

# HEALTHFOCUS

2026 Fall  
Member Newsletter  
**VillageCareMAX Medicare Total  
Advantage Plan (HMO D-SNP)**

**Stay Safe and Independent**  
Stay on Your Feet

**Taking the Pressure Off**  
A Practical Guide to  
Hypertension

**Preparing for Emergencies**  
Simple Steps You Can Take

**A Simple Nighttime Routine**  
To Help You Wake  
Up Well Rested

**Cozy Fall Flavors**  
Turkey & Root Veggie  
Sheet-Pan Dinner

[www.villagecaremax.org](http://www.villagecaremax.org)

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VILLAGECAREMAX



## Consent to Text Form

By completing this form, you are giving VillageCareMAX permission to contact you using pre-recorded calls and/or text messages. These communications may include important health plan information such as updates, reminders, and details about your plan, benefits, and coverage.

Providing your consent helps us meet regulatory requirements and ensures that you receive only the communications you choose.

For a copy of the form call Member Services.



## Paperless Forms

You can submit several health plan forms online—no printing, postage, or mail needed.

### **FOLLOW THESE STEPS TO ACCESS ELECTRONIC FORMS:**

1. Go to: [www.villagecaremax.org/map](http://www.villagecaremax.org/map)
2. Click on “Plan Materials” at the top of the page.
3. Select “eSign Online Forms.”
4. Scroll down until you find the form you want to fill out.
5. Follow the step-by-step instructions to complete and sign the form online. Once the form is completed, it will be saved to the VillageCareMAX system.



# Keep Your Medicaid Active

If you have Medicaid, it's important for you to renew your Medicaid coverage before it ends. Depending on your Medicare plan, you must have active Medicaid coverage to be eligible. VillageCareMAX may disenroll you from your plan if you do not renew it in time.

Depending on where you live, the New York City Human Resources Administration (NYC HRA) will mail your renewal documents. This packet is typically sent one to three months prior to your recertification date. Make sure to complete the Medicaid Renewal application and provide the required supporting documents:

- Proof of all types of income (social security, retirement, disability, workers compensation, etc.).
- Current month's bank statement for all accounts (ONLY IF APPLICABLE).
- Proof of cost for Supplemental Medical Insurance (ONLY IF APPLICABLE).
- Verification of Deposit from the Pooled Income Trust Company (ONLY IF APPLICABLE).

Mail the completed and signed application and all documents back to NYC HRA before the due date.



**For your convenience, VillageCareMAX has partnered with Senior Planning Services (SPS) to support you in the Medicaid Renewal process.**

You may reach out to SPS for assistance:

By Phone: 1-646-616-6400

By Web: [www.seniorplanning.com](http://www.seniorplanning.com)

## Need Help?

VillageCareMAX Medicare Total Advantage Plan (HMO D-SNP)

Member Services Call 1-855-296-8800 (TTY 711), 8:00 am - 8:00 pm, 7 days a week.

[www.villagecaremax.org](http://www.villagecaremax.org)

# Stay Safe and Independent

## STAY ON YOUR FEET

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention say falls are the leading cause of injury among adults ages 65 and older.<sup>1</sup> The good news is falls are avoidable. We want to make sure you know all you can about staying on your feet!

<sup>1</sup> Source: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

### Five Ways to Avoid a Fall:

1. **STAY ACTIVE** – Exercising regularly improves balance and strength.
2. **CHECK YOUR MEDICATIONS** – Some medications can cause dizziness or drowsiness. Talk to your doctor right away if you experience this.
3. **WEAR PROPER SHOES** – Supportive, non-slip shoes help prevent trips and falls.
4. **IMPROVE HOME SAFETY** – Remove loose rugs, install grab bars, and improve lighting.
5. **GET YOUR VISION AND HEARING CHECKED** – Vision and hearing both play a key role in your balance and the prevention of falls.

### When to Call For Help:

- If you experience dizziness, weakness, or pain after a fall.
- If you hit your head, even if you feel fine.
- If you have difficulty standing or walking after a fall.

VillageCareMAX is dedicated to your safety and well-being. If you have concerns about falling call your Care Manager today.



# Taking the Pressure Off

## A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HYPERTENSION

Monitoring your blood pressure is a routine part of healthy aging, and for good reason. According to the Mayo Clinic, hypertension is an incredibly common condition as we get older. In fact, even if your numbers were completely normal at age 40, there is a 50% chance they will elevate by age 65.

What exactly is hypertension? Think of your blood vessels like garden hoses. When water pressure is consistently too high, it puts immense strain on the hose. In your body, this excessive force against artery walls quietly damages your heart, brain, and kidneys. Because it rarely causes noticeable symptoms, you might feel perfectly fine while your body is under stress.

The good news? It is highly manageable through small, practical lifestyle shifts:

**WATCH THE SALT:** Aim for 1,500 mg of sodium daily. That's roughly 2/3 of a teaspoon of table salt, an amount easily hidden in one bowl of canned chicken noodle soup or a deli sandwich.

**STAY ACTIVE:** Aim for 30 minutes of moderate movement, like brisk walking, most days.

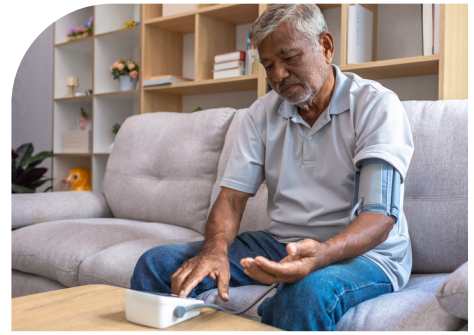
**PRIORITIZE SLEEP:** Strive for seven to nine hours of quality rest each night.

Small, consistent habits make a significant difference for your long-term heart health. Talk to your health care provider to build a monitoring plan that works for you.

### Source Links:

[Mayo Clinic - Hypertension Symptoms and Causes](#)

[Mayo Clinic - Hypertension Diagnosis and Treatment](#)



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# A Simple Nighttime Routine to Help You Wake Up Well Rested

Getting a good night's sleep is one of the most important steps you can take to protect your health—especially as you age. Quality sleep supports memory, mood, heart health, and immune function.<sup>2</sup>

A consistent nighttime routine can help you fall asleep more easily and wake up feeling refreshed.

## Start With a Consistent Schedule

Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day—even on weekends. This helps regulate your body's internal clock, making it easier to fall asleep and wake up naturally.<sup>3</sup>

## Creat a Calm Wind-Down Period

In the hour before bed, shift to relaxing activities such as reading, light stretching, or listening to calming music. These habits signal to your brain that it's time to rest.<sup>4</sup>

## Limit Screen Time Before Bed

Electronic devices like phones and tablets emit blue light, which can interfere with your body's production of melatonin—the hormone that helps you sleep. Turning off screens at least 30 minutes before bedtime can improve sleep quality.<sup>5</sup>

## Make Your Bedroom Sleep-Friendly

Keep your sleep space cool, quiet, and dark. A comfortable environment reduces interruptions and supports deeper, more restorative sleep.<sup>2</sup>



## Watch What You Eat and Drink

Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and heavy meals in the evening. These can make it harder to fall asleep or stay asleep through the night.<sup>3</sup>

Research shows that good sleep habits play a key role in helping you feel rested and energized each day. By following a simple, consistent nighttime routine, you can set yourself up for better sleep—and better days ahead.

### Source Links:

<sup>2</sup> [About Sleep](#)

<sup>3</sup> [Healthy Sleep Habits](#)

<sup>4</sup> [Bedtime Routines](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Limit Screen Time](#)

# Preparing for Emergencies

## SIMPLE STEPS YOU CAN TAKE

Living in New York City means being ready for a range of emergencies—from heat waves and storms to power outages. A little planning can go a long way in keeping you safe and can give you peace of mind.

### Start With a Simple Plan

Think about how you would stay safe if you had to leave your home or stay inside for a few days. Choose a place to meet loved ones and keep a list of emergency contact numbers. NYC Emergency Management recommends having both a nearby meeting place and another location outside your neighborhood.<sup>6</sup>

### Build a Basic Emergency Kit

Have supplies ready so you can manage on your own for several days. A kit should include water, non-perishable food, a flashlight, batteries, a radio, and a First Aid Kit. Don't forget medications, copies of important documents, and a little cash in case credit card systems are down.<sup>7</sup>

### Stay Connected

Create a support network of friends, neighbors, or caregivers who can check in on you. Make sure they know your needs and where your emergency supplies are kept.

### Plan for Your Health Needs

Keep at least a week's supply of medications and a list of what you take. Emergencies can make it harder to get to a pharmacy.



**Taking a few simple steps now can help you stay safe, independent, and confident in the future.**

### Stay Informed

Sign up for Notify NYC to receive free emergency alerts and updates. Staying informed helps you act quickly when something happens.

#### Source Links:

<sup>6</sup> [Start With a Simple Plan](#)

<sup>7</sup> [Build a Basic Emergency Kit](#)

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# Cozy Fall Flavors

## TURKEY AND ROOT VEGGIE SHEET-PAN DINNER

Warm up this fall with a simple, hearty sheet-pan dinner that brings together lean turkey and seasonal root vegetables. This easy recipe is full of flavor, requires minimal cleanup, and makes a healthy, comforting meal the whole family can enjoy.

### Ingredients:

- 2 medium potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 4 medium carrots, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 medium onions, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 2 teaspoons canola oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 package (20 ounces) turkey breast tenderloins
- Minced fresh parsley, optional

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°. Line a 15x10x1-inch baking pan with foil.
2. In a large bowl, toss potatoes, carrots and onions with oil; sprinkle with 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Sprinkle remaining salt and pepper on turkey tenderloins.
3. Place vegetables on pan, spreading evenly. Place tenderloins on top of vegetables. Bake until a thermometer inserted in the turkey reads 165° and vegetables are tender, about 30-35 minutes.
4. If desired, top with parsley to serve.



### Nutrition Facts:

3 ounces cooked turkey with 2/3 cup vegetables: 238 calories, 11g fat (3g saturated fat), 42mg cholesterol, 500mg sodium, 15g carbohydrate (3g sugars, 2g fiber), 22g protein.

# Join the VillageCareMAX Member Advisory Committee

At VillageCareMAX, your voice matters. The Member Advisory Committee is your opportunity to share your ideas, concerns, and experiences to help shape the care and services we provide.

## As a member, you can:

- Help improve access to services
- Share ideas to strengthen care coordination
- Support health equity, especially the underserved communities

## Meeting will have VillageCareMAX representatives from:

- Member Services
- Enrollment and Eligibility
- Grievance and Appeals
- Case Management
- Network Management
- Quality
- Pharmacy

Your input helps us better understand your needs and continues to enhance the care and support you receive.



**Call Member Services if you  
are interested in joining the  
VillageCareMAX Member  
Advisory Committee.**

1-855-296-8800 (TTY 711)  
8:00 am to 8:00 pm  
7 days a week.

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# Your Rights As A Member Of VillageCareMAX Medicare Total Advantage Plan (HMO D-SNP)

VillageCareMAX values your membership in our plan. Our goal is to provide you with the best care and member experience. We also want you to know that you have the following rights:

- To receive medically necessary care.
- To timely access to care and services.
- To privacy about your medical records and when you get treatment.
- To receive information on available treatment options and alternatives presented in a manner and language you understand.
- To receive information in a language you understand; you can get oral translation services free of charge.
- To receive information necessary to give informed consent before the start of treatment.
- To be treated with respect and due consideration for your dignity.
- To request and receive a copy of your medical records and ask that the records be amended or corrected.
- To take part in decisions about your health care, including the right to refuse treatment.
- To be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation.
- To get care without regard to sex (including gender identity and status of being transgender), race, health status, color, age, national origin, sexual orientation, marital status, or religion.
- To be told when, where, and how to get the services you need from your managed long term care plan, including how you can get covered benefits from out-of-network providers if they are not available in the plan network.
- To complain to the New York State Department of Health or your Local Department of Social Services; and to use the New York State Fair Hearing system and/or a New York State External Appeal, where appropriate.
- To appoint someone to speak for you about your care and treatment.
- To seek assistance from the Participant Ombudsman program.



## Your Member Handbook

The Member Handbook has information about the VillageCareMAX plan that you are enrolled in and how the plan works. It explains your benefits, how to get the services you need, your rights as a member, and policies that VillageCareMAX must follow. You can view a copy of the Member Handbook on our website at [villagecaremax.org](https://villagecaremax.org) or call Member Services to request a hard copy.



## Disenrollment Rights

Please note that enrollment on our plan is voluntary. You may disenroll at any time. If you choose to disenroll, we will process your request as quickly as possible. VillageCareMAX will work with New York Medicaid Choice (New York State's managed care enrollment program) to get your request approved, as appropriate. This may take two to six weeks. You will receive written notification with the date of your disenrollment. VillageCareMAX will continue to provide or arrange for you to get covered services until the effective date of your disenrollment. We will also assist with the transfer to a new plan as needed and ensure that you can remain safe in the community.



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# Notice of Non-Discrimination

**VillageCareMAX** complies with Federal civil rights laws. **VillageCareMAX** does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex (as defined in 45 CFR § 92.101(a)(2)).

**VillageCareMAX** provides the following:

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

If you need these services, call **VillageCareMAX** at 1-800-469-6292.  
For TTY/TDD services, call 711.

If you believe that **VillageCareMAX** has not given you these services or treated you differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with the **VillageCareMAX Grievance & Appeals Specialist** by:

Mail: 120 Broadway, Suite 2840, New York, NY 10271  
Phone: 1-800-469-6292 (for TTY/TDD services 711)  
Fax: 1-347-226-5180  
In person: 120 Broadway, Suite 2840, New York, NY 10271  
Email: [Complaints@villagecare.org](mailto:Complaints@villagecare.org)

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights by:

Web: Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>  
Mail: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue SW., Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, DC 20201  
Complaint forms are available at [www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html)  
Phone: 1-800-368-1019 (TTY/TDD 800-537-7697)

This notice is available at VillageCareMax website: [www.villagecaremax.org](http://www.villagecaremax.org).

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