



Health Matters

Member newsletter

FALL 2026

Our newsletter is now online!

This newsletter can now be found in your Member Portal. If you haven't already registered for your account, scan the QR code below to get started.



We want to hear from you

Let us know what you would like to see in your next quarterly newsletter by scanning the QR code below.



Contact us

For any questions,
contact member services at
1.844.856.0826.

Get help from Care Management

Our Care Management program can help you plan and manage care for complex, chronic health issues as well as acute, episodic or short-term needs. The goal is to provide quality care, enhance quality of life and manage health care costs.

What types of services does the Care Management team provide?

- Condition management
- Medicine support
- Coordination of appointments
- Health care provider support
- Self-management goal planning
- A Care Management referral can come from a provider, member, caregiver or discharge planner

Care Management is provided at **no cost**. Call 800.446.1730, option 2, from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (CST) to speak to a care manager nurse.

A 24-hour nurse line is also available at 207.228.1811.



Breast cancer screenings

The best way to protect yourself is through early detection. When breast cancer is found early, treatment is often simpler and more effective. Your screening appointments are not just tests — they are a powerful way to gain peace of mind and advocate for your long-term health. We encourage you to discuss your personal risk factors with your health care provider.

Annual mammograms should begin at age 40.

Myth: mammograms are painful

What it actually feels like: You will feel a very firm, brief squeezing sensation. While it may be uncomfortable, it is incredibly brief. You're done and out the door in about 30 minutes.

Your appointment breakdown:

1. You will change into your robe and go over your medical history with a technologist.
2. You will be guided into a private room with the digital mammogram machine.
3. One at a time, each breast is positioned on a flat, plastic plate while a second plate gently but firmly presses down on the tissue from above for about 10 to 15 seconds. This is so the X-ray can capture a clear picture.
4. You may be asked to hold your breath for a few seconds while the image is taken.
5. A mammogram is quick, safe and over before you know it and is one of the most effective ways to catch concerns early.



Managing cholesterol levels:

Cholesterol is a waxy substance your body needs to build healthy cells, make hormones and produce vitamin D. Your liver naturally makes all the cholesterol you need, but you also get it from the foods you eat. The key is balance: "bad" cholesterol (LDL) can build up in your arteries, while "good" cholesterol (HDL) works to transport excess cholesterol back to your liver to be broken down and removed from your body.

Managing your cholesterol is all about making small, sustainable shifts that give your body the tools it needs to clear out excess plaque.

Diet and exercise

- Focus on adding, not just subtracting. Soluble fiber acts like a sponge, grabbing cholesterol in your digestive tract and carrying it out of your body. Aim for more oats, beans, Brussels sprouts and pears. Swap out saturated fats (like butter and fatty meats) for heart-healthy unsaturated fats (like olive oil, avocados and walnuts).
- Regular physical activity is one of the single best ways to boost your HDL (the "good" cholesterol) and lower your LDL (the "bad" cholesterol). Just 30 minutes of brisk walking, cycling or swimming five days a week makes a big difference.

By keeping your levels in a healthy range now, you significantly lower your risk of heart attacks and strokes down the road. These small, daily choices keep your cardiovascular system strong, helping you stay active and feel your best as you get older.

Low back pain

When your back hurts, your first instinct might be to ask your doctor for an immediate X-ray or MRI. It's completely natural to want a quick look inside to see what's going on.

For most everyday back pain, getting an imaging scan right away won't help you heal any faster. In fact, scans often show normal, age-related changes that aren't actually causing your pain. This can lead to unnecessary worry, extra doctor visits and expensive treatments you don't actually need.

In most cases, the best and fastest way to get back to doing what you love is to start with simple, gentle movement right at home.

How gentle stretching helps you heal

When your back is sore, the muscles around your spine tighten up to "protect" the area. While this is your body's natural defense, it can actually make your back feel stiffer and more painful.

By starting a gentle stretching routine, you can ease the pressure, boost blood flow and relieve tension.

Three easy exercises to try at home

You don't need fancy equipment or a clinic visit to start feeling better. Try these three simple, low-impact movements to help soothe your back.

1. Knee-to-chest stretch

Gently stretches your lower back and hip muscles

How to do it: Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat on the floor. Gently pull one knee up toward your chest with both hands. Hold for 15 to 30 seconds, then switch legs. Repeat two to three times on each side.

2. Cat-cow stretch

Gently wakes up and loosens your entire spine

How to do it: Start on your hands and knees. Slowly arch your back up toward the ceiling (like a stretching cat) while tucking your chin. Hold for a moment. Then, let your belly curve down toward the floor while looking slightly upward. Flow smoothly back and forth 10 times.

3. Gentle knee rolls

Relieves tightness in your lower back and sides

How to do it: Lie on your back with your knees bent and feet flat. Keeping your shoulders flat on the floor, slowly let your knees fall together to one side as far as is comfortable. Hold for five to 10 seconds, bring them back to the center and lower them to the other side. Do this three times on each side.



Need to find a provider?

Visit www.christushealthplan.org/find-a-provider or call member services at **1-844-856-0826 (TTY 711)** for help in finding a provider or for a provider directory to be mailed to you within five business days at no cost. Call us from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., local time, Monday through Friday for assistance.



FRAUD, WASTE OR ABUSE?

Report potential fraud, waste or abuse in the CHRISTUS Health Plan Network by submitting details to the Special Investigations Unit via email, secure fax or phone.

FWA HOTLINE: 855.771.8072

EMAIL:

christushealthsiu@christushealth.org

SECURE FAX: 210.766.8849

If you prefer anonymity, call the Integrity Line at 888.728.8383 or visit **CHRISTUSintegritylink.org**.

For compliance questions or concerns, you can email us at chpcompliance@christushealth.org

