



## 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:

- Opioid Addiction and Awareness
- Pain Management, including Low Back Pain
- Healthy Aging and Fall Prevention
- Childhood Obesity and Weight Inclusion
- Diabetes and Appetite

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

### Opioid Risk Addiction and Awareness

Did you know?

- About 41 people die from prescription opioid overdose daily in the U.S. This includes hydrocodone, morphine, and oxycodone.
- It's easy for anyone to become addicted. Your brain and nervous system change with the drug.

- Combining opioids with other substances can increase a chance of death. This includes alcohol, cough medication, and sleeping pills.

Whether prescribed or not, there are risks like addiction, misuse, and even death. Be sure to discuss the risks versus benefits with your primary care team. You can find more in this [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) fact sheet](#).

## Ask Your Pharmacist: Why Words Matter with Opioid Addiction

As a nation, we are becoming more aware of the risks of opioid use. Opioids affect each person who takes them in a unique way. Because of this, anyone can become addicted. Choose words wisely when talking about opioid addiction. This goes for other drugs as well.

Some words to lose and words to use:

Instead of...	Use...	Because...
Addict	Person with substance use disorder	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Person-first language is more empowering</li> <li>• It shows a person “has” a problem and is not “the problem”</li> <li>• The terms are more positive and take away individual blame and judgement</li> </ul>
User or abuser	Person with substance use disorder (or person with opioid addiction)	
Junkie	Person in active use	
Alcoholic	Person with alcohol use disorder	

Source: <https://nida.nih.gov/nidamed-medical-health-professionals/health-professions-education/words-matter-terms-to-use-avoid-when-talking-about-addiction>

## How to Treat Low Back Pain

Lower back pain is common. It can be caused by an accident or lifting something heavy. Or, it can be due to age-related changes to your spine. If your physical activity is inconsistent and sporadic you may experience it.

You should call your primary care team if symptoms worsen or you have additional symptoms, including:

- Progressive and persistent numbness
- Muscle weakness
- Known or suspected infection, including any fevers

- Significant trouble walking
- Pain that is constant or increasing over time

There are many at-home methods to help with less severe pain. See [this tip sheet](#) for more information. Also, [Where to Get Care Now](#) helps when choosing between your primary care team, urgent care, or emergency department.

If you are interested in the SQCN care management team to help with no-cost low back pain services or other pain management, email [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com).

## How to Treat Low Back Pain


**A Message on Behalf of Your Primary Care Team or Specialist**

Low back pain is common. It can be the result of an injury, medical condition, or life event. The pain itself can feel dull and constant or sharp and sudden. It generally goes away on its own.

If your symptoms are not severe, there are a variety of home treatments:

- ✓ Pain medication, such as acetaminophen
- ✓ Applying ice or heat
- ✓ Getting a massage
- ✓ Gentle stretches and exercises, including tai chi and yoga
- ✓ Meditation

Try a series of no-cost videos and meditations. Click or scan the QR code to access.



How do you know if you need help?


Watch for symptoms like these, in addition to back pain:

- Pain, numbness, or weakness in legs
- Unintentional weight loss
- Trouble urinating
- Significant trouble walking
- Fever
- Pain that wakes you up at night

If you have any of the above, contact your provider. Going to your primary care team or specialist can be less expensive than urgent care or the emergency department. Wait times are likely shorter too. If you do not have a provider, try a physical therapy center, pain management center, or an orthopedic practice.

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 manage lower back pain and any other conditions that you may have. These services are personalized and do not cost you anything. Contact the care management team to get started at [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com).

Source: <https://www.niams.nih.gov/health-topics/back-pain>. Accessed 5 September 2023.



## Aging Gracefully: Fall Prevention

More than 1 out of 4 people fall each year. Less than half tell their doctor.

A fall can change your mobility, independence, and confidence. Falls can also decrease quality of life and contribute to social isolation from family and friends. Here are a few questions to ask yourself:

- Have you fallen, or almost fallen in the past year?
- Do you sometimes feel dizzy or lightheaded, especially when standing up from a couch or chair?
- Do you feel less steady on your feet?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above, discuss a fall prevention plan with your primary care team. See [this double-sided tip sheet](#) for more information on how to prevent falls at home.

If you are interested in SQCN care management services to help with no-cost fall prevention planning, contact us at [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com).

## Facts About Falls

Have you fallen, or almost fallen in the past year?

Do you sometimes feel dizzy or lightheaded, especially when standing up from a couch or chair?

Do you feel less steady on your feet?

Falls are not only the leading cause of fatal injury in older adults, but they are more likely to lead to long-term complications. These can include hip fractures, decreased mobility and head injuries. Your quality of life and independence can be forever decreased as a result of a fall.

### By the numbers

For those over the age of 65...

More than **1 out of 4 people** fall each year. Less than half tell their doctor.

At least **95% of hip fractures** are caused by a fall. Most traumatic brain injuries are caused this way too.

Falls account for **over 36,000 deaths** a year. In this age group, falls are the leading cause of injury death.

A fall can instantly change your mobility, independence, and confidence. The results from a fall can decrease quality of life and contribute to social isolation from family and friends. There are many ways to alter your home, diet, and daily habits to help prevent a fall. See the following prevention tips.

Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/falls/index.html>. Accessed 25 August 2023.

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## S.A.F.E. Program: Sentara Awareness for Falls Education

This program helps reduce the risk and fear of falls. It improves flexibility, strength, balance, and walking endurance over a one-year period. There are follow-ups to check your progress.

Do you have any of the following?

- Generalized weakness
- Walking instability
- Decreased balance

If so, you may qualify. A S.A.F.E. program evaluation can be set up through the Sentara Outpatient Therapy Scheduling Office at 855-852-9066.

Find out more information about fall-prevention therapy [here](#).

## Program Update: Follow-up Call After Hospital Discharge

If you were recently discharged from the emergency department or hospital, you can expect a follow-up call from the SQCN team. You will be called during the week (Monday-Friday). You will be asked questions about your health and progress, such as:

- Are you feeling the same, better, or worse since your visit?
- If you were given a prescription, were you able to fill it? Do you have any questions?

- Do you have a follow-up appointment scheduled?
- Do you have any questions regarding your discharge instructions?

Your primary care team, and their on-call partners, are available 24/7 to assist you with your healthcare needs.

### **Are You Concerned About Your Child's Weight?**

September is Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. There is a stigma associated with children who have a high body weight. Parents or guardians may blame themselves. They may even delay seeking healthcare for fear of judgement. The child may experience bullying, or worse, from kids at school.

If you are concerned about your child's weight, try the following:

- Work on healthy eating and physical activity goals you think your child can manage. Model these behaviors at home.
- Celebrate success in other ways than treats.
- Be aware of eating triggers. Notice if your child eats when bored, stressed, or angry.
- Consider seeing a dietitian or mental health provider for a personalized plan. Ask your primary care team for a referral.

When talking about whole-body health, focus on more than looks. Stay away from words like "fat" and "thin" when describing people. And most importantly, let your child know you are there for support.

Check out this [no-cost program offered by Eastern Virginia Medical School \(EVMS\)](#).

Source: [National Library of Medicine: Addressing Weight Stigma and Opening Doors for a Patient-Centered Approach to Childhood Obesity](#)

### **Care Corner: Diabetes and Your Appetite**

Having diabetes can cause changes in your appetite due to not feeling well or having depression. There may be medication side effects. Or, gastroparesis, caused by food sitting in the stomach too long. A healthy, balanced diet is so important with diabetes.

If you are interested in learning more about diabetes and the effects on your appetite, [download this tip sheet](#).

You may be eligible for no-cost diabetes self-management care services. Contact us at [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com) to find out more about the program.

## Diabetes and Your Appetite

### A Message on Behalf of Your Primary Care Team

Having diabetes can cause changes in your appetite due to not feeling well or having depression. There may be medication side effects. Or, gastroparesis, caused by food sitting in the stomach too long. A healthy, balanced diet is so important with diabetes.

Sometimes, you may not feel hungry. It's not a good idea to skip meals because it can lead to high blood sugar levels. When your body doesn't get enough energy from food your liver produces more sugar.

Your primary care team is working with a team of specially trained registered nurse care managers and care coordinators. Together, they can help you understand and manage your diabetes and any other conditions that you may have.

#### Some ways to manage your appetite:

- ✓ Eat several small meals instead of three large ones. Have something every 2-3 hours. This prevents you from overeating during a large meal.
- ✓ Consume foods that are higher protein, especially at breakfast. This keeps you fuller during the day.
- ✓ Bring portable snacks for eating on the go. Stock your pantry and fridge for easy eating at home.
- ✓ Keep active and move around often.
- ✓ Set reminders on when to eat. Make your dining space an inviting place to sit.



Your diabetes self-care manager can work with you on the above goals and more:

- Discuss your medications and side effects.
- Empower your lifestyle choices.
- Achieve your best health.

Your diet may be off because of food insecurity issues. It may be hard to buy healthy foods because of your budget, difficulty in getting to the store, or being able to get a healthcare appointment. This is another way care management services may help. Contact care management services at [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com).

Source: <https://www.heart.org/healthcare/162560-diabetes-loss-of-appetite>. Accessed 29 August 2023.



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**Questions? Contact the SQCN Team:**

**757-455-7330 | [SQCN@sentara.com](mailto:SQCN@sentara.com)**

**Find a [SQCN Provider](#)**

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