

FirstChoiceSM
by Select Health of South Carolina
Your Hometown Health Plan

Healthy Connections 

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

Healthy NOW

SUMMER 2022

www.selecthealthofsc.com


Taking care of
your health —
from head to toe

Learn more
about your
benefits and
services

Renewing
your Healthy
Connections
benefits
See page 2

 @firstchoicebyselecthealth

 @firstchoicebyselecthealth

 First Choice by Select Health

Important information about your First Choice and Healthy Connections benefits

The annual eligibility review process to renew your Healthy Connections benefits if you are still eligible resumes at the end of the COVID-19 public health emergency. We want you to continue getting the extra benefits you enjoy from First Choice by Select Health of South Carolina. Take steps to be prepared!



Update your address and phone number now. Make sure **both** Healthy Connections and First Choice can reach you with important

notifications about your benefits. Update your contact information by calling:

- Healthy Connections at **1-888-549-0820** and
- First Choice at **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**).



Be on the lookout.

If you get an Annual Review Form from Healthy Connections, fill it out and return it

within 30 calendar days of the date on the form.

- If you return your form on time and you are still eligible for

Healthy Connections, you can continue your First Choice plan benefits without interruption.

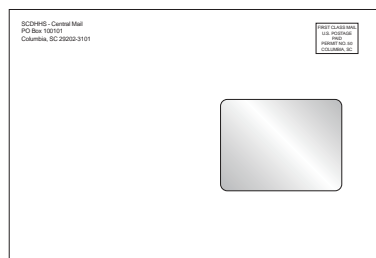
- If you return your completed form late, you may temporarily lose benefits or be placed on another health plan, but you may regain Healthy Connections coverage if you are still eligible. You can also choose to come back to First Choice if that happens.



Return the Annual Review Form to Healthy Connections by email to

8888201204@fax.scdhhs.gov.

Or mail it to: SCDHHS — Central Mail, P.O. Box 100101, Columbia, SC 29202-3101.



We can help you!

We want to help our First Choice members with their annual eligibility review. When you get the Annual Review Form, if you have questions or need help:

- Visit our website at **www.selecthealthofsc.com/renew** for detailed information.
- Call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**.
- Go to the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services website at **www.scdhhs.gov**.
- Call the South Carolina Healthy Connections Member Service Center at **1-888-549-0820**.

If you need a replacement Annual Review Form:

- Call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**). We can also send a preaddressed, prepaid envelope for you to send the form back to Healthy Connections.
- Download the form at **www.scdhhs.gov/sites/default/files/WKR002.pdf**.

Note: Your health plan choice does not affect your Healthy Connections eligibility.

Update your contact information today

This will help make sure you do not miss important information from your health plan. You can update your address and phone number through our mobile app or online Member Portal. To access the Member Portal, visit **www.selecthealthofsc.com**. Once you are done, call Healthy Connections at **1-888-549-0820** to share your updated information.

Learn more about your benefits and services

On our website, through your member portal, or by mail

The First Choice website, www.selecthealthofsc.com, described below is home to important resources and information about your health benefits and services.

The member portal.

Here you can see your medical and drug benefits, and health information. You have access to recent medical care history while you have been a First Choice member. You can also:

- Request a new ID card.
- Change your primary care provider (PCP).
- See a list of your medicines.
- Enroll in a care management program.

To register, go to the **Members** section under **Member tools**. Click on the **Member portal** link and enter your personal information.

The most current Member Handbook.

This has information about:

- Benefits and services that are and are not covered.
- How to get language services. These services are provided at no cost.
- How to choose a PCP and find providers in our network.
- When to access emergency services and how quickly you should be seen in urgent and routine situations.
- How to get care in case of an emergency or when you are out of town.

- What to do if you need to be admitted to the hospital.
- How to get care after normal business hours.
- How to get a second opinion.
- How to get specialty care and mental health services.
- Member Rights and Responsibilities and the Notice of Privacy Practices.
- Grievances and Appeals and how to report suspected fraud and abuse.
- How First Choice makes decisions about your care when there are advances in medicine and new treatments become available.
- Other benefits and services to help you be successful in your health decisions.

Network hospitals, doctors, and behavioral health providers.

Using the online provider directory, you can search for a First Choice health care provider, behavioral health provider, or hospital by name, ZIP code, or county. You can see their specialty, languages spoken, gender, office hours, and wheelchair accessibility.

Copayment amounts for adults.

See the Copayment Reference Guide.

Medicine updates.

You can find preferred drug list updates (under **Member Tools**), information and limits about pharmacy benefits (under **Benefits**, then **Prescription Benefits**), and drug recall information (under **Information for You**).

Member Rights and Responsibilities and the Notice of Privacy Practices.

It is important for you to know what your health care rights are and what information you can control.

Instructions for how to report fraud or make a complaint.

You can find out about Medicaid State Fair Hearings and learn how to:

- Report suspected fraud or abuse.
- Make grievances (complaints).
- Ask for an appeal if a service you feel you need is denied.

Frequently asked questions and urgent notices.

You can find out about many things like what to do if you get a bill, the policy on prior approvals, whom to call if you have trouble getting medicine filled, and how to change your PCP. Remember to check our website for notices of any temporary benefit changes related to public health emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, or extreme weather, such as hurricanes.



MEMBER SERVICE

LET US HELP! WE ARE HERE FOR YOU.

We can help you **SCHEDULE** a provider visit.

We can answer **BENEFIT QUESTIONS**.

LET US KNOW if you wait longer than **45 minutes** from your appointment time.

We can help you get your covered **MEDICINES FILLED**. Call Member Services for help before you leave the pharmacy.

We can help you **ARRANGE TRANSPORTATION** to get to and from provider visits or to pick up your covered medicine from a pharmacy.

MEMBER SERVICES: 1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)

24-HOUR NURSE CALL LINE: 1-800-304-5436

Please see your Member Handbook at www.selecthealthofsc.com for complete and detailed information.

PRESCRIPTIONS

There is generally **NO MONTHLY LIMIT** to how many prescriptions you can have (certain medicines have limitations).



Some medicines require a **prior authorization**. Your provider will submit this request.

Ask your provider to **check the list of preferred drugs** on our website to see if a prior authorization is needed.

For medicines that need a prior authorization, you may get **72-hour temporary supply** from your pharmacy while the request is pending.* A decision for drug prior authorization can take up to **24 hours**.

*A member is permitted one temporary supply per prescription number. Inhalers, diabetic test strip and supplies, and creams or lotions are exceptions to the supply limit because of how they are packaged. For those medicines, the member may receive the smallest package size available.

Medicine updates

Please visit www.selecthealthofsc.com for up-to-date pharmacy information.



Did you know cardiac rehab is a covered benefit?

Please ask your provider for more information.

Cardiac rehab can help more than your heart

The CDC stresses that cardiac rehabilitation (rehab) is an important part of healing after a heart attack. These programs can help you live longer, prevent future heart problems, and more. For example, they can help:

- Ease depression and anxiety.
- Improve your ability to exercise.
- Return you to your daily activities.



The programs are not only for people who had a heart attack. Cardiac rehab may also help those with heart failure or chronic stable angina, or who had bypass surgery or angioplasty.

How to prepare for storms

Mother Nature has always been all-powerful. But now more than ever, she is hard to predict. As temperatures rise around the globe, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) says you can expect more extreme weather events in the future. It's important to prepare for any kind of storm that might come your way.

Have an emergency kit

First Choice members can **claim a personal safety emergency kit at no cost to you.**

It has the following items:

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

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) suggests also keeping water, nonperishable food, a can opener, and a battery-powered radio in an airtight plastic container. You may also need other supplies, such as pet food, medicines, or infant formula, depending on your situation. See the full list of recommendations at www.ready.gov/kit.

Make a plan

If you live in a hurricane-prone area, create an emergency plan. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says to ask yourself:

- Do I know the nearest shelter location and all the routes to get there?
- What will I do with my pets?

- Do I have a checklist of things to do before I leave (evacuate)?

The CDC says this checklist should include things like unplugging appliances, turning off the power, and clearing your yard of things that could damage your home. You may also need to cover windows and doors with plywood or storm shutters. Make sure your car has a full tank of gas if there is a hurricane warning. For information about local shelters, making an emergency plan, and hurricane evacuation zones, visit the South Carolina Emergency Management Division's website at www.scemd.org.

Upon request, limit of 1 kit per household, per lifetime.

Communicate better in an emergency

Consumer Reports suggests taking these steps now to prepare for a hurricane or flood:

- Have your family members check the contacts on their cellphones. Make sure information for all key people is correct and complete.
- Make a paper list of your key contacts, too. It should include someone outside your area. Give a copy of the list to each member of your household.

During a crisis, keep 1 device on at a time to save power. And know that texts are more likely to connect than calls. For more planning resources, visit www.ready.gov/plan.



Call Member Services at 1-888-276-2020 to request the emergency kit.

Take care of your diabetes from head to toe



Diabetes affects almost your whole body, warns the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases (NIDDK). If it's not controlled, diabetes could lead to a wide range of health problems.

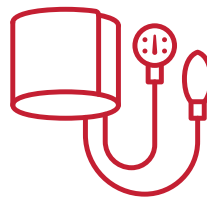
To help prevent or slow problems, follow your eating and exercise plan and take any medicines as directed. The NIDDK says you should also talk with your health care provider about the following tests and exams:

- **HbA1c, or A1c, blood test.**

This shows your average blood sugar level over the past 3 months. A typical goal for many people with diabetes is less than 7%.



- **Blood pressure check.** Diabetes increases the risk for high blood pressure and heart disease.



- **Cholesterol blood test.** Diabetes increases the risk for heart attack, stroke, and poor circulation.



- **Kidney function urine and blood tests.** Diabetes can affect how your kidneys work.



- **Dilated eye exam.** This is the only way to see early signs of some eye problems. Over time, high blood sugar levels can lead to eye diseases that affect how you see.



- **Dental checkup.** Diabetes can lead to gum disease and tooth loss.



Are you In Control?

First Choice members with diabetes can join the In Control diabetes program to help them manage their condition. To join the program, visit the member portal today. Or call **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)**. Select the option for Rapid Response/Care Management.

Take steps to protect your kidneys

Coffee filters keep grounds out of your morning cup of joe. Your kidneys work much the same way. They strain waste products from your blood.

Diabetes places your kidneys at risk. The NIDDK says about 30% of adults with diabetes have chronic kidney disease. But you can catch it and act early.

Diabetes can cause damage

The kidneys are 2 bean-shaped organs that sit just below your rib cage. Millions of tiny blood vessels inside filter your blood. The waste goes into your urine to leave the body. If you have diabetes, high blood sugar damages these blood vessels, warns the NIDDK. The damage prevents the kidneys from doing their important job. This problem gets worse with time.

After a while, your kidneys may stop working. This is called kidney failure. You may need a kidney transplant or regular blood-filtering treatments (dialysis). Kidney disease also can raise your risk for heart and blood vessel (cardiovascular) disease and other health problems.

Know the signs

Kidney disease often has no symptoms at first. Once it gets worse, it can cause:

- Swelling in your legs, feet, and ankles.
- Sleep problems.
- Trouble focusing.
- Nausea and vomiting.

Avoid problems

Early treatment may help prevent long-term damage. Talk with your health care provider about getting blood and urine tests for kidney disease. **If you have Type 2 diabetes or have had Type 1 diabetes for more than 5 years, you should get tested for kidney disease every year.**

These healthy habits can also help you stay well:

- Manage your blood sugar levels.
- Control your blood pressure. Eat less salt. Follow your provider's other instructions.
- Take the medicines your provider prescribes as directed.
- Exercise regularly. Aim for at least 150 minutes (2 hours and 30 minutes) of moderate-intensity aerobic activity every week. You can do as many small sessions as needed.



Healthy food swaps

Prepackaged foods, like sweet cereals and chicken nuggets, are fine sometimes. But they do not have everything children need to feel good and grow healthy. They can also contain a lot of calories and added salt, sugar, and fats.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends a healthy diet with veggies, fruits, and other whole foods. This can help prevent diabetes, heart disease, and other health conditions down the line. If your child already has diabetes, choosing better foods can help keep their condition under control.

Here are ways to replace some common foods:

Instead of: Sugary cereal Serve: Whole-grain cereal

Check the labels on packages. Look for options with at least 2 grams of fiber and less than 10 grams of sugar per serving.

Choose those with words like “whole grain” in the ingredients list. Whole grains contain parts of the plant that keep kids healthy. That includes fiber, which protects their hearts and helps digestion. Add sweetness with fruits like bananas or peaches.



Instead of: Soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, and juice

Serve: Water

Sweetened drinks contain much more sugar than kids need in a day. The CDC warns that they have been linked to cavities, Type 2 diabetes, and other health problems. Even juice is high in calories and low in the healthy fiber kids get from whole fruit.

Water helps keep blood flowing and joints moving. To add flavor, use lemon or mint.



Instead of: Chicken nuggets or hamburgers

Serve: Beans

Growing bodies need protein to get bigger and stronger. But it does not have to come from meat products, especially those that are processed or fried. Beans have plenty of protein, as well as iron, fiber, and potassium. They can be made into veggie burgers or replace meat in other dishes. Just add in ¼ cup of beans for every ounce of meat you would have used.

Take part in our
First Choice Fit
Virtual Health Challenge
to learn about eating
right and more!
For details, visit
www.selecthealthofsc.com/firstchoicefit.

Peanut butter and banana pockets



Watch a demo of this recipe at www.youtube.com/firstchoicebyselecthealth.

Ingredients

- 3 ripe bananas
- 3 tablespoons creamy peanut butter
- 1½ teaspoons honey
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 4 (8-inch) whole wheat flour tortillas
- Nonstick cooking spray

Directions

Peel and cut bananas into about ¼-inch-thick slices. In a small bowl, stir together peanut butter, honey, and cinnamon.

Lay tortillas flat. Spread about 1 tablespoon of the peanut butter mixture on 1 half of each tortilla.

Divide banana slices evenly among tortillas. Place them in a single layer on top of peanut butter mixture. Fold each tortilla in half.

Coat a large skillet with nonstick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. Place folded tortillas in the skillet. Cook for 1–2 minutes on each side, or until golden brown.

Nutrition facts

Makes 4 servings. Each serving (1 tortilla) has about 290 calories, 8 g total fat (1.5 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 340 mg sodium, 50 g total carbohydrate, 16 g fiber, 17 g total sugars, 8 g protein.

Source: *Cooking Matters®*,
Share Our Strength



When was your child's last well-visit?

Having a well-visit once a year can help your child stay up-to-date on routine vaccines (shots) and other care. To see vaccine schedules for children from birth to age 18, visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules. To schedule a well-visit, call the provider's office. If you need help, call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**).



Is your child afraid of getting a shot?

Many children have a fear of needles. And it can often be more upsetting than the shot itself. To help your child through it, try these tips from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP):

- **Explain what is about to happen.** Tell them the shot will hurt a little but only for a moment.
- **Make them feel heard.** Instead of "It's no big deal," you could say something like, "I know it's not fun. I get it. Let's make a plan to keep you as comfortable as we can."
- **Comfort your child.** Remain calm and upbeat. Use comforting words in a soft voice to make them feel reassured, even if your baby does not understand words yet. Young children may want to sit in your lap.
- **Distract your child with an age-appropriate toy.** For example, bring along a rattle for a baby. Have a video game for an older child. Keep using the toy for a few moments right after the shot.

Can my kids get a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes, they can. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has authorized the emergency use of the Pfizer vaccine for young people ages 5 to 15. The FDA has also fully approved the Pfizer vaccine for people ages 16 and older. This means that most people ages 5 and older can get 1 of the COVID-19 vaccines. Young people ages 12 and older can also get a booster shot at no cost to you.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says that getting a COVID-19 vaccine is an important tool to help stop the pandemic. Vaccine guidelines may continue to change. If you have questions, contact your health care provider or pharmacist. You can also:

- Visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov.
- Visit the SCDHEC website at <https://scdhec.gov/covid19/covid-19-vaccine>.
- Call SCDHEC at **1-866-365-8110**.

Need help with getting an appointment for a COVID-19 vaccine or booster shot? Call First Choice Member Services at **1-888-276-2020** (TTY **1-888-765-9586**).



6 things to do when you find out you are pregnant

Once you know you are pregnant, the Office on Women's Health says take these steps right away:

1 Schedule a prenatal visit. Try to have it early in your first trimester (weeks 1–13). This checkup and other regular prenatal visits with your health care provider can help reduce health risks for both you and your baby. Your provider can offer advice and should do screening tests.

2 Review any medicines you take. Some prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, and herbal products may harm an unborn baby. Talk with your provider before you stop taking any medicines.

3 Avoid alcohol, drugs, and tobacco. If you need help, talk with your provider. For tobacco, you can call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** to talk with a nationally certified Quit Coach. Also avoid secondhand smoke.

4 Look at your diet. You need more iron, calcium, and folic acid now. Talk with your provider about prenatal vitamins, healthy food choices, and what foods to limit or avoid. Ask about caffeine.

5 Get or stay active. Check with your provider first. Exercise is good for your well-being and health. It helps get your body ready for labor and delivery. You may also recover faster.

6 Take care of your teeth. See a dentist if you have not been having regular dental checkups. Certain gum problems in pregnancy may cause a baby to be born too early or too small, warns the American Academy of Periodontology.

Taking care of mom

First Choice has extra benefits to support pregnant and new moms! Visit www.selecthealthofsc.com. Click on **Learn about our Extra Benefits** for more information about:

- Regional baby showers with car seats, diaper bags, and more.*
- Home-delivered meals for new moms.**
- Electric breast pump for new and expectant moms.**

**For qualifying members, while supplies last. **Conditions apply, see website.*



When the blues stick around

Most women get the baby blues within a few days of giving birth. These feelings often go away in 3 to 5 days, says the Office on Women's Health (OWH). If they last longer than 2 weeks, it may be a more serious condition called postpartum depression (PPD). New moms can develop PPD during pregnancy or up to a year after childbirth. The OWH says signs of PPD include:

- Crying more often or for no apparent reason.
- Losing interest or pleasure in activities that are usually enjoyable.
- Eating too little or too much.
- Feeling moody, irritable, restless, or angry.
- Having no energy or motivation.
- Oversleeping or being unable to fall asleep.
- Having a lack of interest in the baby.
- Constantly doubting your ability to care for the baby.
- Trouble concentrating or making decisions.
- Feeling worthlessness, hopeless, or guilty.
- Thinking about hurting yourself or the baby.

Talk with your health care provider if you have any of these symptoms. PPD can make it hard to get through the day and care for your baby. Left untreated, the OWH says PPD can affect a baby's development.



Need an interpreter?

If your primary language is not English, First Choice has phone interpreters to help you with health care services anywhere, anytime. These interpreters are available for more than 200 languages. You also can use our interpreters when you are at your provider's office. This is offered at no cost to you or your provider. Call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020**. You can also call the First Choice Nurse Call Line at **1-800-304-5436** for free health advice, 24 hours a day. They can also connect you to an interpreter.

Spanish: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **1-888-276-2020** (TTY: **1-888-765-9586**).

Russian: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните **1-888-276-2020** (TTY: **1-888-765-9586**).

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. Si necesita ayuda con traducciones de otros documentos, o en otros idiomas, llame a Servicios al Miembro al **1-888-276-2020**.

www.selecthealthofsc.com

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Get help with your GED!

First Choice by Select Health of South Carolina offers a **GED program** to help our eligible members with their learning goals. There is no cost to members if they qualify.

Mission GED (general educational development) helps cover the cost of the GED exam (up to \$150 in testing fees) and 1 retake, if needed. **You are eligible to participate if:**

- You are a First Choice member at the time of enrollment into the GED program.
- You are age 19 or older.
- You do not currently have a high school diploma or GED.

To sign up, fill out the online application available at www.selecthealthofsc.com, under the **Community** tab. Follow the instructions on the form. To find out more or get help with the application, call Member Services at **1-888-276-2020 (TTY 1-888-765-9586)** or send an email to ged@selecthealthofsc.com.



First Choice Member Services
P.O. Box 40849
Charleston, SC 29423



Member Services:
1-888-276-2020
TTY for the hearing impaired:
1-888-765-9586



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