



Welcome!

Welcome to another edition of Whole You, a newsletter from Arkansas Total Care.

In this issue, Arkansas Total Care is bringing you plenty of useful articles. You'll learn about tips to beat seasonal allergies, foods that help fight stress, and ways your pharmacist can help you manage your health.

Arkansas Total Care hopes you enjoy our latest edition of Whole You and that it helps you take care of your whole health.



Tips to Beat Seasonal Allergies

Allergy season has arrived! And with it comes pollen and allergens leaving many people longing for relief. Here are a few tips to help you get through allergy season more comfortably.

Consider allergy testing.

Ask your primary care provider (PCP) about the benefits of allergy testing. Testing helps your provider to pinpoint the triggers and the severity of your reaction. Allergy testing has come a long way. Your results will help you and your provider make a plan to help you best manage your allergies.

Adjust your outdoor time.

If it's dry and windy outside, try to spend more time indoors. After it rains, pollen build-up on outdoor surfaces is less. That's a better time to enjoy the outdoors. The time of day matters, too. Pollen counts are highest in the morning. So do your outdoor activities in the evening when the counts are lower.

Breathe easier inside.

Open windows expose you to allergen triggers. Make your air conditioning even more effective by using high-efficiency air filters. Change them often for the best quality air flow. Keeping your carpets and floors clean will lower allergy inducing pet dander and dust. Take a bath or shower before going to bed. This will lessen pollen buildup on your sheets.



Be in the know.

Monitor the allergy index in your area with an app or weather website. Most TV stations broadcast allergy forecasts during weather segments. Check the night before so you know how pollen will affect you the next day.

Allergy-inducing foods.

Many people don't realize that certain foods can increase allergic responses and inflammation. If you notice your allergy symptoms getting worse, take note of the food you ate. Sugars, wheat, dairy, and processed foods can increase the onset and intensity of allergic reactions. Drink plenty of water to flush and hydrate your system.

Fight Stress With Delicious Super Foods

Sometimes life can be stressful. And staying healthy can help you fight the side effects of stress. Did you know certain foods can help? Check out these five foods that may help you reduce some of the tension you're feeling.

1. Add Avocado. Adding B-rich avocados to your diet can help elevate your mood. Avocados contain mono-saturated fat and potassium, which can help lower blood pressure. They have also shown to ward off hunger making you less likely to grab a sugar-filled treat instead. Try it on a tasty turkey sandwich or on top of your salad!

2. Bring Blueberries. These tiny berries pack a powerful punch. Their high levels of phytonutrients and antioxidants have been linked to improved thinking. They're also rich in vitamin C, another natural stress buster. Toss a few in your morning yogurt or pack them in your lunch for that daily boost!

3. Nibble on Nuts. Nuts like almonds, walnuts, and pistachios may boost your immune system because of their concentration of vitamin E and zinc. Nuts also contain B-vitamins that help your body fight stress. Try spreading almond butter on a piece of whole wheat toast for a morning treat! Or grab a serving of your favorite nuts for an afternoon snack.

4. Feed on Fatty Fish. A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids helps keep your cortisol and adrenaline levels from rising when you're feeling tense or anxious. Fish like salmon, herring, and albacore tuna are good choices. Pair a grilled or baked fillet with your favorite green vegetable and you'll have a stress-fighting, nutritious meal.

5. Fill Up on Oatmeal. This complex carbohydrate helps your brain produce serotonin. This feel-good chemical can help you overcome stress. Go with thick-cut instead of instant oatmeal to get soluble fiber that keeps you fuller for longer. Then you'll be less likely to grab a sugary treat. Make a big batch on the weekends, then heat it up during the week for a quick and easy meal or snack.



Five Ways Your Pharmacist Can Help You Manage Your Health

Your pharmacist is more than just the white coat behind the counter when you pick up prescriptions. They are a valuable resource if you have questions about your medications or your overall health. Here are five ways you can look to them for help.



If you're not sure where to go for the care, ask a nurse! You have access to a nurse 24/7 as part of your benefits. Call the 24/7 Nurse Advice Line at 1-866-282-6280 (TTY: 711). They can help with your symptoms and give you next steps.

1

Identify Side Effects.

Knowing what to expect from your medicine is important. Your pharmacist can help you learn early signs of side effects. This is important when starting a new medication or combining it with other medicines you take.

2

Recommend Relief.

Have you ever felt unsure about what to choose when you get to the pharmacy? Your pharmacist can help! Describe your symptoms and let them know any other medications you are taking. They can help pick the best over-the-counter option for your symptoms.

3

Give Routine Vaccines.

Part of staying healthy is prevention. Your pharmacist can explain the benefits and side effects of routine vaccines. Routine vaccines include seasonal ones like flu, COVID-19, and RSV. Many pharmacies offer vaccines without requiring an appointment to help you stay healthy.

4

Coordinate Change.

Your pharmacist can talk to your provider if you would like to switch or stop one of your medications. They can walk you through the pros and cons of making a change. This will help you understand how it will impact your overall health.

5

Determine Diagnosis.

Many pharmacies have clinics. The clinics are typically staffed by pharmacists and other healthcare professionals. They can diagnose and prescribe medications for ear infections, rashes, and cold and flu symptoms. It's convenient and easy! Most pharmacies can also check blood pressure and heart rate. Ask them to check if you have concerns.