Generally, most of us need more water or other fluids during the hot summer months. However, if you have congestive heart failure (CHF), you must balance the weather with your disease’s effect on your body.

With CHF, your heart doesn’t pump blood like it should. Your lungs, kidneys and other organs may be affected as fluid collects in the tissues of your body.

Health care providers usually tell CHF patients to limit the fluids they eat or drink. This includes:
- Water, other drinks or ice
- Soup
- Foods high in liquid like ice cream, yogurt, gelatin, pudding or fruit.

But in hot weather you may be sweating out or breathing out more water than usual. Dehydration happens when you take in LESS water than you LOSE.

What are the signs of dehydration?
- Thirst
- Less urine
- Less sweating
- Dry mouth
- Eyes not producing tears
- Muscle cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Lightheadedness

Dehydration can become serious. The result can be coma, organ failure or even death.

Talk with your health care provider about the amount of liquids you should drink and eat. Ask if you should make changes during the hot weather months.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health, American Heart Association
A heart attack can be the first sign of coronary artery disease (CAD). An artery leading to your heart may be blocked. During a heart attack, cells in the heart muscle do not receive enough oxygen and begin to die. If you don’t get treatment right away, your heart could be damaged or you could die.

The blockage in your heart may be cleared by surgery or a procedure. Other treatment may include medicines that include beta blockers.

Beta blockers:
- Lower blood pressure
- Slow down your heart rate
- Decrease cardiac output

If you continue taking beta blockers and follow other advice from your health care provider, you may not have another heart attack. You need a prescription to get beta blockers.

Side effects of beta blockers may include:
- Feeling drowsy, tired or weak
- Dry mouth, eyes and skin
- Cold hands and feet
- Sleep disturbances
- Lower sex drive
- Wheezing

Tell your health care provider about any side effects. But don’t stop taking the medicine until you are told to.

Sources: American Heart Association, National Institutes of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**Common Beta blockers include:**
- acebutolol (Sectral)
- atenolol (Tenormin)
- bisoprolol (Zebeta)
- metoprolol (Lopressor)
- nadolol (Corgard)
- timolol (Blocadren)
- nebivolol (Bystolic)
Pregnancy: Get prenatal care early

You’re pregnant. Congratulations! It’s an exciting time in your life.

What’s your first step? Check one:
   a. Post the news online for friends and family?
   b. Start planning the baby’s nursery?
   c. See your OB/GYN?

Only “c” starts your motherhood off on the right foot. A home pregnancy test may be easy and accurate, but you should have the news confirmed by a health care professional as soon as possible. Special care for you and your baby should begin right away.

Delayed prenatal care can lead to:
   • Pre-term birth
   • Health problems for your child that can last a lifetime.
   • A higher risk of infant mortality

For prenatal health care visits, the March of Dimes recommends:
   • Weeks 4 to 28: 1 visit per month (every 4 weeks)
   • Weeks 28 to 36: 2 visits per month (every 2 to 3 weeks)
   • Weeks 36 to birth: 1 visit per week

If you’re feeling great, you may be tempted to skip a prenatal visit. Don’t take the chance. Your health care provider can find problems that are not obvious to you, and there are important tests to take during each step of pregnancy.

Prenatal care provides:
   • Tests for conditions like high-blood pressure and gestational diabetes that can impact you and your baby
   • Information and counseling on healthy diet and exercise
   • Monitoring of the growth and development of your baby with special attention to any genetic conditions
   • Preparation for labor and childbirth
   • Training for the care of your newborn
   • A connection to community services and organizations

By partnering with your health care provider early in your pregnancy, you have a greater chance of delivering a healthy child.

Don’t forget that we’re here for you, too. Our CaringStart Maternity program is FREE to you. You will get:
   • Support from obstetric nurses
   • Information about before, during and after pregnancy
   • Coordination of services
   • Educational materials

Call CaringStart at 1-888-416-3025, toll free, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Eastern Time.

Sources: March of Dimes, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institutes of Health
Asthma: Is your action plan up-to-date?

If you have asthma, work with your health care provider on a written action plan.
- Update the plan regularly.
- Keep it where you can find it.
- Make copies of the plan for your spouse, family members or friends – anyone who needs to know about your medicines.

Your asthma action plan helps you respond no matter how you feel.

On Green Zone days, when you’re doing well:
- You should have no coughing, wheezing, chest tightness or trouble breathing.
- You should be able to do most activities.
- You should take your regular, daily asthma medicines.
- Keep following your plan!

On Yellow Zone days, when you’re having some problems:
- You may be coughing and wheezing with a tight chest and some trouble breathing.
- You may have trouble sleeping and going about your normal activities.
- You should take your regular medicines.
- You should make sure you have your quick-relief medicine (inhaler) with you.
  - Are you having any trouble using your inhaler?
  - If so, ask your health care provider for help.

On Red Zone days, you may need extra help:
- You may have been in the Yellow Zone for 24 hours.
- You are very short of breath and your quick-relief inhaler is not helping.
- You can’t do your normal activities.
- Take your Red Zone medicines as directed.
- Call your health care provider now or ask someone to call them for you.
  - Danger signs include:
    - You are so short of breath you have trouble walking and talking.
    - Your lips or fingernails are turning blue.

Go to the hospital or call 9-1-1 if:
- You are still in the Red Zone after 15 minutes, AND
- You have not talked to your doctor.

You can go on-line at cdc.gov/ASTHMA/actionplan.html to download an Asthma Action Plan form. Or call CareSmart at 1-888-416-3025.

But it is important that you talk through the plan with your health care provider. Make sure you fill in and understand every step.

Sources: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
COPD: Summertime – Is Your Breathing Easy?

Shortness of breath is one of the complications of chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder. Hot weather can make breathing worse.

The airways of COPD patients are already irritated or inflamed. As you breathe in hot summer air, your airways may grow even smaller. You may struggle to pull air into your lungs.

In hot weather your body also needs extra energy and oxygen to keep a normal temperature. If you have COPD, you are already struggling to get enough oxygen. So, as your body tries to cool down, you may be even shorter of breath than usual.

This cycle of heat and shortness of breath can lead to serious illness and even death.

When the temperature goes up, remember to:
• Enjoy outdoor activities in the cooler morning and evening hours.

Use your air conditioning.
• Follow your health care provider’s directions for physical activity.
• Wear lightweight and lighter-colored clothes.
• Drink plenty of liquids.
• Take all your medicines as directed.
• If you are on oxygen, talk to your doctor about any changes for the hotter months.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Behavioral Health: What is Bipolar Disorder?

You may have recently seen TV commercials about medicines for Bipolar Disorder, also known as manic-depressive illness. The commercials talk about people feeling very low or depressed. You may wonder if you have this problem.

All of us may go through times when we feel down or “blue.” This is normal. Usually, we feel better soon. But people with Bipolar Disorder have big mood swings.

One minute they are very up. The next minute, they may be sad and low. One day they are full of energy. The next day they can’t get out of bed. These highs and lows make it hard to work, take care of themselves and live normal lives.

Bipolar Disorder is a serious medical illness. If you are diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder, it is likely you will need medicines and treatment from a mental health provider for the rest of your life.

If you’re worried about your mood swings, talk them over with a health care provider.

Your health plan offers benefits for mental health services. We can help you find a doctor who accepts your health plan.
• BlueCare members call 1-800-468-9698.
• TennCare Select members call 1-800-263-5479.

Source: National Institute of Mental Health
More and more children are overweight. In Tennessee, up to 42 percent of school-age children are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight.

The problem usually lasts. One study says 80 percent of children who were overweight when they were 10-15 years old were obese by the time they turned 25.

These children face a number of serious health issues, including:
- High cholesterol
- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure

Learning healthy habits at an early age can help your children eat right, stay active and live a healthy life today – and for many tomorrows.

**Eat Smart**
A healthy body starts with a healthy diet that includes:
- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Lean meats like chicken and fish
- Low-fat milk products

Try these simple tricks to eating smarter:
- Eat two vegetables at lunch or dinner.
- Drink water instead of sweetened drinks like soda or sweet tea.
- Have fruit for dessert.
- Have ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables in your refrigerator for quick and healthy snacks.

**Get Active**
Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day to be healthy. And it’s not a bad idea for us all. Being active burns calories, makes you feel good and is a great way to spend time as a family.

Here are some family activity ideas:
- Take a walk, play outside or go for a bike ride together after dinner.
- Limit TV and computer time to no more than an hour a day.
- Play sports and games as a family.
- Encourage your children to participate in sports and other activities like dance or cheerleading.

Be a healthy role model. Eat smart and be active with your children.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health; Tennessee Department of Health; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
This summer you may be tempted to kick off your shoes for a stroll in the sand or through the grass. If you are diabetic, however, bare feet are never a good idea.

Complications of diabetes include nerve damage and poor circulation. Because of numbness in your feet, you may not be able to feel injuries as they happen.

Diabetics have gotten serious burns on the bottoms of their feet from walking on hot sand or concrete. Indoors can be dangerous to bare feet, too. You may not even notice if you step on a pin, needle or tack. Infections from cuts or burns can become a wound that won’t heal. In the worst cases, this can lead to amputation.

Play it safe year-round for good care of diabetic feet:

- Wear shoes indoors and out.
- Make sure your shoes fit properly.
- Examine your feet everyday for signs of trouble.
- Dry feet completely, especially between toes. Rub in lotion completely.
- Your doctor should perform a complete foot exam once or twice a year. Take off your socks and shoes every time you visit your doctor. Point out hard-to-heal sores or other problems.

Sources: American Diabetes Association, National Institutes of Health

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**Getting To Know You**

**Misti Ajoc, RN MSN**

If you are looking for a primary care physician (PCP) home, you may talk to Misti Ajoc. She is a Disease Management Specialist with the VSHP EMS West Team.

Misti explains to members the importance of having a PCP home to see for regular appointments. She reminds members to use the 24-hour Nurseline (1-800-262-2873) for health questions that are not an emergency. Her advice helps members find the right care at the right time.

After earning her Registered Nurse degree, Misti received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration. She also earned a Masters of Science in Nursing/Education.

Misti puts her educational skills to work every day. She says, “I’m especially happy when a member thanks me for helping them at time when they need it most.”

When she’s not working, Misti loves to go scuba diving. She plans to be married later this year.
Foreign Language Lines
Call if you need help and need to speak with someone in one of these languages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>العربية (Arabic)</td>
<td>1-877-652-3046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bosanski (Bosnian)</td>
<td>1-877-652-3069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كوردی - پادیناى (Kurdish-Badinani)</td>
<td>1-877-652-3046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>كوردی - سۆرانی (Kurdish- Sorani)</td>
<td>1-877-652-3046</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soomaali (Somali)</td>
<td>1-877-652-3054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Espanol (Spanish)</td>
<td>1-800-254-7568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngurui Việt (Vietnamese)</td>
<td>1-800-269-4901</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helpful Numbers
Customer Service: BlueCare members call 1-800-468-9698; TennCareSelect members call 1-800-263-5479.
CareSmart® - 1-888-416-3025

Call if you have any questions about the CareSmart Disease Management Program. Also call if you need to talk to your CareSmart nurse about your disease.

*Nurseline – 1-800-262-2873
Have a health question? Registered nurses are available to talk to you any time, day or night.

*Health Information Library – 1-800-999-1658
This audio Library has more than 1,200 recorded messages on a variety of health topics. Access the number 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

*Services of independent companies serving BlueCare and TennCareSelect members.

Sources: American Diabetes Association; National Institutes of Health; National Institute of Mental Health; March of Dimes; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; American Heart Association; National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, Tennessee Department of Health; United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Hay una línea telefónica en español para los consumidores hispanos de TennCare. Llame a las oficinas de BlueCare/TennCareSelect al teléfono 1-800-468-9698/1-800-263-5479.

We do not allow unfair treatment in TennCare. No one is treated in a different way because of race, color, birthplace, religion, language, sex, age, or disability. Do you think you’ve been treated unfairly? Do you have more questions or need more help? If you think you’ve been treated unfairly, call the Family Assistance Service Center for free at 1-866-311-4287. In Nashville, call 743-2000.

Volunteer State Health Plan, Inc. (VSHP), BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee, Inc. (BCBST) and BlueCare are independent licensees of the BlueCross BlueShield Association. VSHP is a licensed HMO affiliate of BCBST.

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