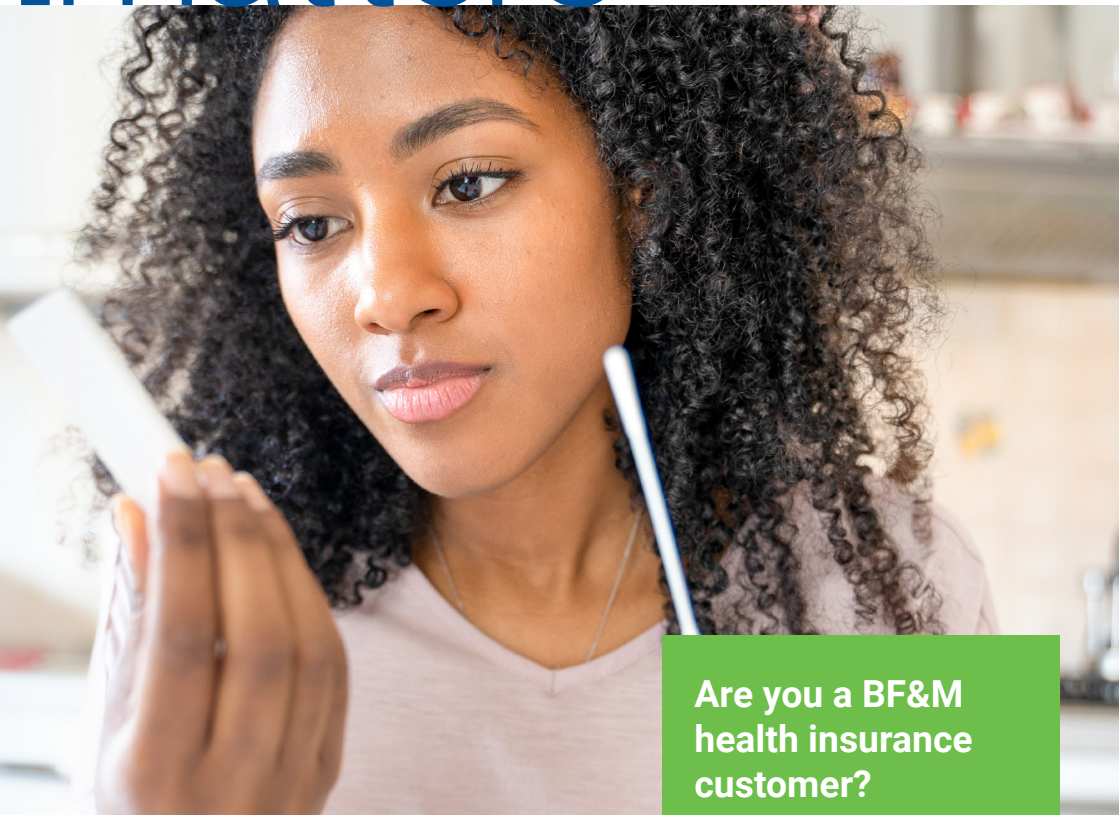


healthmatters

Winter 2023

Be prepared for flu or COVID-19



Even those who are up-to-date on vaccinations may develop flu or COVID-19 infections. Here are a few essential items to have on hand if you get sick.

- **Home testing supplies:** Test for COVID-19 as soon as you have symptoms.
- **Over-the-counter medicines:** Drugs like acetaminophen and ibuprofen can relieve low fever and mild aches and pains. Nasal decongestants, cough medicines, and saline nasal sprays improve respiratory symptoms.
- **Well-fitting masks:** When you're sick, keeping a mask on prevents you from spreading the virus to others.
- **Plenty of tissues:** Covering your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze stops viruses from spreading. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and wash your hands immediately afterward.

- **Foods easy on your stomach:** For some people, COVID-19 causes nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. It's hard to eat when your stomach's on edge—but it's important to nourish your body so you avoid exhaustion and dehydration. Bland foods like bananas, rice, applesauce, toast, saltine crackers, and potatoes don't irritate your gut and they restore vital nutrients.
- **Electrolyte beverages:** Electrolyte drinks can provide extra nutrients after vomiting or diarrhea. Liquids like soup and broth can also help replenish fluids.

STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR PROVIDER

Getting treatment for COVID-19 soon after you develop symptoms can reduce your risk of getting very sick or going to the hospital. If you're at high risk for complications, call your provider as soon as you feel sick.

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Stress-free holiday party planning checklist

Does your holiday season seem as busy as Santa's? Don't let that keep you from hosting a holiday gathering if you want to spend time with friends and family. Instead, use the following checklist to keep your sanity while planning something simple.

PREP STEPS



Pick a comfortable date. Choose a date far in advance so you have enough time to prepare.



Make a to-do list. Schedule a time for each task into your calendar.



Redo your to-do list. Eliminate anything that's unnecessary, like baking five pies.



Enlist help. Ask others for help with shopping, gift wrapping, and decorating.

THE MAIN COURSE



Plan the menu.

You don't need to make everything from scratch. Look for healthy, prepared hors d'oeuvres, salads, and side dishes.



Ask friends to bring dishes.

Coordinate so you don't end up with three plates of gingerbread men cookies.



Cook ahead of time.

Soups and casseroles can be made early and frozen. Move them to the fridge a day or two before your party, then reheat and enjoy.

FINISHING TOUCHES



Rest. Don't skimp on sleep to get things done the week of the party. Get the normal number of hours your body needs to feel rested.



Exercise. Cleaning the house counts! And take time for a brisk walk.



Relax. If you feel overwhelmed, stop and take a short break to recharge.



Enjoy. Don't fret if things aren't perfect. Remind yourself that the point of your party is to just be with loved ones.

Holiday health myths—busted

You can enjoy the holidays and focus on your health. Don't buy into the following holiday health myths.

MYTH: The holiday is ruined if something doesn't go as planned. *False!* Remind yourself about all the things that are going right, such as being together with family and friends.

MYTH: You must give up your favorite holiday foods to eat healthier. *Untrue!* Eat what you love; just make healthier choices. Take smaller portions. Include fruits and vegetables on your plate. Choose indulgences carefully.

MYTH: Exercise is hopeless if you don't have time for long workouts. *No way!* Any amount of physical activity is helpful, such as parking farther away or getting off the bus at an earlier stop to walk more.

MYTH: Feeling stressed is unavoidable over the holidays. *Nope!* Make time for things you find calming, such as listening to music, reading a book, or talking with a good friend.



Happy, healthy holidays

WITH DIABETES

Gathering with friends and relatives is a favorite part of the holidays. If you have diabetes, though, it's best to add some caution to your holiday cheer. Try these tips:

- **Eat first.** Continue to eat while drinking alcohol. Your body digests food slowly, helping to prevent low blood sugar.
- **Take a close look.** Check out everything at the dessert table before you get anything. Then make a conscious decision about what you'll pick.
- **Balance your choices.** Desserts with sugar can still be part of special occasions but remember that they count toward your total carbohydrates. Cut carbs elsewhere in your meal so that you can have dessert without adding to your total carbohydrates.
- **Try alternatives.** Keep a nonalcoholic beverage, like a sugar-free beverage, in hand.
- **Keep alcohol in a safe range.** Ask your provider how much alcohol is safe for you.
- **Make a nighttime check.** Check your blood sugar level before bed. You may need to eat a bedtime snack to avoid nighttime low blood sugar.

YOU'RE NOT ALONE

Nearly one in eight adults report a diagnosis of raised blood glucose or diabetes.

What every Black man should know about prostate cancer

Black men are more likely to get and die of prostate cancer than other men. It's one of the largest racial disparities seen in cancer. What does that mean for you?

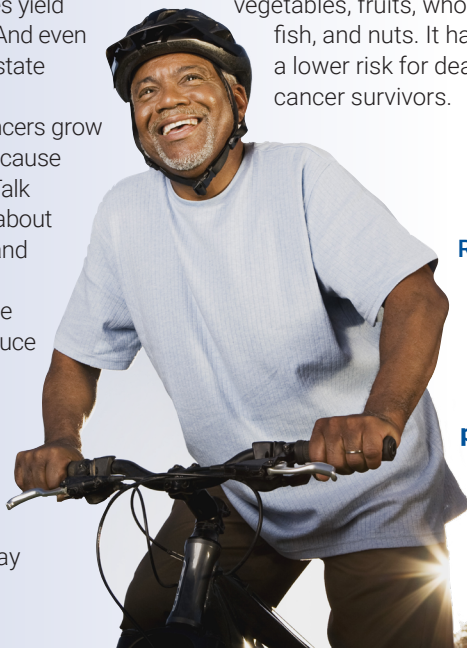
To help find prostate cancer early, a screening test can measure prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels in the blood. However, PSA tests sometimes yield inaccurate or unclear results. And even if the test accurately finds prostate cancer, treatment isn't always necessary. Some prostate cancers grow so slowly that they may never cause problems in a man's lifetime. Talk with your healthcare provider about the possible benefits, harms, and uncertainties of screening.

Take these steps to improve your health and potentially reduce your prostate cancer risk:

- **Consume calcium in moderation.** Check with your provider before using calcium supplements. Men with high intakes of calcium may

have a slightly increased risk of getting prostate cancer.

- **Quit smoking and lose weight**, if you need to. Smoking and being overweight may raise the risk for fatal prostate cancer.
- **Follow a healthy eating pattern**, such as the Mediterranean diet. This diet is rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, olive oil, fish, and nuts. It has been linked to a lower risk for death in prostate cancer survivors.



MORE ABOUT SCREENING
Read more about prostate cancer screening at cancer.bm/cancer-information/prostate-cancer.



Men aren't as healthy AS THEY THINK

If you're like most men, you think you're healthier than the average guy. And that can be dangerous if you skip annual health screenings.

After all, even the average man is less healthy than the average woman. Men also face a higher risk for serious diseases, including heart disease, HIV, and lung cancer. Males face unique health concerns too, including prostate cancer. And they're more likely to engage in risky behaviors, including smoking and heavy drinking.

The good news is that you can take control of your health. Start by booking yearly visits with your healthcare provider. Ask your provider about testing for:

- High blood pressure and cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Cancer, including lung, prostate, and colorectal
- Bone health problems
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Depression and other mental health conditions

In addition, your provider can offer care that keeps you from getting sick in the first place. This includes vaccines for diseases like flu and medicines that ward off health issues—for example, vitamin D supplements to prevent fractures.

Preventative healthcare matters.

Remember to schedule the screenings and healthcare provider appointments to which you are entitled under your coverage, because preventative healthcare matters.

Learn more online at bfm.bm/preventativehealthcare

With **BF&M** you can.



* LiveWell is intended to complement rather than substitute for proper medical advice or treatment.

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