



Summer Safety Tips

Swimming safety

Swimming can be fun for the whole family! You can keep it fun by knowing how to stay healthy and avoid swimming-related illnesses. People can get sick while playing in swimming pools, splash pads, hot tubs/spas, oceans, lakes and rivers if the water is contaminated with germs.

Some common symptoms caused by swimming-related illnesses are skin rashes, ear pain, cough or congestion and eye pain. You can get these symptoms if you swallow, have contact with or breathe in germs or chemicals in the water. Chlorine is a chemical that is added to pool water to kill germs, but it must be added correctly.

Diarrhea is the most common swimming-related illness. People who are already sick with diarrhea can spread it to others when they get in the water if even a tiny amount of feces (poop) on their body washes into the water around them. That tiny amount of poop can contaminate the water with germs and make someone else sick if they swallow it.

When you visit oceans, lakes, rivers and other natural bodies of water, germs found in the water and sand can come from human or animal poop that is carried into swim areas by heavy rain. Be very careful not to swallow water when you are swimming. You can also get infections from contaminated water if you have an open cut or wound especially from a surgery or piercing.

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LifeTimes is published for BCBSTX STAR members. Each issue brings you news about your health plan and staying healthy, along with important phone numbers for you to keep. If you have questions or need help, call the Customer Advocate Department. Articles in *LifeTimes* are meant to educate. They are not meant as medical advice. Please check with your doctor for any advice about your health.

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Don't get in the water if:

- You are sick with diarrhea or have open cuts or wounds.
- Signs say the swim area is closed. It may be closed due to high levels of germs in the water that could make it unsafe for swimming.
- If the water is cloudier than normal, discolored or smelly. Cloudy water could mean that there are more germs than normal. Discolored or smelly water may mean there is harmful algae.

Beat the heat and rays

There are many ways to enjoy the summer outdoors, but as temperatures rise, make sure you find ways to take breaks and cool down. Heat-related illness can cause headaches, heavy sweating, dizziness, nausea and could even lead to death. Protect yourself from the heat. Take timed breaks to go indoors and sit in the air-conditioning during hot hours. Wear cool clothing, drink plenty of liquids and pay attention to heat alerts.

Sunburn is also a danger of being out in the sun. Unprotected skin can be burned by the sun's UV rays in as little as 15 minutes but can take up to 12 hours for the skin to show the harm. The CDC suggests staying out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when its UV rays are at their highest level. You should wear sunscreen when you are working and playing outside, even on cloudy days. Hats, sunglasses and long sleeves can also protect you from sunburn during outdoor events.



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Helpful Toll-Free Phone Numbers

Behavioral Health Services Hotline	1-800-327-7390	(TTY: 1-800-735-2988)
24-Hour Nurse Advice Line	1-844-971-8906	(TTY: 711)
Maximus Enrollment Broker	1-800-964-2777	(TTY: 711)
Medicaid Managed Care Helpline	1-866-566-8989	(TTY: 711)
Service Management/Disease Management	1-877-214-5630	(TTY: 711)



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Children's Health and Safety

Keep the fun going all summer long:

- Make sure your child is wearing helmets that fit well for each activity from bike riding to baseball.
- Children should be properly buckled in a car seat, booster seat or seat belt — whichever is the right fit for their weight, height and age — on each trip.
- Check out these tips on playground safety:
 - Check playground equipment before your child starts to play to make sure there are no nails or tears in the materials that could cause injuries.
 - High temperatures can quickly heat up metal swings, slides, dark rubber and plastic materials. Check these surfaces to protect your child from burns.
 - Keep areas clear from bikes, scooters and other toys around slides and fall zones to prevent accidents and injuries.

Insect protection

Insect bites are uncomfortable and can carry diseases. Protect yourself and your family by using an insect repellent with an active ingredient recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- such as DEET. Always follow label instructions.

Repellents are safe and effective for children and even pregnant and breastfeeding women. You should only put repellents on exposed skin or clothing and always follow the instructions on the product label. Be sure to put repellent on last if you are also putting on sunscreen.

Insect Repellent Tips for Babies and Children:

- Dress your child in clothing that covers arms and legs.
- Cover strollers and baby carriers with mosquito netting.
- When using insect repellent on your child:
 - Do not put insect repellent on a child's hands, eyes, mouth, cuts or irritated skin. Adults should spray insect repellent onto their hands and then put it on a child's face.

■ Source: <https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2019/p0517-eight-tips-healthy-summer.html>

Vaccinations

Summer is just starting but it will be over before you know it. Get ahead of the crowds and get an appointment with your child's doctor to make sure they have their immunizations for the first day of school. Click here to see a full list of [Preventive Health Guidelines](#).



Stay Hydrated

Staying hydrated is vital for all people, especially those who have diabetes. Summer is a time to stay well-hydrated with healthy drinks. Fluid loss can impact blood sugar levels badly.

Healthy summer drinks:

- Sugar-free lemon water
- Coconut water
- Fruit-infused water
- Herbal teas
- Teas like green, black or oolong
- Cucumber juice
- Chia water
- Kombucha

Diabetes also requires mindful eating, especially in the summer when the days are longer and high temperature and humidity could have a harmful effect on your blood sugar levels.

■ Source: <https://www.hindustantimes.com/lifestyle/health/best-drinks-fruits-vegetables-for-people-with-diabetes-in-summer-101650604467064.html>





Getting Ready for Summer Fun?

We want to help! Stay active during the summer months and you may be able to get a reimbursement. You can find community programs and resources at communityservices.bcbstx.com.

Type in your zip code and search the key words 'summer' or 'fitness' for places near you.

You can also call our Member Outreach line at 1-877-375-9097 to get help finding a place near you.

Tell Us What You Think!

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) – now online or by phone

Every three months, we invite STAR members to attend a CAC meeting to give us feedback on member education materials and Value Added Services, and get health plan program updates. CAC meetings are now offered by phone and online.

You can visit www.bcbstx.com/star to see a schedule of CAC meetings or call a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas Member Advocate at **1-877-375-9097** for details and to register for a meeting.

Health and Wellness Activity Reimbursement

STAR members can receive up to a \$50 reimbursed for Health and Wellness programs. Parents/guardians/LARs of members may request reimbursement for Health and Wellness participation in sports activities, sports classes, gym membership or race entry fees by contacting Member Outreach Representatives at **1-877-375-9097**

Renew Your Medicaid Coverage

How Do I Keep My Medicaid Plan?

Have you been on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas Medicaid plan since the COVID-19 pandemic began? Now, the continuous Medicaid coverage requirement has ended and it's time to renew your Medicaid. If you do not renew, you may lose your coverage. Texas is starting renewals again to see if you are still eligible.

**Don't risk losing your coverage!
Here's how to complete
your renewal:**

1. Make Updates

The best way to protect your benefits is to make sure **Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)** has your most up-to-date contact information.

- Make updates online at yourtexasbenefits.com.
- **Create an account** to keep your information up to date.
- Log in and select 'Manage' to confirm or update your account information.
- Select 'Details' and **report a change** to confirm or update your name, address, phone number and email.
- You can also make updates on the HHSC Mobile App or call **211**.

2. Renew Your Benefits

- Before your benefits end, HHSC will send you a notice by mail (or an email if you signed up to go paperless).
- Follow the instructions in the notice as quickly as possible to **renew** your STAR benefits.
- You can log in to yourtexasbenefits.com and go to 'Select Details,' then 'Time to renew.'
- Be sure to turn in proof of income and any other information you are asked to provide.

Frequently Asked Questions About the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency

Get answers to questions you may have with the [public health emergency FAQs](#).

What if I Don't Qualify for Medicaid?

If you no longer qualify for Medicaid, you may be able to get another health plan. You could be eligible to get help paying for a plan through premium tax credits or cost-sharing assistance.

[Learn about BCBSTX individual and family health insurance plans](#). We want you to stay covered.



We want to see you!

BCBSTX Outreach staff hosts member meetings and community events that provide important health information and resources for our members.

Go to <https://www.bcbstx.com/medicaid/pdf/chip-star-community-calendar-tx.pdf> to view a list of upcoming events near you. If you need assistance completing your Medicaid renewal packet, come out and see us, we can help!

To get auxiliary aids and services, or to get written or oral interpretation to understand the information given to you, including materials in alternative formats such as large print, braille or other languages, please call the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas STAR Customer Advocate Department at **1-888-657-6061** (TTY: **711**).

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas provides:

- Free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats and more)
- Free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact the Civil Rights Coordinator.

If you believe that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Civil Rights Coordinator, Office of Civil Rights Coordinator, 300 E. Randolph St., 35th floor, Chicago, Illinois 60601, **1-855-664-7270**, TTY/TDD: **1-855-661-6965**, Fax: **1-855-661-6960**. You can file a grievance by mail or fax. If you need help filing a grievance, Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at **<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>**, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201

1-800-368-1019, 1-800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at **<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>**.

ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711)。

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم 1-855-710-6984 (رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: 711).

خبردار: اگر آپ اردو بولتے ہیں، تو آپ کو زبان کی مدد کی خدمات مفت میں دستیاب ہیں۔ کال کریں 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

ATTENTION : Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le 1-855-710-6984 (ATS: 711).

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं। 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) पर कॉल करें।

اب دشاب یم مهارف امش یارب ناگیار تروص هب ینابز تلایهست، دینک یم وگتفگ یسراف نابز هب رگا: هجوت 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) دیریگب سامت.

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

સુચના: જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા હો, તો ન:શુલક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода. Звоните 1-855-710-6984 (телетайп: 711).

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

ໂປດຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າ ທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາລາວ, ການບໍລິການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ໂດຍບໍ່ເສັງຄ່າ, ຄວນມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທສ 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).