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**Welcome to the winter  
2026 edition of the  
Keystone Accountable  
Care Organization  
(ACO) newsletter!**

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Everyone plays a vital role in keeping our community and our families healthy. This winter, take time for your own wellness, connect with your loved ones and find joy in the moments of calm. Let's continue to care for one another and for ourselves.

January is Glaucoma Awareness Month — the perfect time to shine a light on one of the leading causes of preventable vision loss. By raising awareness, encouraging regular screenings and supporting those living with vision challenges, we can promote healthier long-term vision. Schedule your eye exam and remind someone you care about to do the same.



## All about glaucoma

Glaucoma affects the pressure inside the eye. In a healthy eye, clear fluid constantly flows in and out to nourish the eye's tissues. But when fluid stops draining, it builds up and creates too much pressure. Over time, this can damage the optic nerve.

Left untreated, glaucoma can lead to vision loss and blindness, which is why early detection and proper treatment are key. To keep your eyes healthy, get a yearly exam with dilation, especially if you have risk factors.

### Types of glaucoma

- Open-angle glaucoma is the most common form. Pressure in the eye increases over time.
- Angle-closure glaucoma is less common. It causes a rapid, sudden increase in eye pressure.
- Normal-tension glaucoma damages the eye's optic nerve, despite normal eye pressure.
- Congenital glaucoma is a rare condition related to a defect in the eye's canals.

### Risk factors

In its early stages, glaucoma doesn't have symptoms. But as the condition progresses, vision gradually worsens. Those at highest risk include people:

- Over age 60 and African Americans over age 40
- With diabetes
- Who've had a serious eye injury
- With a family history of glaucoma
- Who take corticosteroid medications, such as prednisone

### Diagnosis and testing

Along with reviewing your medical history and examining your eyes, your eye doctor will conduct these tests:

- Eye chart test
- Pupil dilation that lets your doctor better examine the back of your eye for optic nerve damage
- Visual field test to measure your side vision
- Tonometry test, which uses a puff of air to measure eye pressure

### Treatment

Although there is no cure for glaucoma, treatment can keep the disease in check — which is why early detection and treatment are key. Our eye doctors will work with you to develop a treatment plan that works with your lifestyle and offers you the best chance of preserving your vision.

Treatments may include oral medication, prescription eye drops, vision aids, laser surgery or eye surgery.

# Eye care word find

ACUTE GLAUCOMA

CORNEA

GLAUCOMA

HYPEROPIA

IRIS

MYOPIA

OPHTHALMOLOGIST

OPTIC DISCS

OPTIC NERVE

TONOMETRY

WIDE-ANGLE  
GLAUCOMA

T W D S W X M P V L O Q O W S T C U T R E C G R  
 M J H Y T O X A C D P C B Y K X I T V I F B I O  
 U P G A M O C U A L G E L G N A E D I W G R A P  
 S D W S G I Z C G S S O Q G Z H M Q M A I G D T  
 G J K G L A U C O M A O A J Y V K P D S I E U I  
 J O I Z Z K G C S S R L H P N V J C O V G B M C  
 Y P T E R N K M K V E H E K T L B Z Y S B S X D  
 B H D B R R Y S H Q Z R U T L K C V Y W B N Q I  
 Q T H G Z O Q J S W O D E C E N G S F M D T L S  
 W H Y A P B A S B P G B S O E Q S L E K P N Q C  
 F A H I K V L M I W E I S R S Q B N E X C Z N S  
 V L A J O N Z A O Q J E I N Z O A J R X U D M O  
 V M Z P O R A Q Y C K N D E O M B W X M U F X H  
 O O E L D L Q M O V U J X A C Z B A O F M Y T D  
 O L V C G W Y Z C O T A I J G R N V S T M L G O  
 H O X D X G B R P Q Z Z L U R J I Q D Y J T G E  
 Z G B U Q E W T T C I M V G A C D X V R O T T O  
 V I H A V L I H R E L U O F E R V U O Z E M J M  
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 X V K E I Q X N V C Z N M E T Y P E T Y H K B E  
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## Understanding heart disease

Your heart is an incredible machine. It beats about 37 million times per year, supplying your organs and cells with vital oxygen and nutrients. It also adjusts its rate and force to keep pace with your exertion, age and lifestyle.

The bad news is that some factors, such as clogged arteries, can lead to heart disease.

Also called atherosclerosis, heart disease typically occurs when there's a buildup of cholesterol or plaque in the arteries. Over time, this can trigger a blood clot and lead to a heart attack, heart failure or stroke.

Having an annual physical will help your family doctor determine your risk factors for atherosclerosis, such as:

- Smoking
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- Type 2 diabetes
- Family history of heart disease, heart attack or stroke

If your doctor has any concerns, they may order imaging or stress tests.

### Reversing heart disease through lifestyle changes

While some factors are out of our control, such as age and genetics, you can take steps to undo damage caused by heart disease.

- 1. Stop smoking.** Tobacco use is linked to blockages and narrowing of the arteries.
- 2. Get moving.** Regular physical activity is one of the best things you can do for your heart. Focus on a mix of cardiovascular exercise, strength training and stretching.
- 3. Change your diet.** Cut back or eliminate saturated and trans fats, high-cholesterol foods, salt, sugar and processed foods.
- 4. Lose weight.** By lowering your daily calorie intake and being physically active for at least 30 minutes a day, you'll set yourself up for better heart health.

If you have any concerns about heart disease, talk with your doctor about assessing your risk and boosting your heart health.





## Slow cooker vegetable minestrone soup

Serves 8

### Ingredients

- 4 large carrots, peeled and chopped
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 cups fresh green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 (15 ounce) cans no-sodium-added red kidney beans, rinsed
- 2 (15 ounce) cans no-sodium-added diced tomatoes, undrained
- 6 cups no-sodium-added vegetable broth
- 2 tablespoons Italian seasoning
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper
- $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon salt, divided
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground pepper
- 1 large zucchini, chopped
- 4 ounces whole-wheat pasta elbows or other small pasta
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

### Directions

1. Combine carrots, celery, onion, garlic, green beans, kidney beans, tomatoes, broth, Italian seasoning, crushed red pepper, salt and pepper in a slow cooker. Cook on low for 6 to 8 hours.
2. Stir in zucchini and pasta. Cook on low until the pasta is tender, 15 to 20 minutes more. Serve immediately, topping each serving with Parmesan.

### Nutrition facts (per serving)

Calories 222 | Fat 2g | Carbs 42g | Protein 12g



## Selecting a primary care provider

Medicare beneficiaries may select their primary Medicare beneficiaries may select their primary care provider (PCP) on the medicare.gov website. Watch a how-to video at <https://youtu.be/AZ7h-rqshG4>. A Spanish language version is available at <https://es.medicare.gov/>



## Neighborly

Neighborly is an easy-to-use online network that connects you to free and reduced-cost programs and services, including food, housing, childcare, transportation, utility assistance, education, healthcare, legal services and financial assistance. Find help and download the app at [neighborlypa.com](https://neighborlypa.com).



## Need help affording your medications?

Programs are available for those who meet certain financial requirements, and some pharmaceutical companies offer reduced pricing on certain drugs based on financial need. Call 570-808-4704 for help.



## Schedule appropriate preventive screenings

- ☐ Annual Wellness visit
- ☐ Mammograms
- ☐ Colonoscopies
- ☐ Eye exam
- ☐ Dental visits

## Update your annual vaccines

- ☐ Flu
- ☐ Pneumonia
- ☐ RSV
- ☐ Shingles
- ☐ Tdap or Td
- ☐ COVID-19







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A photograph of a middle-aged man with a grey beard and mustache, smiling while talking on a black mobile phone. He is wearing a brown quilted jacket over a maroon turtleneck sweater. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and buildings.

## Medicare resources

For more information about ACOs, contact Medicare at 800-633-4227 (TTY: 877-486-2048) or visit [medicare.gov/acos.html](http://medicare.gov/acos.html)