

THE BENEFIT

Housing Benefits Plan (HBP) is the medical plan provided to you by your housing authority. It is directed by housing authority Executive Directors from across Southeast and Southwest NAHRO for the benefit of housing authorities.



June 2026

Back Workouts & Tips for Preventing Back Pain

Back pain is no small thing. Luckily, back stretches don't require equipment. Here are some light exercises you can do upon waking.

- 1) Bent leg stretch—Lie on your back with arms at your side. Bend one leg at the knee and pull it to your chest, with the other leg bent with your foot resting flat. Pull the leg in, as far as you comfortably can, and then extend it out, five times. Then switch legs and repeat. While in this position, try bringing one leg up toward your chest and holding it there for several seconds while the other leg is extended flat on the ground.
- 2) Gentle twist—Lie on your back with your arms out in a T. Bend both knees and let them fall to one side for a gentle low-back twist. Use your abs to lift both legs up and over to the other side. Try 5 reps per side.
- 3) Hip lifts—Lie on your back with arms at your side. Bring your knees up so the soles of your feet are flat on the ground. Use your glutes and back muscles to lift your bottom up and back down. Try 5 reps.
- 4) Upper body rotations—Stand tall with legs shoulder width apart. With hands on hips, rotate your upper body one way, then the other. Focus on rotating wider as you become stronger and more flexible.

Here are some tips to prevent back pain from work. Sit straight with your knees at a 90-degree angle. Shoulders should be in a straight line over your hips and ears directly over your shoulders. Adjust your computer screen height to eye level and raise the keyboard to keep your hands, wrists, and forearms in line and parallel to the floor.

When using a phone, raise your device to eye level instead of tilting your chin down or tucking it between your ear and shoulder. Or, use a speakerphone or headset.

When lifting objects, keep your back straight, head up, core in tight, and lift with your knees. Keep the object close to you so you don't have to stoop over and hunch your back.

Schedule a break every 30 minutes to stand, stretch, or walk. Staying in one spot can make your muscles and joints stiff.



June's Health Focuses

Each month, UHC — who offers incentives and well-being programs — provides information on their selected health focus. The June selections are:

National awareness — [Men's Health](#)

UHC's health tip — Back for health (preventing back pain)

UHC Rewards challenges* — Get a biometric screening (\$50 value)

Download the biometric screening (bloodwork and measurements) form to take to your doctor at [myUHC.com](#) in the UHC Rewards or Health Resources tabs.

**Enroll in UHC Rewards and complete these challenges to earn money.*

June toolkit — Men's Health

Additional information is attached.

HBP Session at SERC

Stay in the room after the SERC-NAHRO conference opening session this Sunday (6/28) to learn more about the perks included with your HBP medical membership!

Upcoming Webinar Trainings

Thurs, July 23, 10am (EST) Topic: [Self-Care: Small Changes for Positive Results](#) *click to register*

Thurs, Aug 20, 10am (EST) Topic: [Understanding & Managing Stress: Strategies for Wellbeing](#) *click to register*

You can find previous webinar recordings at <https://www.housingbp.com/links-2>

The HBP website at www.housingbp.com provides more information and helpful links. Questions or comments? Email us at hbp@callhsa.com or call 1-800-288-7623, option 5.

Health tip: Back for health



According to the World Health Organization, low back pain can be experienced at any age and is the single leading cause of disability worldwide.¹

Many back injuries are a result of strain and damage over time, but there are certain motions and risk factors^{2,4} to be aware of:

- Having certain types of cancer or arthritis
- Twisting at the waist while lifting or holding a heavy load
- Lifting or carrying objects with awkward or odd shapes
- Having depression or anxiety
- Using a particular muscle group for long periods of time without relief
- Weak back and abdominal muscles
- Being overweight and inactive

To help avoid back pain consider the following practices:^{1,4}

- Maintain a healthier diet and weight
- Stay active
- Maintain proper posture
- Get quality sleep on a supportive mattress
- Lift with your knees, keep the object close to your body, and do not twist when lifting
- Quit smoking
- Work with your doctor or a chiropractor to ensure that your workstation is ergonomically correct

If you have back pain, there are steps you can take:

- Your first line of support for any health problem should be your primary care physician who can assess your symptoms to determine the best treatment options
- If you don't have a doctor and are looking for one you can find a Premium Designated in-network provider at myuhc.com or through the UnitedHealthcare app
- Call Advocate4Me using the number on your UnitedHealthcare medical ID card to help you make better healthcare decisions regarding your back health, including treatment options and determining the appropriate level of care

Back pain

Chronic back pain is a major cause of work loss, participation restriction, and reduced quality of life around the world.¹

Maintain good posture³

Poor posture can lead to excessive strain on our postural muscles leading them to be more prone to injury and back pain. Poor posture can be caused by stress, obesity, pregnancy, weak postural muscles, abnormally tight muscles, and high-heeled shoes. In addition, a poor work environment, incorrect working posture, and unhealthy sitting and standing habits can also contribute to poor body positioning. The desired position you should seek to achieve is referred to as 'neutral'. Keep these tips in mind when standing or sitting:

- Set the arch of the foot so your weight is evenly distributed
- Align the second and third toe with the knees
- Set your hips in a neutral position with your rib cage tucked down
- Keep a natural spine by avoiding hunching, extending and reaching
- Draw your shoulders down and back
- Center your head on the shoulders
- Tuck your chin in, not up or down
- Look forward

Lift safely⁴

Lifting safely may help you avoid injury. By lifting with your larger, stronger leg muscles instead of the small muscles of your back, you may prevent back injuries and reduce low back pain. Guidelines for lifting objects safely to reduce the chance of back pain, strain or injury include:

- Get close to the load. Get as close to the load as possible to put less force on the low back.
- Maintain your curves. Keep yourself in an upright position while squatting to pick up.
- Tighten your abdomen. Tightening the stomach helps support the spine. Don't hold your breath while tightening the muscles.
- Lift with your legs. Your legs are the strongest muscles in your body—so use them.
- Pivot and don't twist. Turn with your feet, not your back. It isn't built for twisting from side to side.
- Avoid unnecessary twisting
- Keep objects close to body

Sources:

¹ World Health Organization, Low Back Pain. <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/low-back-pain>. 2023. Accessed January 2024.

² Mayo Clinic, Back Pain. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/back-pain/symptoms-causes/syc-20369906>. 2023. Accessed January 2024.

³ Stanford University, Postural Awareness. <https://ehs.stanford.edu/subtopic/postural-awareness>. 2024. Accessed January 2024.

⁴ National Institutes of Health, Back Health. <https://ors.od.nih.gov/sr/dohs/HealthAndWellness/Ergonomics/Pages/spine.aspx#lift>. 2024. Accessed January 2024.

This information is for general informational purposes only and is not intended nor should be construed as medical advice. Individuals should consult an appropriate medical professional to determine what may be right for them.



Staying on top of *your health*

A guide for men on routine checkups



Many health problems are easier to treat when caught early – yet many men skip regular checkups and screenings. These visits can detect issues before symptoms appear and provide peace of mind when everything is on track.

Men often delay preventive care because they feel fine, worry about results or don't recognize warning signs. But serious conditions – including heart disease – can develop without obvious symptoms. Making routine checkups a habit is one of the simplest ways to protect your health.

Getting started with screenings

Screening recommendations vary by age, health history and location. A health care provider can help determine what's right for you. Most screenings begin with a physical exam and basic blood tests. Based on the results, your provider will recommend when to return or if any follow-up is needed.

The chart below offers some general guidelines for men.

Regular checkups	When to begin	Notes
Routine physical exam	Age 18	A routine physical exam includes reviewing your health history, a basic exam and general health discussion. Frequency varies by age, health status and risk factors. Many adults under 50 may not need annual exams, while those 50 and older often benefit from yearly visits.
Screenings for common health risks	Age 18	During a routine physical exam checkups or at other intervals, your doctor may recommend screening for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, kidney or liver function, and other common conditions, based on your health status and risk factors.

Additional screenings	When to begin	Notes
Colon and rectal cancer and polyps screenings	Age 45	Earlier screening may be recommended if you have an immediate relative with colon cancer. Several tests are available – your doctor can recommend the option right for you.
Diabetes/prediabetes	Age 45	Screen earlier if you are overweight or have additional risk factors.
High blood pressure	Age 18	This screening is part of routine checkup, with frequency depending on results and risk factors.
Lung cancer	Age 50	Get screened if you currently smoke or have a history of heavy smoking and quit within the past 15 years.
Mental health	Age 18	Screening for depression and anxiety is recommended, with frequency depending on symptoms, risk factors and your doctor's guidance.
Prostate cancer	Discuss at age 50	Begin earlier (age 40–45) if you are at higher risk, including Black men of African descent or men with a father or brother diagnosed before age 65.
Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)	Based on sexual activity and risk factors	HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis and other infections can be transmitted during sexual activity, often without obvious symptoms. If you're sexually active – especially with more than one partner – regular STI screening is recommended.

Please note: These screenings are among the most commonly recommended. Recommendations can vary by age, country, ethnicity and risk factors. Your doctor may recommend specific screenings at earlier or more regular intervals for you.

Recognizing risks early

It's also important to pay attention to your health between routine checkups. If you notice physical, mental or emotional changes – especially those that start affecting your daily life – it's a good idea to talk with a health care professional. Ongoing changes in your mood, behavior, energy level, sleep, appetite or physical health, such as unexplained pain or fatigue, could signal that something else may be going on.

Tracking your family medical history

Some chronic diseases run in families. If a biological relative has had one, it might mean you're at a higher risk. Sharing your family's medical history with your health care team helps them understand your risks and recommend appropriate screenings.

Use the space on the next page to note any known medical conditions or causes of death for your biological relatives. For information you don't know, ask someone who may have more details. Include:

- Major medical conditions, including physical and mental health
- First-, second- and third-degree relatives
- Age when diagnosed
- Age and cause of death (if applicable)
- Ethnic background

Keep this information on hand so you can share it during appointments.

Great-grandmother	Great-grandfather	Great-grandmother	Great-grandfather	Great-grandmother	Great-grandfather	Great-grandmother	Great-grandfather
Maternal grandmother		Maternal grandfather		Paternal grandmother		Paternal grandfather	
Aunt	Aunt	Aunt	Mom	Dad	Aunt	Aunt	Aunt
Uncle	Uncle	Uncle			Uncle	Uncle	Uncle
Sibling (full or half)	Sibling (full or half)	Me		Sibling (full or half)	Sibling (full or half)		

Sources

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The information provided in these materials is for educational purposes only and is not a substitute for your doctor's care. Please talk with your doctor about it. Your personal health information is kept private based on your plan's privacy policy. Some services may not be covered under your benefit plan. Please check your benefits.

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