



For men, taking care of your family means taking care of yourself

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June is not only when we celebrate Father's Day but also when we observe Men's Health Month. This is no coincidence since we know that many men, particularly fathers, neglect their health. Work and family responsibilities take priority over that doctor's appointment you should have scheduled months ago. That's why this is the right time for you to start taking better care of yourself so you can take care of your family.

There are health benefit laws that can help you through your job-based health coverage. For example, the Affordable Care Act provides access to preventive services such as cancer screenings, diabetes tests, blood pressure checks, cholesterol screenings, help quitting smoking and some forms of nutritional counseling – often with no

out-of-pocket costs. This ensures you can receive comprehensive services at every stage of your life and helps you prioritize your health.

Your health plan also may cover mental health services such as counseling, therapy and screenings for anxiety. Mental health parity laws generally require that mental health and substance use disorder benefits without greater restrictions than medical and surgical benefits. When seeking treatment, you shouldn't face barriers or roadblocks that don't exist for medical and surgical benefits. Remember, your mental health is as crucial as your physical health to your overall well-being. It's important to break the silence and normalize conversations about mental health issues, encouraging others to seek the help they need to improve their quality of life.

Getting started is simple:

- 1. Review your health plan documents.** Find out what your plan covers and what it costs. Review your plan's summary plan description (SPD) and/or your Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC). Contact your health plan administrator for a copy if you need it. The Employee Benefits Security Administration's (EBSA) publication, [Top 10 Ways to Make Your Health Benefits Work for You](#), can help you make the most of your benefits.
- 2. Take advantage of preventive services.** Get the necessary screenings and check-ups to keep a minor inconvenience from turning into a major crisis. Early detection can improve treatment outcomes and quality of life.
- 3. Participate in wellness programs.** Many employers and health plans offer wellness programs to promote healthy habits and lifestyles. These may include fitness challenges, nutrition workshops, stress management seminars and smoking cessation programs. Check with your employer, your health plan administrator, and your plan SPD/SBC to see whether such programs are available and how you can get involved.

4. **Use mental health and substance use disorder benefits.** Find out what services are available to you and use these services. Addressing mental health concerns can positively impact your overall health. Learn more about your mental health benefit protections in EBSA's publication, [Understanding Your Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Benefits](#).
5. **If you have questions, contact EBSA.** EBSA has benefits advisors to help you understand your benefits and how to use them. You can reach them by [visiting us online at askebsa.dol.gov](#) or by calling 1-866-444-3272.

Use this focus on men's health and appreciation of the fathers in our lives to empower yourself to be proactive about your health. Learning about your health plan and benefit protections now will help you make informed decisions about your health care to keep you healthy and strong. By taking care of your health, you can be a role model and a steward of good health to your family, friends, coworkers and colleagues. This June, give yourself the gift of good health – it's a gift that keeps on giving!

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