



AUGUST 2021
HEALTH EDUCATION

CARE CONNECTION

HEALTHCLIPS: YOUR VIDEO MEDICAL INFORMATION RESOURCE

Do you find yourself visiting Dr. Google when you have a medical question? We're probably all guilty of this sometimes, even though we know the information we find on the web isn't always accurate or applicable to our own unique health situations — and it's no substitute for evidence-based, peer-reviewed medical resources.

At the NECA/IBEW Family Medical Care Plan, we want you to have easy access to verified, clinically grounded health and wellness information you can trust.

That's why all FMCP members will now have access to HealthClips for free through the Member Self-Service Online Portal!



healthclips Online

What is HealthClips?

HealthClips is an easily accessible platform for expert-reviewed health and wellness education. The HealthClips library contains more than 4,000 videos about various health and wellness topics — including mental and emotional health, medication, cancer, blood pressure, heart disease, and many more — which means there's information there for every situation! The resources at HealthClips were created to ensure that you have access to accurate medical information right at your fingertips, when and where you need it most.

How can I access HealthClips?

Log in to your account in the [Member Self-Service Online Portal](#) to find the HealthClips tab in the left menu bar (just above the Contact Us tab). When you click on the HealthClips link, you'll be automatically logged in to view any of the multitudes of resources that HealthClips has to offer.

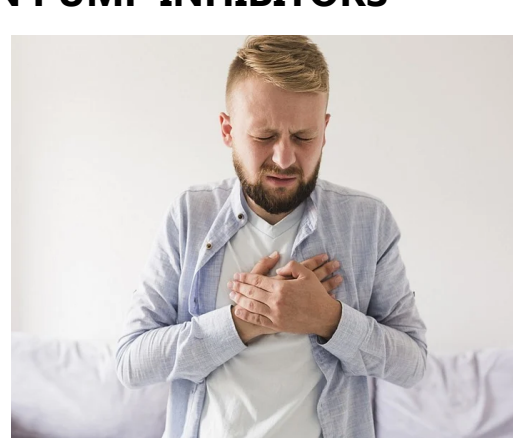
There are three ways to access these resources:

- **Recommended Learning.** Browse through curated playlists for the topic(s) of interest to you. Each topic contains a collection of additional health resources.
- **Full Library.** Explore the entire collection of HealthClips video and print resources.
- **Search.** Use the search tool to enter a keyword or topic you'd like to learn more about. The results will present both playlists and individual resources available on that topic. You can filter by media type and language from this tool.

Log in to your account in the [Member Self-Service Online Portal](#) today to check out everything that HealthClips has to offer! If you haven't registered with the Portal yet, now's the perfect time!

TELL ME MORE ABOUT... PROTON PUMP INHIBITORS

"Doctor, I don't know what is going on, but my stomach has been bothering me off and on for a few months now. I can't take this burning in my throat and chest. It's like someone is pouring acid down my throat. And my stomach... there's this gnawing pain I get at night. It's kept me up three or four days a week for months now." Fortunately, you are in luck — your doctor prescribes a medication that will help — a proton pump inhibitor (PPI). Nexium®, Prilosec®, and Prevacid® are some of the common PPIs that are available. But what are these medications and what should you consider as you make the decision to start treatment?



Our stomachs have specialized cells that serve as little pumps producing acid which helps us digest the food we eat. In some people, these pumps overproduce acid, which can backup into the esophagus causing heartburn or increasing the risk of an ulcer forming. PPIs are a class of medication that are used to treat several medical conditions that affect the stomach, including ulcers or gastroesophageal reflux disease, also known as GERD. PPIs work over time by decreasing the acid these pumps produce. These medications work best when taken on an empty stomach, usually before eating a meal. It can take several days before someone sees an effect from these; they do not work immediately. This is why PPIs are not recommended to be taken for occasional heartburn.

Taking any medication comes with the potential for side effects. While most PPIs are well tolerated, in rare instances some individuals may experience nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, gas, and/or headache. When they are taken long term or unnecessarily, it can place someone at an increased risk for other medical issues such as fractures, clostridium difficile (also known as C. Diff), pneumonia, and vitamin deficiencies.

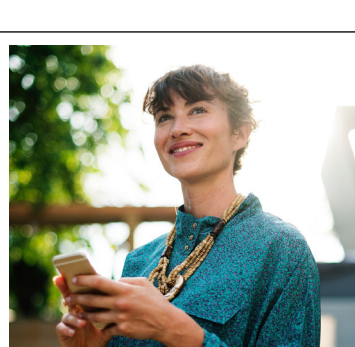
- Some research studies showed a possible increased risk for wrist, hip, and spine fractures when taking PPIs. There is not enough research to say PPIs cause fractures, however, it is an important point to discuss with your healthcare provider.
- Changing the internal environment of the stomach can create a ripple effect further down the gastrointestinal (GI) tract. Reducing stomach acid may allow bacteria, such as C. Diff, to grow out of control. Some research has shown a connection between PPIs and C. Diff diarrhea. This can be a serious infection causing multiple episodes of watery diarrhea, abdominal pain or cramping, fever, and/or loss of appetite.
- It is possible that PPIs also increase the risk for developing pneumonia. Again, altering the acidic environment of the upper gastrointestinal (GI) tract could create a more favorable environment for pneumonia-causing organisms to flourish.
- Our bodies are designed to be able to extract the vitamins and minerals that we need from the food we eat. When the stomach and GI tract do not have enough acid, we cannot absorb enough of some vitamins and minerals. This most significantly affects the absorption of magnesium, which is needed for proper muscle function. Individuals who are on long term PPIs are at an increased risk for low magnesium levels which can affect the conduction system of the heart.



PPIs have been a revolutionary advancement to help treat ulcers and GERD. But medications are often one piece of the puzzle when treating these conditions. There are often other contributing factors that may need attention. An individual's diet and eating habits can significantly affect stomach acid production. For example, avoiding spicy foods, mint, chocolate, and coffee can decrease acid production and heartburn symptoms. Elevating the head of the bed can help keep stomach acid from backing into the esophagus, improving symptoms at night. Exercise and weight loss can also bring improvement. These types of changes can be difficult and are best tackled as a part of a holistic approach in partnership with your healthcare team.

The next time you visit your healthcare provider, do not be afraid to start up a conversation. Ask them to tell you more so you can more confidently navigate your path to health and wellness.

Sources: Amanda Lynch, RN BSN OCN; [Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services](#), [U of M Health](#), [Harvard Health](#), [UpToDate](#)



TALK TO A THERAPIST when, where, and how you choose



Talkspace is therapy on your schedule — no appointment necessary! With Talkspace, you can send messages (text, audio, picture, and video) to a therapist in a private, text-based chat room where you can engage with your therapist at your own pace. Through the FMCP, you'll have access to free, unlimited messaging therapy and one 30-minute video session with your therapist each month, so you can communicate in the way you're most comfortable.

It's quick and easy to get matched with a therapist and start working toward better mental health, so why not give it a try?

Get started today at www.talkspace.com/fmcp.

Please note: This benefit only applies to members who have their medical benefits through one of the FMCP PPO Plans. If you are eligible, you must register through www.talkspace.com/fmcp to receive this benefit at no cost through the FMCP.

WELLNESS TIP!

Drink water — especially before meals

Drinking enough water can have numerous benefits. Surprisingly, it can even boost the number of calories you burn. Two studies note that it can increase metabolism by 24–30% over 1–1.5 hours. The optimal time to drink it is before meals. One study showed that drinking 2.1 cups (500 ml) of water 30 minutes before each meal increased weight loss by 44%!



Sources: [Healthline](#)

DON'T FORGET ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS

You can now opt in to receive electronic communications from the FMCP through the Member Self-Service Online Portal! Opting in will notify you when you have a new document to review in your account, like an EOB, and will let us alert you to important Plan updates and announcements!

To opt in, log in to your account in the portal, go to the Contact Us tab, and click the check box for Electronic Communications.

BE PREPARED FOR SUMMER COLD & FLU SEASON.

LiveHealth
ONLINE

As mask mandates are slowly loosened and lifted throughout the country, many experts worry that the US will see a major uptick in cold and flu cases — but did you know that cold and flu aren't just winter problems? It's true, and it could mean that you're more likely to get sick during the summer this year!



But that's where you have LiveHealth Online!

LiveHealth Online is available 24/7 in all 50 states, so you can always reach a doctor when you need one. Whether you're traveling or get sick overnight, LiveHealth Online can connect you to a doctor on your schedule through your smartphone or computer. They're your easy go-to for most common medical conditions, like cold and flu, fever, eye or ear infections, allergies, headache, and more!

Signing up is easy: you just need your medical ID card.

1. First you'll be asked for some basic information (your name, email address, date of birth, secure password, location, and gender).
2. When asked if you have insurance, click Yes and select Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield; then you'll enter your Member ID from your medical ID card.
3. If you are the primary subscriber, click Yes; if you're creating an account as a covered dependent, click No and then provide the primary subscriber's information.
4. Once you click Finish, you'll be ready to have online medical visits when you need them.

LiveHealth Online is free for FMCP members and their dependents through 2021!

To learn more or to sign up, visit www.livehealthonline.com.

Please note: LiveHealth Online is only available to members who have a PPO plan through the FMCP.

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

PPO - Anthem 1-800-810-BLUE (Provider locator services) www.anthem.com	Rx Drugs - SavRx 1-866-233-4239 www.savrx.com	Best Doctors 1-800-497-1634 https://bestdoctors.com/	Dental - MetLife 1-800-942-0854 www.metlife.com/mybenefits (if applicable)	Vision - VSP 1-800-877-7195 www.vsp.com (if applicable)	NECA/IBEW Family Medical Care Plan 410 Chickamauga Avenue, Suite 301 Rossville, GA 30741 1-877-937-9602 www.nifmcp.com
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