

New! – Pack Health Offers Insights To Improve Your Health

PEEHIP has for decades been trying to provide the best medical insurance and access to the best medical care for our members. But, we also are looking more at prevention as well as coaching as a way to help you and your family. In our continuing effort to improve the health of our members, PEEHIP has engaged with a team of experts to look at our health plan data to find opportunities to improve the health of our members. That data has revealed some interesting trends and conditions which we feel can be best addressed by helping you, our members in self-help programs using a coaching model.

Many of you have been members of a team where a coach made all of the difference in not only your performance but who also produced life-long lessons. Using that model, we will offer a **purely voluntary coaching program for three conditions which are common: joint and back pain, pre-diabetes and weight control.** We will give much more information over the coming months on each of these... stay tuned! [This program does not replace the coaching requirement of the *Team Up for Health Wellness Program.*]

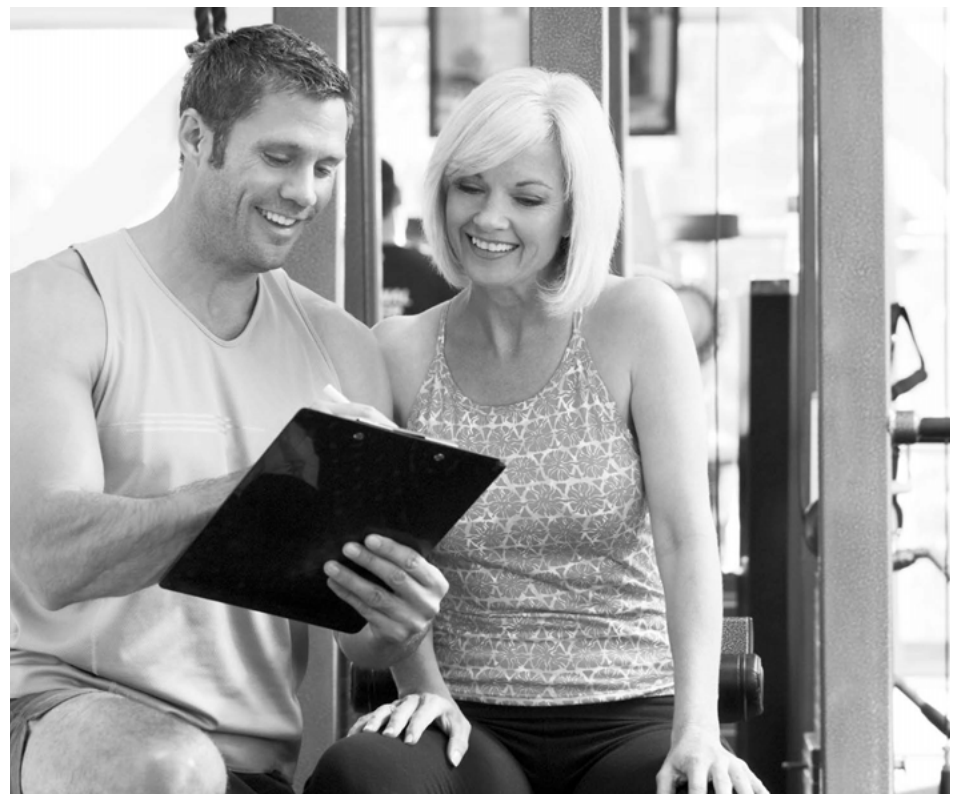
The company providing these services was brought to us with the help of BCBSAL and is Pack Health, a Birmingham company dedicated to improve the outcome of a number of medical conditions.

Pack Health delivers support on your schedule in the form of your own personal Health Advisor - a person who understands what you're going through and can help you with everything from managing pain and fatigue, to maintaining a healthy weight, to accessing treatment. You set the goal; they will help you get there. Pack Health makes it easy to stay on track with weekly coaching calls, educational resources, text message reminders, and more.

Pack Health has a proven track record and has published their results

and in fact are certified by the CDC for their diabetes prevention program, but PEEHIP is initiating this relationship as a pilot. **There is no cost to our members or the plan.** We are in the process of setting measurement goals for each of these programs and will be assessing Pack Health against those goals at the end of the pilot.

Future articles and mailings will be addressed to specific people who might benefit from their programs... and we would love to hear feedback from our members on how to improve this as well as other programs. ●



2017 Scale Back Alabama Schools



It is time for the 2018 Scale Back Alabama program so mark your calendar now. Join us to kick off the twelfth year of Scale Back Alabama on January 9, 2018. Scale Back Alabama (SBA) is a free statewide weight-loss program designed to encourage Alabamians to get healthy and to have fun while doing it. Since the first competition in 2007, Alabamians have lost more than 1.35 million pounds! Scale Back Alabama is designed to address the state's challenge with obesity; however, we caution individuals to check with their healthcare provider before beginning a new exercise or diet regimen.

Attention Schools!

The Scale Back Alabama School program is an additional component of Scale Back Alabama that gives school personnel the opportunity to be healthy role models for their students, and for the school to be entered into a drawing to possibly win nutrition and physical activity-oriented prizes.

Becoming a Scale Back Alabama School is easy

- Go to www.scalebackalabama.com for instructions on signing up for Scale Back Alabama. Your school will need a coordinator to get started. Visit www.scalebackalabama.com/project/coordinators/ for registration information.
- All schools (K-12) participating in Scale Back Alabama will automatically be enrolled in the Scale Back Alabama School program. Students are not allowed to participate and weight loss for students is not being encouraged.
- Scale Back Alabama Schools receive special recognition and are entered into a school drawing for prizes that promote good nutrition and physical

activity habits for the students. These prizes are in addition to the team and individual drawings for cash prizes.

- If your school does not have a coordinator or does not wish to be a weigh-in site, check the Scale Back Alabama website for a public site in your area so you do not miss out on the fun! Be sure to let us know your school teams are using a public site so it is still eligible for prizes.

It is a win-win for schools. School personnel work to achieve a healthier lifestyle while their students cheer them on and learn the importance of healthy habits.

Scale Back Alabama Mobile App

The Scale Back Alabama app, available for both Android and Apple mobile devices, makes participating in Scale Back Alabama more convenient than ever. The **FREE** app features continuous tracking of your weight, activity, and goals - even when the Scale Back Alabama competition is over.

Work toward a new, healthier lifestyle with the help of the Scale Back Alabama app, available in your Google Play and Apple Store. Be sure to continue using the app even after the program is over. The app requires Android 4.1 and up or iOS 8.0 or later. It's compatible with iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch, as well as all Android devices.

Registration and More

- Teams of 2 can register at www.scalebackalabama.com or in person at a weigh-in site.
- Schools that decide to be a weigh-in site (public or private) must register at least 3 teams of 2.
- Receive health tips and family centered information for healthier lives.

Important Program Dates

- December 1, 2017 (Friday) - Online Pre-Registration Opens
- January 9 (Tuesday) - Kick-Off Event
- January 22-28 (Monday-Sunday) - Weigh-In Week
- April 2-8 (Monday-Sunday) - Weigh-Out Week
- April 17 (Tuesday) - Final Event and Cash Prize Drawings

Thank you to all of the schools that participated this past year! You have set a great example for your students and faculty.

For more information about Scale Back Alabama Schools, please contact Molly Killman at 334.206.5646 or molly.killman@adph.state.al.us. Scale Back Alabama is sponsored by the Alabama Hospital Association and the Alabama Department of Public Health in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Alabama. ●



Your Preferred Method to Communicate with PEEHIP and the RSA

If you have accessed PEEHIP's Member Online Services (MOS) website at <https://mso.rsa-al.gov> recently, you may have noticed the enhancements that were added earlier this year in June. These include a new and easier to navigate user-interface, the ability to upload documents, and added security via a re-registration process. **In addition to these upgrades, members also now have the ability to set their preferred method of communication to email instead of paper mail.** Along with preserving paper and helping PEEHIP and RSA save on postage cost, this allows you to receive notifications immediately in your email rather than waiting for paper mail. This can be particularly helpful with timely PEEHIP documents that involve deadlines for response or application.

If you are currently set to receive

your communications via email, you will receive an email notification whenever you have an important PEEHIP or RSA document waiting for you in your MOS Secure Message Center. If you have registered on MOS since June, you were defaulted to email preference unless you manually unchecked the "My preferred method of contact is Email" checkbox shown below.

This means that unless you unchecked this box, you will not receive paper mail from PEEHIP and the RSA. Instead, your correspondences will be in your MOS Secure Message Center. Regardless of what you did or did not select when you registered, **all members can change their preferred method of communication at any time by logging into your MOS account and clicking on "My Account," then "Contact Information," and then**

"Change your current phone or email information."

Please be aware that when you sign up for email notifications, you will receive a confirmation email. If you do not see this confirmation in your email inbox within 24 hours, or if you believe you signed up for email preference but are not getting emails from PEEHIP or the RSA, check your junk mail or spam settings. Make sure that your email settings allow messages from "noreply@rsa-al.gov." Lastly, even if you choose paper mail, you will also be able to access your secure communications in your Secure Message Center when using MOS anywhere that you have internet access. ●

Registration Step 2 of 2

User ID:	*	<input type="text"/>	Minimum of 5, maximum of 20 characters
Password:	*	<input type="password"/>	Minimum of 8, maximum of 16 characters
Confirm Password:	*	<input type="password"/>	
1st Secret Question:	*	Select a Secret Question:	▼
Answer to the 1st Secret Question:	*	<input type="text"/>	
2nd Secret Question:	*	Select a Secret Question:	▼
Answer to the 2nd Secret Question:	*	<input type="text"/>	
Email:	*	<input type="text"/>	
Confirm Email:	*	<input type="text"/>	

My preferred method of contact is Email.

Flex Filing Deadline Approaching Fast

The deadline to file for reimbursement from your 2017 PEEHIP Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) plan is January 15, 2018. If you were enrolled in the Health FSA or Dependent Care Reimbursement Account (DCRA) between October 1, 2016, and September 30, 2017, there is still time to file for reimbursement of expenses incurred by September 30, 2017.

Submit your request online at www.myhealthequity.com or mail in a reimbursement form along with supporting documentation to HealthEquity. Remember, unused funds contributed to a FSA plan cannot be refunded. All unused funds remaining in your 2017 DCRA and in excess of \$500 in your Health FSA after the January 15, 2018, filing deadline will be forfeited. To check your balance, login to your HealthEquity online account or contact customer service at 877.288.0719.

Flex Plan Webinar

The video of the Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) webinar held during the month of September is now available for viewing on the RSA website at www.rsa-al.gov/index.php/members/peehip/flex-account. The webinar contains many helpful hints on how to access your flex benefits and manage your account online through the HealthEquity member portal www.healthequity.com/peehip and mobile app. If you did not get a chance to participate in the webinar or would like to review the information again, please visit vimeo.com/239893021.

Zinc Supplementation May Lower Diabetes Progression Risk

By Amber Cox, www.healio.com/endocrinology/diabetes

Full Study: Ranasinghe P, et al. J Diabetes. 2017;doi:10.1111/jdb.12621.

Adults with prediabetes assigned to zinc supplementation are less likely to progress to type 2 diabetes compared with adults not assigned to supplementation, and supplementation may lead to reductions in fasting plasma glucose, 2-hour oral glucose tolerance test and insulin resistance, according to researchers in Sri Lanka.

Priyanga Ranasinghe, MBBS, of the department of pharmacology, faculty of medicine at the University of Colombo in Sri Lanka, and colleagues evaluated data from 200 adults (mean age, 51.8 years; 43% men) with prediabetes randomly assigned to zinc 20 mg per day or placebo to determine the effect of zinc on glycemic control, other cardiometabolic and anthropometric parameters, and progression of disease.

Participants were enrolled between August 2012 and December 2016; the study duration was 12 months. Study visits were conducted at baseline, 1, 3, 6, and 12 months.

Type 2 diabetes developed in more participants in the placebo group compared with the zinc group (25% vs. 11%; OR = 2.7; 95% CI, 1.2-6.5). Reductions in FPG and 2-hour OGTT were observed in the



zinc group but not in the placebo group. From baseline, insulin resistance decreased significantly at 6 and 12 months in the zinc group, but the decreases were not observed in the placebo group.

Significant reductions were observed in both groups for systolic and diastolic blood pressure. There were no significant changes in BMI, waist circumference, HDL cholesterol or triglycerides. Significant reductions in total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol were observed in the zinc group, whereas the levels remained unchanged or increased in the placebo group.

“Zinc deficiency was observed in the present study population with prediabetes,

which was corrected by supplementation,” the researchers wrote. “Zinc supplementation reduced blood glucose and insulin resistance, while improving beta-cell function. Furthermore, disease progression to diabetes was reduced, and beneficial effects of supplementation were also noted on total and LDL cholesterol. However, these results need to be replicated in larger randomized controlled trials, prior to advocating the use of zinc supplementation for prevention of diabetes and further studies are also required to fully elucidate the mechanisms responsible.” ●

Medicare-Eligible PEEHIP Members

The information below pertains to PEEHIP members covered under the UnitedHealthcare® Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) plan or prospective members who are considering enrolling in this PEEHIP plan. For more information, visit www.UHCRetiree.com/peehip.

Existing PEEHIP UnitedHealthcare Members Will Not Be Receiving New ID Cards in 2018

With all of the holiday hustle and bustle, one thing you do not have to worry about is your UnitedHealthcare ID card being lost in the mail. That's because members currently enrolled in the PEEHIP UnitedHealth Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) plan will **not** be receiving a new UnitedHealthcare® Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) plan ID card for 2018. You should continue to use your current UnitedHealthcare® Group Medicare Advantage (PPO) plan ID card for all medical and prescription drug needs in 2018.

New PEEHIP members enrolling in this plan will still receive their first UnitedHealthcare ID card just as all current members did when first enrolled. If you have any questions, please call UnitedHealthcare Customer Service toll free at 877.298.2341, TTY 711, 8 a.m. - 8 p.m. local time, 7 days a week.