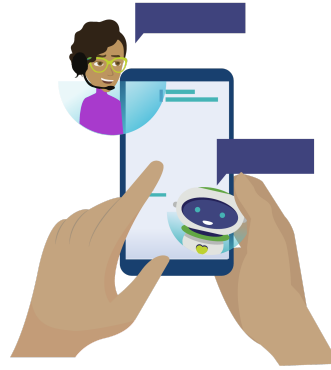
Contact SQCN@sentara.com to request a no-cost consultation with our social work team.

 Sentara Quality Care NETWORK

Program Update: Pyx Health Program and National Caregiver Appreciation Month

We want to give a huge shoutout to all the caregivers out there. It takes lots of love, patience, and energy to care for a loved one. Caregiving can often feel isolating, stressful, and...lonely.

If you're a caregiver yourself or just need some extra support, Pyx Health is here for you. The friendly people in the Compassionate Support Center can help you over the phone by connecting you with resources and plan benefits, or just spending time listening. On the mobile app, find lots of resources, activities and tips for wellness and connection—24/7, at no cost to you.



Here's a quick, [two-minute video](#) to show you more!

With Pyx Health, no one has to feel alone. Follow these easy steps to try it out. From a smartphone or tablet:

- Search "Pyx Health" in the App Store or Google Play and download the app to your smartphone or tablet.

Don't have a smart device? No problem, sign up by:

- Landline: Call 1-855-499-4777
- Web app: [Pyx Health app](#)

Contact the team at SQC@sentara.com for more information.

National Influenza Vaccination Week: December 5-9, 2023

It's the season for family, but also for flu. National Influenza Vaccination Week is your reminder that there's still time to get a flu vaccine and fight flu. Protect yourself and the ones you love from flu illness. Get a flu vaccine today. Find flu and other vaccine locations [here](#).

Antibiotics and Your Family

Have a virus such as a cold or the flu? You can feel better without antibiotics. Ask your healthcare professional or pharmacist about the best way to feel better while your body fights off the virus.

You can find treatments for common illnesses [here](#). You can see the differences between viruses and bacteria within the chart on the right. Also, whether antibiotics will help.

Have a sick child? Antibiotics may not be the answer. Watch this [30-second video](#) from the CDC to learn more about kids and antibiotics.

Viruses or Bacteria What's got you sick?

Antibiotics are often prescribed when they are not needed for respiratory infections. Antibiotics are only needed for treating certain infections caused by bacteria. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics. When an antibiotic is not prescribed, ask your healthcare professional for tips on how to relieve symptoms.

Common Respiratory Infections	Common Cause			Are Antibiotics Needed?*
	Virus	Virus or Bacteria	Bacteria	
Common cold/runny nose	✓			No
Sore throat (except strep)	✓			No
COVID-19	✓			No
Flu	✓			No
Bronchitis/chest cold (in otherwise healthy children and adults)		✓		No**
Middle ear infection		✓		Maybe
Sinus infection		✓		Maybe
Strep throat			✓	Yes
Whooping cough			✓	Yes

*Antiviral drugs are available for some viral infections, such as COVID-19 or flu.
**Studies show that in otherwise healthy children and adults, antibiotics for bronchitis won't help patients feel better.

To learn more about antibiotic prescribing and use, visit www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use.

Source: [CDC Patient Resources and Education](#)

Ask Your Pharmacist: Your A1C

You have probably heard the term A1C, but what does it mean? It's the measurement of your blood sugar level over a two-to-three-month period. It's checked by a basic blood test that may be called the hemoglobin A1C or HbA1c test. The results can show prediabetes and diabetes. It can also help with the maintenance of either.

Sugar attaches to a protein called hemoglobin, found in your red blood cells. Those with higher blood sugar levels tend to have more sugar attached.

A baseline A1C test is recommended for those over the age of 45 or who are overweight or have additional risk factors. [Read more about your A1C on this downloadable tip sheet.](#)

Diabetes and Your A1C Level

A Message on Behalf of Your Primary Care Team

What is an A1C? It is an average of your blood sugar level over a two- to three-month period. It is checked by a basic blood test. The results can flag prediabetes and diabetes. It can also help with the maintenance of either.

Your level should be tested if you are over 45, overweight, or have a history of gestational diabetes. Or if you get prediabetes results from routine screenings.

Here are the levels for diagnosing prediabetes or diabetes:

- Normal: below 5.7%
- Prediabetes: 5.7% to 6.4%
- Diabetes: 6.5% or above

The **safe A1C goal** for most people with diabetes is 7% or less. For those that are older, taking insulin, or have other medical conditions, it should be 8% or less.

You can reduce your A1C levels by:

- ✓ A healthy diet with protein, low-sugar fruits, whole grains, and non-starchy vegetables.
- ✓ Drinking 4-6 large glasses of water daily. Avoid sweet drinks like tea, fruit juice, soda.
- ✓ Using your natural insulin through exercise.
- ✓ Lowering your weight by 5%-7%.
- ✓ Taking medications as prescribed.
- ✓ Managing overall stress and mental health.
- ✓ Getting a good night's rest.

Your primary care team is working with a group of specially trained registered nurse care managers and care coordinators. Together, they can help you understand and manage your prediabetes or diabetes. This is a diabetes self-management program offered to you at no cost. Contact care management services at SQCN@sentrara.com to get started on the above goals and more.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/managing/managing-blood-sugar/a1c.html>, Accessed 1 November 2023.

Source: [CDC All About Your A1C](#)

Care Corner: Diabetes Self-Management Services

What is the difference between diabetes education, diabetes medical management, and diabetes self-management services?

Diabetes education is giving specific information or instruction on how to manage diabetes. This is usually done at a specific time.

Diabetes medical management is the diagnosis of diabetes, assessing a variety of measures (labs, home glucoses), evaluating potential complications, and prescribing or adjusting appropriate medications.

Diabetes self-management is your ongoing management of diabetes. This includes:

- Working diabetes care into your lifestyle and receiving support to make needed lifestyle changes.
- Building skills and abilities for self-care through informed decision making, problem solving, and collaboration with the healthcare team.
- Improving clinical outcomes, health status, and quality of life.

If you would like to learn more about [no-cost diabetes self-management services, please click here](#) and/or email our care management team at SQC�@sentara.com.

Questions? Contact the SQCN Team:

757-455-7330 | SQC�@sentara.com

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