

The exclusive magazine for Sharp Direct Advantage® Medicare members

FALL/WINTER 2024

INSPIRE

*Soothing
chicken
soup recipe*

Can you
unclog your
arteries?

COLORECTAL CANCER:
unlock the secrets
to prevention

**A STEP-BY-STEP
GUIDE TO THE
SILVER&FIT®
PROGRAM**

**Resident
free days at
Balboa Park**

SHARP Health Plan



Highest member-rated, thanks to you

We're grateful to be celebrating another holiday season together! Your continued trust in us as your health plan fills us with appreciation. Your support has elevated us to the top, earning us the distinction of the highest member-rated Medicare Advantage plan in California yet again, with the highest member rating for health care quality.¹ We consider it a profound honor and privilege to support you on your health journey. Thank you for choosing us.

We have another great issue of INSPIRE for you to enjoy. This edition features a guide explaining the different types of screenings used as preventive care for colorectal cancer (pages 3-4), an article examining the link between sleep and your overall health (page 5), and an informative piece about airborne viruses (pages 7-8).

There's also an article with lifestyle choices you can make to keep your arteries healthy (page 9), along

with information on how to get a 100-day supply of your maintenance medications to ensure you don't run out (page 10).

We've also included some wonderful feel-good pieces: tips for keeping the holiday blues away (page 11), a delicious chicken soup recipe (page 13), and an overview of our Silver&Fit program (page 15). The issue wraps with a list of days when residents can take advantage of Balboa Park's many museum offerings, free of charge (page 17).

We hope the remainder of your year is spectacular, and we're wishing you a 2025 that's brimming with health and happiness.



In good health,

Melissa Hayden Cook

Melissa Hayden Cook
President and CEO
Sharp Health Plan

¹ Based on a 91% base group in the area of members' overall rating of their health plan, and 89% base group in the area of members' rating of health care quality from the 2024 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems® score survey results achieved by Sharp Health Plan. This is based out of 39 California Health Plans designated as same Organization Type (Local CCP) and Plan Type (HMO/HMOPOS) as Sharp Health Plan (with no "partial" or "EGHP" designations) for 2025.

CONTENTS

INSPIRE | FALL/WINTER 2024

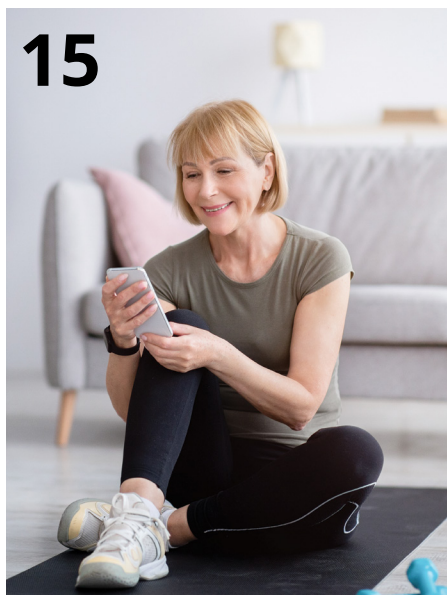


FEATURE

- Colorectal cancer: unlock the secrets to prevention3
- Three benefits of FIT kits4
- Night owls' guide to syncing sleep cycles5

YOUR CARE

- Clearing the air: what you need to know about airborne viruses7
- Five tips to reduce the spread8



PRESCRIPTIONS

- Can you unclog your arteries? ..9
- Only three refills a year with 100-day supply10

HEALTHY LIVING

- Help for holiday blues11
- Soothing chicken soup13

MEMBER CENTER

- A step-by-step guide to the Silver&Fit® program15

OUR COMMUNITY

- Resident free days at Balboa Park17

TOOLS TO MANAGE YOUR HEALTH ONLINE

Sharp Health Plan app



The Sharp Health Plan app makes it easy to manage your health

insurance anytime, anywhere. See your plan coverage, track health care spending, check cost shares, pay premium bills and more. Download the Sharp Health Plan app or visit sharpmedicareadvantage.com/login to create an online account today.



com/login to create an online account today.

Sharp app



For Sharp patients, the Sharp app is a great way to manage your care.

Message your doctor, schedule appointments, pay bills, view test results, get same-day care and more. Download the



Sharp app or visit sharp.com/app to get started.

Do I need a Sharp account and a Sharp Health Plan online account?

If you are a Sharp patient, we recommend both apps for the best member experience.

COLORECTAL CANCER

Unlock the secrets to prevention



The evidence is clear — screening for colorectal cancer may save your life. Today, more and more people are choosing colorectal cancer screening.

Colorectal cancer usually starts from polyps or other precancerous growths in the rectum or the colon (large intestine). The only way to find a polyp, precancerous growth or colorectal cancer is to do a screening test or procedure.

There are a few different types of colorectal cancer screenings that are covered under your benefits. Please talk with your doctor to determine which is the best option for you given your health history and risk factors. Other types of screenings are usually only recommended by your doctor when a visual screening procedure or a stool sample test can't be done.

▶ Colonoscopy

During this outpatient procedure, your doctor uses a scope — a tiny camera attached to a long, thin tube — to look for signs of cancer, including inflamed tissue, abnormal growths and ulcers, throughout your entire colon and rectum.

▶ Sigmoidoscopy

Like the colonoscopy, your doctor uses a scope during this outpatient procedure to look for signs of cancer. Only the rectum and lower colon are screened.

▶ Fecal immunochemical test (FIT)

Stool samples collected at home are sent to a lab to test for the presence of microscopic amounts of blood from the lower intestines, which can be an early sign of cancer or precancerous polyps.

In addition to getting screened, there are many other healthy behaviors that can help lower your risk of developing colorectal cancer. Examples include maintaining a healthy weight, regular physical activity, limiting alcohol and quitting smoking.



Scan the QR code or visit sharphealthplan.com/wellness/best-health/news/preventive-care-spotlight-colon-cancer/ to learn more about reducing your risk of colon cancer.

Sources: FDA.gov; Sharp Health News

Three benefits of FIT kits

FIT kits provided by your doctor allow you to conveniently screen for colon cancer with ease in the privacy of your home.

In just a few simple steps, you can use the kit materials to collect a small sample of your stool and mail it to a lab for testing. Here are three benefits of FIT kits:

#1: Accuracy

FIT kits have high overall diagnostic accuracy and can help with early detection.

#2: Convenience

FIT kits can be used at home and don't require any changes to what you eat or what medicines you take before collecting a sample.

#3: Easy to use

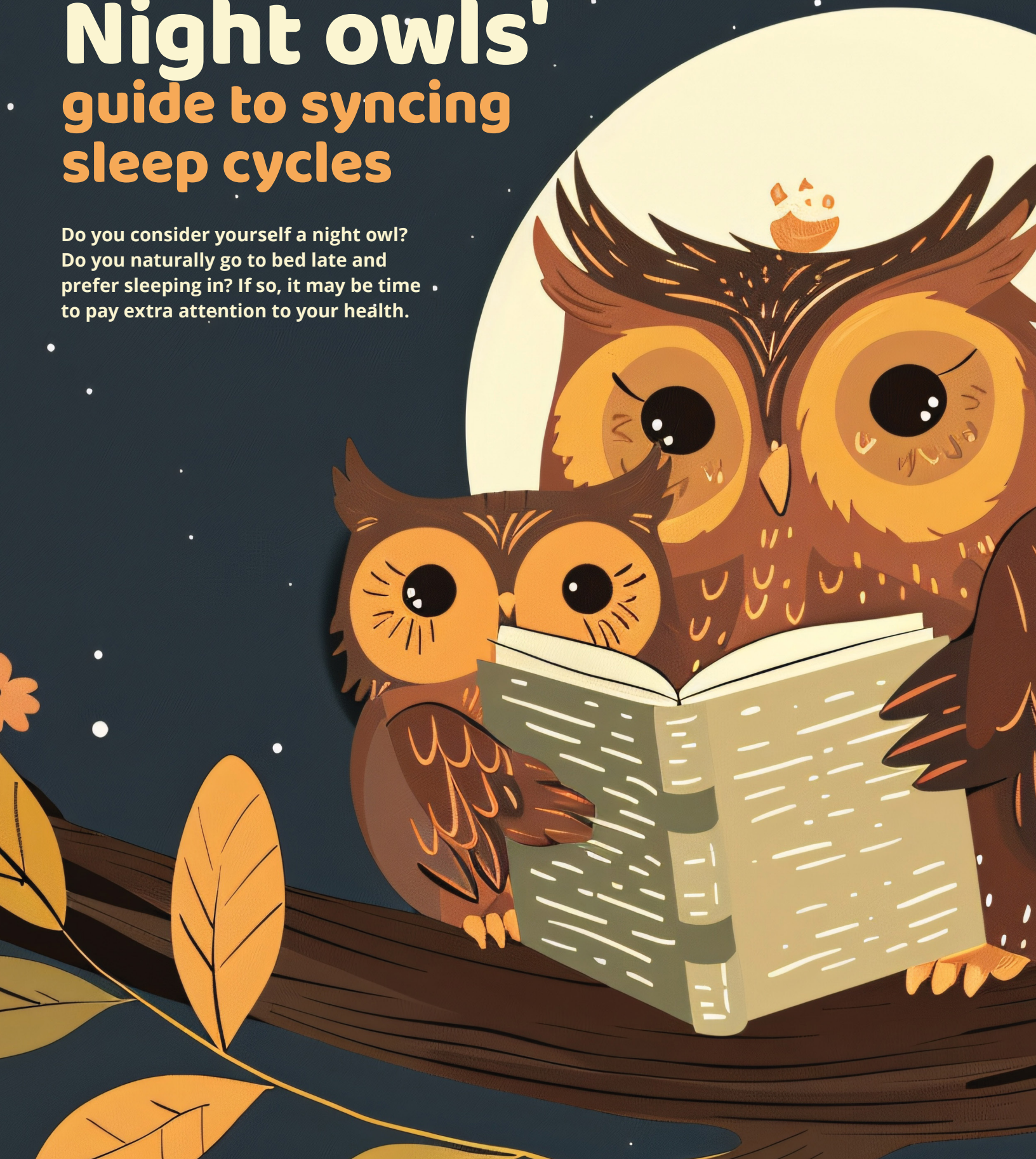
FIT kits come with all the supplies needed for testing, such as test cards or tubes, brushes, waste bags and a mailing envelope.


Discover the simplicity of FIT kits in this tutorial video. Scan the QR code or visit sharp.com/health-news/just-do-fit-video to watch.



Night owls' guide to syncing sleep cycles

Do you consider yourself a night owl? Do you naturally go to bed late and prefer sleeping in? If so, it may be time to pay extra attention to your health.





Studies show a link between being a night owl and making unhealthy lifestyle choices, which can quickly snowball into unhealthy behaviors. For example, getting too little sleep has been shown to make it harder to eat a healthy diet and exercise. Over time, these unhealthy behaviors can raise the risk for chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease.

Some experts believe that having a natural circadian rhythm (your body's internal clock that helps you know when to wake up, eat and fall asleep) that is out of sync with your lifestyle and activities can affect a number of processes in the body, from hormone secretion to metabolism regulation.

5 tips to reset your circadian rhythm

Resetting your circadian rhythm can help improve your sleep and overall well-being. Here are five tips to help reset your internal clock:

1. Have a routine

Create a sleep schedule. Going to bed and waking up at the same time helps regulate your rhythm. If you want to adjust your schedule, do it gradually by 15 to 30 minutes each day.

2. Exercise

Exercising helps with melatonin production, which can help you sleep. Also, working out can help your body's other systems sync with your circadian rhythm.

3. Limit naps

Avoid long naps during the day. Naps that are longer than 30 minutes can make you feel groggy. Plus, napping after 3 p.m. can make it harder to fall asleep at night.

4. Avoid caffeine and alcohol

Caffeine can keep you awake, so pay attention to when you have that last cup of coffee. Also, limit how much alcohol you drink.

5. Limit screen time

Avoid too much exposure to artificial light in the evening, especially blue light from screens. They interfere with melatonin production and disrupt your sleep-wake cycle.

Our circadian rhythm does change over time. As you age, you may find yourself wanting to go to bed earlier and waking up earlier. Listen to what your body needs.

Sources: StayWell Health Library; Cleveland Clinic



CLEARING THE AIR:

what you need to know about airborne viruses

Some viruses, like other germs, can live on surfaces. You become infected when you touch them and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth. But many viruses spread through the air. These are called airborne viruses. A range of illnesses — from mild colds to the flu to COVID-19 — are caused by airborne viruses.

A sea of aerosols

Every time you talk, sneeze or cough, you breathe out more than just air. You also exhale lots of tiny fluid particles. These come in a wide range of sizes. The smallest particles, called aerosols, can hang in the air for minutes or even hours, and they are able to travel more than six feet through the air.

Just as you breathe out aerosols, you can also breathe in aerosols that others exhale. And some viruses can hitch a ride in them. The more viruses that are in the air, the more likely you are to breathe them in and become infected.

Spreading indoors and out

How much virus is floating around in the air depends on where you are. Indoor spaces tend to be poorly ventilated compared to the outdoors. When aerosols collect in the air, you're more likely to breathe them in and get infected. Good airflow can quickly clear indoor air of aerosols. This lowers the chance that people will breathe in enough viruses to become infected. Outdoors, aerosols can float off or blow away.

Five tips to reduce the spread

We can all help reduce the spread of airborne viruses. Below are some wise choices you can make to help protect yourself and others.



Stay up to date with all CDC-recommended vaccines. Scan this QR code or visit sharpmedicareadvantage.com/flushot for more information on where to get your flu shot.



Maintain a healthy lifestyle to help your body resist germs. This includes eating healthy and getting regular exercise.



Stay home when you're unwell and reduce close contact with people who are sick to avoid getting and spreading illnesses.



Improve indoor ventilation and air filtration. Open windows, use portable air purifiers and turn on fans. Change your HVAC filters regularly, every three to six months.



Wear masks when in high-risk settings, such as indoor places with poor ventilation, or if you have a weakened immune system.

Preventing infection

The best defense against airborne viruses like the flu, is getting Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)-recommended vaccines to help your body ward off germs. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle can also help keep you from getting ill. That includes a healthy diet and regular physical activity.

Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Source: National Institutes of Health (NIH)

CAN YOU UNCLOG YOUR ARTERIES?

Arteries are a major part of your circulatory system, similar to a highway that keeps life moving. Just like traffic flows smoothly on clear roads, your blood needs open pathways to deliver oxygen and nutrients to every part of your body.

When those highways get clogged with unwanted debris — like cholesterol, fats and other substances — it's as if a silent traffic jam is building up in your blood vessels. This condition is called atherosclerosis, and over time, it can narrow your arteries, making it harder for your heart to pump blood through your body.

With the right combination of medications, a heart-healthy diet, regular exercise and more, you have the power to partially reverse and prevent further buildup of plaque in clogged arteries.

Here's what you need to know:

Take your medication

If your doctor prescribes medications to manage your blood pressure or lower your cholesterol, make sure to take them as prescribed.

Eat healthy

Research shows eating certain foods, and avoiding others, can help prevent artery clogging. Limit processed foods that are high in trans and saturated fats and sodium. Instead, try eating more whole foods like nuts, grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables.

Move more

Staying physically active can improve your cardiovascular health. The CDC recommends muscle-strengthening activities, like yoga, handheld weights and exercise bands. Be sure to talk with your doctor before starting a new activity or exercise routine.

Don't smoke

Smoking contributes to the development of atherosclerosis and also affects the aorta, the main artery in your body. Sharp Health Plan's Best Health® program offers free smoking cessation support. Scan the QR code or visit sharpmedicareadvantage.com/healthcoach to learn more.



Manage stress

Chronic stress can increase inflammation in the body, which can lead to plaque buildup in the arteries. Take time to relax each day or consider seeking support from a professional. Scan the QR code or visit sharpmedicareadvantage.com/bh to learn more about your behavioral health benefits.



Source: Healthline



ONLY THREE REFILLS A YEAR WITH 100-DAY SUPPLY

Wave goodbye to the standard 90-day refills and welcome the new 100-day medication supply for certain maintenance medications. That's only three refills a year!

Why make the switch?

- ✓ **It's convenient** — A 100-day supply ensures you always have the medicine you need on hand. This is especially important for medicines you take every day to manage conditions like cholesterol or high blood pressure.
- ✓ **It's effective** — When you take your maintenance medication as prescribed for chronic or long-term conditions, you can better manage your care.
- ✓ **It's affordable** — You pay the same copay for a 100-day supply as a 90-day supply.* You may even qualify for pharmaceutical assistance if you need help paying for your prescriptions.

How do I change from a 90-day supply to a 100-day supply?

Simply ask your prescriber to write your next prescription or refill for a 100-day supply. Or, you can ask your local pharmacist to request a 100-day supply from your prescriber. Contact our Medicare prescription helpline at 1-855-222-3183 with any questions.

* The same copay applies when members are in the initial coverage phase of the prescription benefit.

HELP FOR THE HOLIDAY BLUES

The holidays can be stressful. Shopping, social events, missing loved ones, and other pressures can lead to anxiety. Plus, holiday activities can throw off our daily routines, which can cause us to neglect good nutrition and skip exercise. Together, these factors can lead to holiday blues.

Keeping the blues away

You might ease your holiday blues with something as simple as getting enough rest. People tend to sleep less during the holidays and end up shortchanging themselves. Lack of sleep can cause cloudy thinking and irritability. It can also impact your ability to deal with everyday stress.

Don't be afraid to say no. Don't go to parties when you don't really have time. Don't overextend yourself. Don't spend time around people who add to your stress.

Tips to ease the blues

If you have the holiday blues, try these tips:

- Find time for yourself every day.
- Stick to your normal routine.
- Have a heart-to-heart with a friend.
- Limit your alcohol intake.
- Set a realistic budget and then stick to it.
- Set realistic goals and expectations.
- Enjoy free holiday activities.





Additional resources

Check out these free well-being resources that are included with your plan at no additional cost. Scan the QR code or visit sharpmedicareadvantage.com/wellness/wellness-center to learn more.



- **Best Health**[®] — A wellness program to help you reach your healthy lifestyle goals through personalized coaching, classes and events, wellness webinars, a library of health content and more.
- **Magellan website** — Access articles, videos and webinars on a variety of topics like caregiving, aging, managing health conditions, sleep, anxiety, depression and grief.
- **NeuroFlow** — A digital health app for tracking, assessing and managing your mental wellness. Personalized resources are recommended based on your needs and interests. Available to download from both the Apple App and Google Play Stores.

The holiday blues can be quite common, but if you are feeling especially down — for example, your sleep or your appetite is affected or your feelings persist after the holidays — contact your doctor.

Please call Magellan at 1-844-483-9013 for 24/7 crisis intervention and urgent mental health support. If you or someone you care about is experiencing a suicidal or mental health crisis, please call or text the Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988 or dial 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Source: StayWell Health Library



Soothing chicken soup

Chicken soup has long been known as a comforting remedy for the soul. It's a warm embrace in a bowl that soothes away the day's stresses. But beyond its reputation as a culinary hug, this humble dish is also a powerhouse of nutrition.

Full of tender chunks of chicken and a medley of fresh vegetables, each spoonful is a step toward wellness. Whether you're under the weather or simply seeking a nourishing meal, this timeless classic is as good for the soul as it is for the body.

Ingredients

- 6 cups of homemade or canned low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 large carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 large stalk of celery, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped (1 cup)
- 1 cup sliced fresh mushrooms (optional)
- 2 cups diced cooked chicken (12 ounces)
- 1 cup canned plum tomatoes (4 whole tomatoes), coarsely chopped, with liquid
- 3 cups cooked egg noodles (2 cups uncooked)

Directions

Put all ingredients except noodles (unless using uncooked noodles) into a large pot. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes or until carrots are cooked. Put 1/2 cup noodles into each bowl. Ladle soup over noodles. Serves 6.

Source: StayWell Health Library

A step-by-step guide to the Silver&Fit[®] program

Through the Silver&Fit program, you can enjoy access to fitness centers and an at-home fitness kit at no cost. Select one or both of the following options.

Fitness center

Access fitness centers like 24 Hour Fitness, the YMCA, Jazzercise, LA Fitness and others throughout San Diego, including:

- Coed fitness centers with standard membership
- Gender-specific fitness centers with standard membership
- Fitness studios, such as pools, yoga studios or Pilates studios
- Premium fitness studios and fitness center choices

The Silver&Fit Premium fitness network has full-service fitness centers and unique fitness experiences, such as rock climbing and martial arts, for an additional cost. Pricing varies depending on the location.

Home fitness kits

At-home kits are mailed directly to your home; options include the following:

- Fitbit[®] or Zewa[®] Wearable Fitness Tracker Kits
- Walking/Trekking Kit with two walking poles
- Pilates Kit with Pilates ball and towel
- Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Strength Kits with weights and exercise bands
- Beginner and Advanced Swim Kits
- Beginner, Intermediate and Advanced Yoga Kits

You can choose one Home Fitness Kit per year. Kits cannot be exchanged after you've placed an order. Shipping times for kits may vary.



Scan this QR code or visit sharpmedicareadvantage.com/silverfit for more information on the Silver&Fit program on our website, including an FAQ and links to join.

Ready to join?

1. Go to silverandfit.com from a desktop or mobile browser.
2. Select Check Eligibility.
3. Choose a participating fitness center, a Home Fitness Kit, or both.

To speak with an agent and join the Silver&Fit program over the phone, call 1-877-427-4788 (TTY/TDD: 711).

The Silver&Fit program is provided by American Specialty Health Fitness, Inc., a subsidiary of American Specialty Health Incorporated (ASH). All programs and services are not available in all areas. Silver&Fit is a trademark of ASH and used with permission herein. Other names and logos may be trademarks of their respective owners. Kits are subject to change. Fitness center participation may vary by location and is subject to change.

“

What our members are saying

“Ever since I’ve had this Silver&Fit program, I lowered my cholesterol and my blood pressure went down.”

“We joined the Silver&Fit program because there are so many things offered, and it will help keep us young and healthy.”

“At our age, this is quality of life. In order to enjoy it, you’ve got to be in shape.”





Resident free days at
Balboa Park

Discover the vibrant cultural scene of San Diego with complimentary access to select Balboa Park museums.

Every month, residents of the City and County of San Diego, along with active military members and their families, are treated to a rotating selection of museums where they can explore new worlds at no cost. Don't miss this chance to immerse yourself in art, history and science — all for free!



FIRST TUESDAY

- Fleet Science Center
- San Diego Natural History Museum (Not valid for films)
- San Diego Model Railroad Museum

SECOND TUESDAY

- San Diego Air & Space Museum (Not valid for special exhibitions; excluding December)
- The Veterans Museum at Balboa Park
- Comic-Con Museum (Excluding November & December)

THIRD TUESDAY

- San Diego Museum of Art (Not valid for special exhibitions)
- Japanese Friendship Garden (Excluding December)
- Mingei International Museum
- The Old Globe (Backstage tours require advance reservations)

FOURTH TUESDAY

- San Diego Automotive Museum (Excluding December)

Before you embark on your adventure, just remember to have a photo ID handy to confirm your address. Dates and operating hours may change, so it's always a good idea to touch base with your chosen venues for the latest information.

Curious about which museums are opening their doors to you each month?

Scan the QR code or visit balboapark.org/resident-free-days to dive into all the details and make your free museum day an unforgettable experience!



**Source: Balboa Park*

SHARP Health Plan

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN DIEGO, CA
PERMIT #1

8520 Tech Way, Suite 201
San Diego, CA 92123

Important Sharp Health Plan Information

H5386_2025 Inspire Fall 2024

We believe you deserve the best

Thanks to you, we're the highest member-rated
Medicare Advantage plan in the state.¹



¹ Based on a 91% base group in the area of members' overall rating of their health plan, and 89% base group in the area of members' rating of health care quality from the 2024 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems® score survey results achieved by Sharp Health Plan. This is based out of 39 California Health Plans designated as same Organization Type (Local CCP) and Plan Type (HMO/HMOPOS) as Sharp Health Plan (with no "partial" or "EGHP" designations) for 2025.