

# Preventive health



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**L**et's take a minute and talk about the word "preventive." Cambridge Dictionary defines this word as "intended to stop something before it can happen, or before it becomes a problem." Taking preventive measures can apply in your daily life choices, in your financial choices, or—as I'm here to discuss—in your health care choices.

I may not know you personally. I may not know your family history. And I may not understand what is of importance to you. But what I do know is, you matter and your health is important. And because of that, I know that preventive health should be a top priority for you.

**Preventive care is essential to healthy living because it can detect changes and abnormalities in your body, which in turn could result in earlier diagnosis and treatment plans. Preventive service, as defined by healthcare.gov, is, "routine health care that includes screenings, check-ups and patient counseling to prevent illness, disease or other health problems."**

If you are not sure where to start your preventative services, I encourage you to speak with your provider regarding immunizations or screenings you should receive based on your age or health risks. Although not an inclusive list, the NALC Health Benefit Plan covers the following benefits at 100 percent when services are rendered by a PPO provider and are in alignment with the United States Preventive Services Task Force and the Centers for Disease Control guidelines:

- Flu vaccination
- Pneumococcal vaccination
- Routine physical exam
- Screening for cervical cancer
- Routine mammogram for women
- Biometric screening—one annually to include: calculation of body mass index, waist circumference measurement, total blood cholesterol, blood pressure check and fasting blood sugar
- Osteoporosis screening
- Colorectal cancer screening
- Lung cancer screening
- Diabetes screening
- PSA (prostate cancer) screening

And don't forget, you can earn valuable health savings dollars to use toward eligible medical expenses when you partici-

pate and complete the Plan's Wellness Incentive programs, services or screenings as defined in our brochure. For a complete list of wellness incentives and what you need to do, visit our website at [nalchbp.org](http://nalchbp.org) or check the NALC Health Benefit Plan mobile app to see what incentives are available to you.

**As we talk about preventive care, there is no better time to give a little extra TLC to the most important muscle in your body—your heart! And that can start with Hello Heart.**

Over the years, cardiovascular disease has remained the leading cause of death in the United States, and too often health concerns related to the heart are understated or overlooked. This can happen when heart attack symptoms are misdiagnosed, or other issues aren't properly treated.

According to the American Heart Association, heart attack symptoms in individuals may include:

- Chest discomfort—Discomfort in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes. It may go away, then return.
- Discomfort in other areas of the upper body—Pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw or stomach.
- Shortness of breath with or without chest discomfort.
- Breaking out in a cold sweat, nausea or lightheadedness.

Keep in mind that though some symptoms may apply to all sexes and genders, others may not, and you should always check with your health care provider as concerns arise.

The good news is that you can help prevent serious health events like heart attacks and strokes by taking steps to care for your heart. These steps let *you* take control of your heart health. By adopting healthy lifestyle habits, staying physically active, avoiding smoking and managing stress, you are caring for your heart.

A helpful tool on this journey is Hello Heart. This app lets you track, understand and manage your heart health, all from the privacy of your own phone. You get personalized digital coaching and heart attack symptom warnings tailored by gender, depending on the setting. Plus, you get a free blood pressure monitor that syncs with the app, so you can monitor your blood pressure anytime, anywhere.

How much will this cost you? The great news is that all of this is available to you at no cost. That's right, we want to make sure your heart is healthy, and you are in control.

If you are ready to give your heart some love today, go to [join.helloheart.com/NALC](http://join.helloheart.com/NALC) or text NALC to 75706.

NALC Health Benefit Plan members or adult dependents (18 years of age or older) with blood pressure readings of 130/80 mmHg or above, or those taking blood pressure medication, are eligible to enroll.