

***We took the pledge.***



**PLEDGE TO YOUR HEALTH!**

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**BJC** Medical Group



**At BJC Medical Group, we truly care about your well-being, and we have doctors who want to help you on your health journey. That's why we, along with your doctor, are asking you to Pledge to Your Health this year. Your journey begins with a visit to your Primary Care doctor.**

*By pledging to your health, you're committing to making an effort to improve your lifestyle in five key areas:*

- Physical health
- Physical activity
- Mental health
- Fall prevention
- Urinary incontinence

# 1. Overall Physical Health

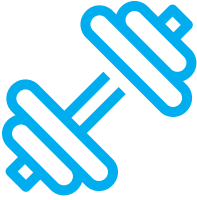


There are many aspects that determine your overall physical health, such as diet, exercise, sleep, stress and environmental factors. Think about how you feel physically, mentally and emotionally. If there are problems in any of these areas, they could affect other areas of your health. That's why it's important to have good preventive health habits or to act as soon as you notice problems.

## *Tips for better overall physical health:*

- Take your medication as prescribed.
- Complete your yearly preventive screenings.
- Eat high-fiber whole foods and include vegetables, fruits, whole grains and lean protein.
- Cut back on sugar and processed foods.
- Drink more water.
- Get quality sleep.
- Increase activity.
- Wash your hands frequently, for at least 20 seconds.
- Maintain a regular personal hygiene routine.

## 2. Activity and Exercise



Being physically fit and active is important at any age. Exercise is good for your heart, lungs, bones, muscles and joints. It can also lower your risk for falls, heart attack, diabetes and high blood pressure. Being active can also help you sleep better, lower stress and keep your mind sharp.

A little exercise is better than none at all. Whatever activity you choose, it's important to include endurance, strength, balance and flexibility.

### *Tips for a better exercise experience:*

- Do an activity you enjoy, like cycling, golfing, walking a pet, gardening or swimming.
- Start and finish your activity with a good stretch.
- Add extra steps into your daily routine — walk to the mailbox or take the stairs when possible.
- Try gentle balance exercises like yoga.
- Exercise virtually through online classes or physician-approved workout apps.

# 3. Fall Prevention



Falling is one of the greatest health threats for aging adults. Bones are much more likely to break and take longer to heal — leading to pain and limited mobility.

It's important to evaluate your lifestyle and overall health to see if there's anything that could contribute to increased falls. If you take medications, there's a chance that one or more of them could be affecting your balance. If this is the case, it might be possible to get them changed or eliminated. Make sure you're keeping up on your eye exams as well. Vision problems can contribute to falls and can often be corrected with updated prescription glasses.

### *Tips to help prevent falls:*

- Stay physically active.
- Keep paths clear of clutter, and use night lights.
- Wear non-slip shoes — even around the house.
- Install handrails and grab bars in your home.
- Keep often-used items in easy-to-reach places.

# 4. Mental & Emotional Health



Mental health is a critical part of your overall health and wellness. Mental and emotional health challenges — like sadness, depression, anxiety and loneliness — are common and can occur at any age. It's important to get medical care and support if you think you may be experiencing these feelings.

Talk to your doctor or other health care professional if you:

- Think about ending your life.
- Feel sad, empty, hopeless or anxious.
- Withdraw from social situations.
- Lack interest in things you used to enjoy.
- Lack energy.
- Have trouble concentrating or sleeping.
- Lose weight or don't have much of an appetite.
- Increase your use of alcohol or other drugs.

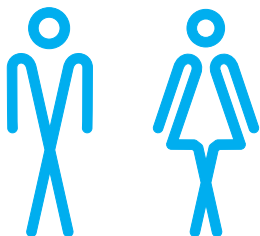
*You can also call these numbers for help:*

- BJC Behavioral Health: 314.747.7491  
*\*Available to patients residing in St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Francois County, Iron County, and Washington County, Missouri.*
- 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1.800.273.8255
- Call 911 if you're experiencing a medical or mental health crisis.

***Tips for better mental and emotional health:***

- Try for seven to nine hours of sleep at night — or at least an extra 30 minutes.
- Socialize with family and/or friends, or make it a goal to call or text at least one person a day.
- Play word games, do crossword puzzles or learn a new language.
- Volunteer at a place that interests you.

## 5. Urinary Incontinence



Urinary incontinence means leakage of urine by accident. It's common in older people — especially women. It can happen for many reasons, such as infections, irritation or constipation. Some medicines can cause bladder control problems that last a short time. In men, most incontinence is related to prostate issues.

The good news is that there are more treatments than ever before. The choice of treatment depends on the type of bladder control problem you have, how serious it is and what best fits your lifestyle. Some treatments include bladder training exercises, pelvic floor muscle training or medication.

### *Tips for urinary incontinence:*

- Ask your doctor about exercises to strengthen the pelvic muscles, which control urinary flow.
- Urinate on a set schedule.
- Drink mostly water, and limit liquids before bedtime.
- Quit smoking, lose weight and limit caffeine.

## Tips that may help prepare for your next appointment:

- Reasons for appointment
- Symptoms and concerns
- Life event that may be affecting your health status
- List of questions you have for the doctor
- Any changes since your last appointment
- List of dates and outcomes of doctor visits over the past year
- If monitoring BP, blood sugar, etc. bring that record with you
- List of medications, allergies, and current vaccinations
- Current physicians with contact information
- Any past surgeries
- Physician recommendations and follow up appointments
- Medication refill request
- Pharmacy information

*\*Some of this information may be available via MyChart*

**PLEASE BRING THIS BROCHURE TO YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT FOR DISCUSSION WITH YOUR PROVIDER!**



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