



Marc Gauvin, SMSgt ANG and Katie Gauvin, MAJ ANG,
with Daniel and Julie

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Home Delivery**

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Your Mood**

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**Asparagus Roasted
and Zested**



**US FAMILY
HEALTH PLAN**

U spring calendar

MARCH

8
Daylight Saving Time begins
(move clocks ahead)

17
St. Patrick's Day

19
Spring begins

APRIL

★
April is the Month of the Military Child

5
Palm Sunday

8
Passover begins

12
Easter

20
Patriots' Day (Massachusetts)

24
Ramadan begins (est.)

MAY

10
Mother's Day

16
Armed Forces Day

25
Memorial Day

JUNE

14
Happy Birthday, U.S. Army!
Flag Day

20
Summer begins

21
Father's Day

FITNESS



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WELLNESS



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COMMUNITY



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US Family Health Plan members choose from a network of over 2,000 civilian primary care providers and thousands of specialists, plus a large network of civilian hospitals.

Who We Are

US Family Health Plan of Southern New England is a Department of Defense TRICARE Prime option, and one of six regional US Family Health Plan programs across the nation. Our large network of civilian doctors, hospitals, and other health providers serves Plan members who live in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and parts of southern New Hampshire and northern Connecticut.

We pride ourselves on friendly, personal service. If you have questions, call us at **1.800.818.8589**. If you're nearby, come visit our headquarters in the historic Brighton Marine building in Brighton, Massachusetts. You can also get to know us better at [usfamilyhealth.org](https://www.usfamilyhealth.org) or at facebook.com/USFHP.SouthernNewEngland.



a message from Gail Schlesinger,
our Senior Vice President and Plan CEO



Proud to Serve You

I must admit that it is a little bittersweet for me to be writing my first column as the new Plan Chief Executive Officer, as it means that my great friend and colleague, David Chicoine, really has retired and is no longer in the office next door to me, as he has been for the better part of 25 years. David inspired us all not to just come to work every day and do our “job” but instead come ready to serve you, our beneficiaries. We have built a very strong program that I’m proud to lead.

When I came to work for US Family Health Plan in February 1995, I never imagined that I would still be here in 2020 — frankly, who even thought about 2020 in 1995? At the time I had two young, very active, children at home (a 6-year-old daughter, Jess, and a 5-year-old son, Rob). Juggling work and family took all my energy and didn’t leave much time for me to ponder 25 years out.

My children are now grown and I couldn’t be prouder of the adults they have become. As you may have read in last quarter’s magazine, Jess is a mechanical engineer who works just down the street from our offices in Brighton, Massachusetts, at Bose Corporation. She recently received a “Tomorrow’s Leader Award” from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation for her volunteer work with the organization, which pleases me very much.

After graduating from Brown University, Rob was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United

States Marine Corps, and attained the rank of captain before leaving the service and settling back in South Boston. Today he’s married and working in commercial real estate acquisitions. As for me, I have been happily married to my husband, Bob, for almost 38 years!

Although I am an accountant by training, I don’t consider myself just a numbers person. Over my years here I have transitioned to much more of an operations role and I feel that my underlying background in finance has helped me look at both sides of most problems. We never want the cost of care to drive our decisions; however we always want to make sure that the care we give to our members is appropriate and cost effective.

If you are wondering how things might change under my direction, my answer is: not much. Although my leadership style is a little different than David’s — he is more reserved and measured and I tend to be more outgoing and direct — we were always very much in sync when it came to running the Plan. We have a very strong and seasoned management team and our business partner, Tufts Health Plan, embraces this program like we do. We are all committed to excellence as you deserve no less. I have loved being a part of US Family Health Plan for the last 25 years and I am looking forward to the future. ■

We are all committed to excellence as you deserve no less.



Changing Your PCP?

If you want to start seeing a different primary care provider (PCP) in our network:

- Find an in-network PCP by going to **usfamilyhealth.org**. Click on “Our Network,” then “Find a Doctor,” and follow guidance to select a PCP. Or call Member Services at **1.800.818.8589**.
- Call the PCP’s office to make sure that the PCP is taking new patients. If the office is taking new patients, explain that you will be a new patient.
- Call Member Services at **1.800.818.8589** and let us know that you have a new PCP. We’ll send you an updated member ID card with your new PCP’s name. Be sure to present your new card when you register at your first appointment.
- Call your current PCP’s office and ask them to mail your records to the new PCP’s office. ■

Stay Current with Our Member Handbook



For up-to-the-minute information about your US Family Health Plan benefits, turn to our *Member Handbook*. The 2020 edition is available online at **usfamilyhealth.org**. Click on “Members,” then on “Member Handbook.”

If you’d like a copy that you can hold in your hands, just call Member Services at **1.800.818.8589** and we’ll mail it right out. ■

New Focus on Breast Cancer Prevention

Deaths from breast cancer have declined steeply in recent decades. According to the American Cancer Society, today's average five-year survival rate is 90 percent. If the cancer is confined to the breast, the figure is 99 percent. Early detection and post-surgical treatment with drugs, radiation, or both are largely responsible for the improved survival rates.

The healthy lifestyle connection

Much recent research has focused on what can be done to prevent breast cancer. So far, the signs point to a correlation between basic healthy habits and reduced breast cancer rates, including:

- Staying at or attaining a healthy weight
- Being physically active



Reduced breast cancer risk is also associated with eating habits. The American Cancer Society recommends:

- Reducing alcohol consumption
- Eating less red meat, especially processed red meat like bacon, sausage, and lunch meat
- Eating more vegetables, fruits, and whole grains ■

No Thanks to Energy Drinks

Just as many of us were starting to understand the health risks of soda, the energy-drink industry stole the spotlight. Now nutritionists better understand the dangers of these high-caffeine, densely sweetened beverages, which are marketed heavily to teenagers, and the verdict is in: the fewer the better.

Most energy drinks, which are advertised as a way to increase alertness and energy, contain the same amount of caffeine as two cups of coffee, plus even more sugar than sugary soft drinks. Some also contain herbs that are purported to increase energy.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, nearly 1,500 adolescents ended up in emergency rooms in one year with energy-drink-related problems, including:

- Heart complications (such as irregular heartbeat and heart failure)
- Severe anxiety
- Insomnia

The upshot

The American Academy of Pediatrics states unequivocally that energy drinks should not be consumed by children or adolescents. Water is the safest way to stay hydrated. ■



Home Delivery Prescription Refills

Please allow ten days



Our members receive maintenance medications (medications taken regularly for chronic conditions such as high blood pressure or diabetes) through the mail, using our Home Delivery pharmacy. You can order refills by phone using our automated systems or our easy Online Refill Tool, which lets you:

- See, track, and request refills of all your active prescriptions
- Change your mailing address
- Add or change payment information for credit cards and FSA cards
- Request express delivery if you're running low on your medication

In most circumstances, you will receive your medication within 10 business days after we receive your prescription. ■

Find the tool at usfamilyhealth.org/refill.
Questions? Call the pharmacy at **1.877.880.7007**.

You Have a Rash... Should You See a Doctor?

Call Our 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line

Sometimes it's hard to tell whether a health issue merits a call to your doctor. As a US Family Health Plan member, you have 24/7 access to our Nurse Advice Line, where nurses are available to listen and help you make a decision.

Call **1.866.767.4546** any time, day or night, at no cost to you. ■





Military Appreciation Night with the Providence Bruins

In January, we were proud to be among the sponsors of Military Appreciation Night with the Providence Bruins. US Family Health Plan Field Rep Jim Souza, SFC, USA (Ret.), presented the team jersey to SMSgt Melissa Lutz, a native of East Providence, Rhode Island.

A 1998 graduate of East Providence High School, she joined the Rhode Island National Guard as an Aerospace Medical Technician and deployed to southwest Asia, Germany, and Puerto Rico. She also taught at Air Force Leadership Academies in Tennessee and Alabama.

SMSgt Lutz is now the 143d Medical Group Nursing Services Superintendent, and lives in Rhode Island with her husband and step-daughter.



Jim Souza, SFC, USA (Ret.), SMSgt Melissa Lutz, and Edianna Lutz

“At US Family Health Plan, we’re always honored to support our local military families. It gives us the chance to know them better and we like to see families have fun!”

— Michael Bucell, Marketing Director

Other Community Events

US Family Health Plan was honored to sponsor events at Naval Station Newport over the winter and into the spring, including December’s Pictures with Santa and Breakfast with Santa programs, Open Swim event, and the festive annual Jingle Jog.

We also participated in the Health Fair at US Army Soldier Systems Center and the Holiday Hayride at Joint Base Cape Cod. ■



Speeding into the holidays at Naval Station Newport’s Jingle Jog

The Month of the Military Child

Thank you for your service

We’re grateful to our military members for their sacrifice and service. The designation of April as the Month of the Military Child reminds us to extend our thanks a little further — to military children and teens.

They go above and beyond every day, by staying steady during a parent’s deployment, by adjusting to new locations (and friends and schools), by explaining to nonmilitary kids what it’s like to live on base or have a parent who may be serving overseas.

Research shows that military kids often gain a special resilience that helps them as adults when they face change and challenges. For now, it’s important to remember that they carry a larger load than most of today’s kids. We thank them for their service.

Relocation Tips for Older Military Kids

Military teens have special needs and concerns when it comes to relocating. They can take on more responsibility and are ready to exercise some control over their aspects of the move. As a parent, you can:

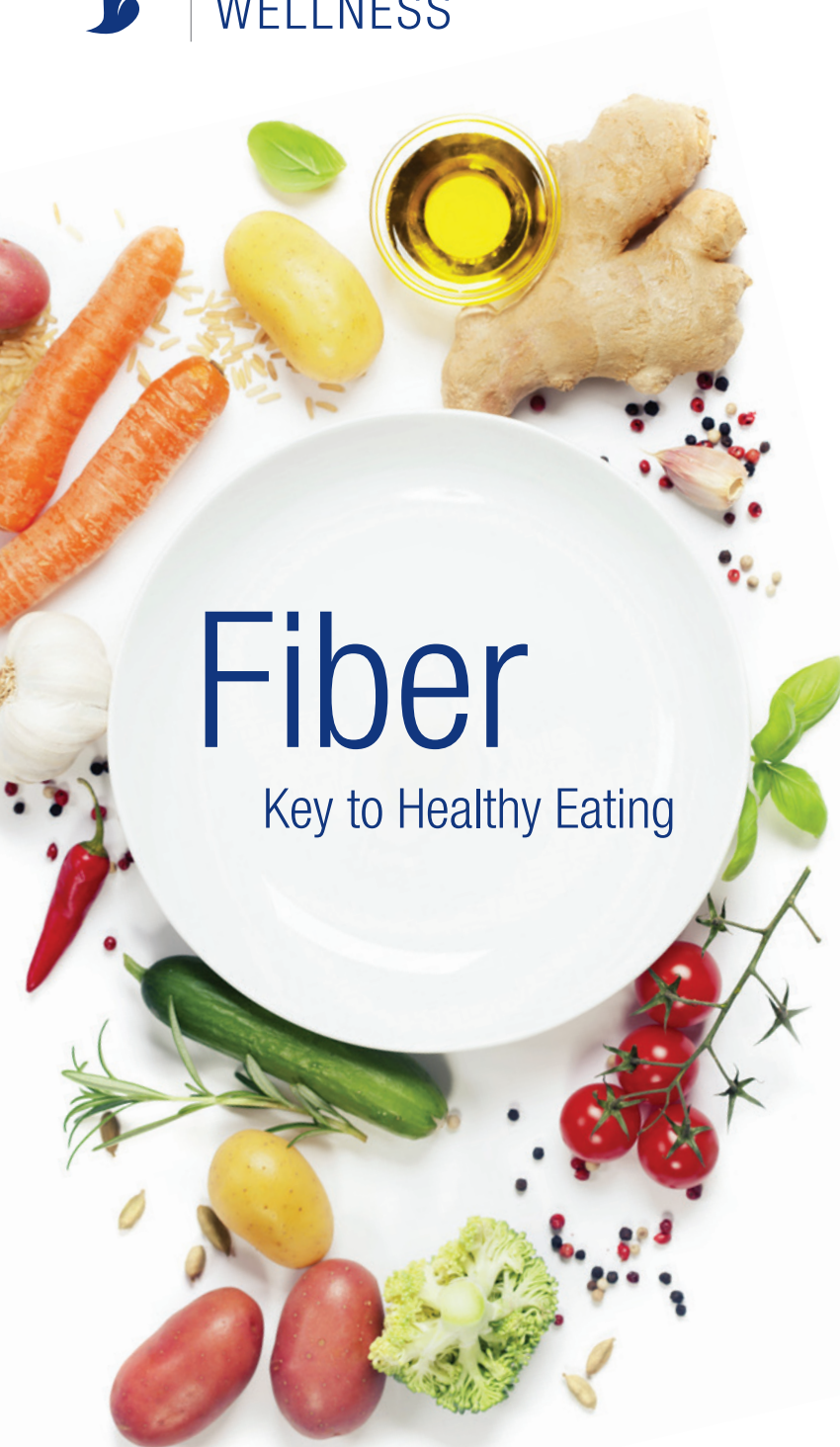
- **Let your teen make decisions** about what to ship and what to bring along in transit. (The hair dryer that may not seem so necessary to you may help your teen continue a routine that’s important to her.)
- **Try to limit stress in your home** while your teen adjusts to a new school.
- **Help your teen understand options for extracurricular activities** in the new location ahead of time. Having a drama club, service group, marching band, or sport to participate in right away can help take some of the sting out of starting a new school. ■



In general, military children engage less often in risky behaviors and are more adaptable, respectful, tolerant, and resourceful compared to civilian children.

Source: J.W. Hutchinson, Evaluating risk-taking behaviors of youth in military families, *Journal of Adolescent Health* 39, May 2016.





Fiber

Key to Healthy Eating

Dietary fiber is critical to good health. It is linked with reduced risks of developing heart disease, type 2 diabetes, constipation, and diverticular disease. Research also shows a connection between high-fiber diets and a lower risk of breast cancer.

Two kinds of fiber

There are two kinds of fiber. Soluble fiber — found in nuts, seeds, beans, legumes, and some fruits and vegetables — is thought to help lower risk of heart disease. Insoluble fiber — found in vegetables and whole grains — helps food pass more quickly through the stomach and intestines.

How much do you need?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends that adult women under age 50 consume 25 grams a day, and 21 grams a day if they're older. The daily recommendation for men under age 50 is 38 grams, and 30 grams a day if they're older. Most American adults fall short of this goal, consuming an average of just 10 to 15 grams a day.

Getting enough

If you're using the DASH Eating Plan or tend to eat a traditional Mediterranean diet, it's likely that you're getting plenty of fiber. But if you're like many people, you may need to take steps to work more fiber into your day.

The best way to increase fiber is to eat a wide range of whole plant-based foods, including fruits, vegetables, legumes (lentils and beans), grains, and nuts. The tips on the right can help.

Easy ways to get more fiber

A few simple substitutions can help boost your fiber intake. You can:

- **Bulk up your breakfast.** Choose a high-fiber cereal (5 or more grams per serving) or make a bowl of oatmeal and top it with nuts and fruit.
- **Choose fruit instead of juice.** Juice provides important nutrients, but most of the fiber disappears in the juicing process. A cup of orange juice has just a half gram of fiber, but a medium orange has 3 grams of fiber.
- **Keep it whole.** To get the most fiber, wash, but don't peel, fruits and vegetables like apples, pears, cucumber, and zucchini. Remember that one whole medium apple has 4 grams of fiber, but only 2 grams if it's been peeled.
- **Switch to whole grains.** Look for bread that lists whole-grain flour as the first ingredient. Instead of potatoes or white rice, try farro, barley, wild or brown rice, quinoa, bulgur, and whole-grain pastas.
- **Snack on fruit, nuts, and seeds.** If you keep fresh fruit in a visible place, you'll be more likely to eat it. And if you have small bags of almonds, sunflower seeds, and pumpkin seeds in your pocket, desk, or bag, you'll be ready for a healthy, fiber-rich snack any time.
- **Include beans and lentils in your meals.** Chickpeas, kidney beans, black beans, navy beans, and all kinds of lentils are extra-healthy sources of protein as well as fiber.
- **Think about switching to the DASH Eating Plan** or incorporating some of its guidelines into your day. Learn more at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's website at [nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/dash-eating-plan](https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/dash-eating-plan). ■

Sources: The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Institutes of Health; the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health Nutrition Source.





Charles Rollinger, MD, is our Vice President of Medical Management and Quality

Medication Safety

Recently several of my patients have had problems with medication awareness. One patient was seen at an urgent care center and received a prescription for the same type of drug she was already receiving. Had the prescription been filled, she could have had an overdose of medication. Luckily, the pharmacy noticed the issue and brought it to my attention. The prescription was not filled.

On another occasion, a medication that appeared on the medication list in the patient’s chart was not in the record when she was seen at the hospital. When I contacted the pharmacy, it turned out that she hadn’t refilled the prescription, which was an important one.

The potential for problems grows when patients are seeing multiple physicians or are going in and out of the hospital. For example, some hospitals carry only one brand of medication and switch a patient to that brand while they’re hospitalized. Then they may forget to switch it back when the patient is discharged.

Updated medication lists are key

It’s important to keep an updated list of all your medications, and there are smartphone apps to help you with this. For Apple owners, Medical ID (under “Health”) allows you to store a medication list. For Android owners, Google Play has several apps for medication lists, including one called “ListMeds.”

If you’re “old school,” and prefer to have a written list, just write down medication names, doses, and frequency on a card and carry it with you. You can also use the medication tracker available for free from our Home Delivery pharmacy (ask for one at 1.877.880.7007).

It’s also a good idea to bring all of your medications with you to your annual physical so that you can review them with your doctor.

Expired medications

It’s important to get rid of expired medications. Some drugs lose potency after their expiration date and patients taking them may not realize that they aren’t as effective as they originally were. To find out where you can dispose of expired medications, you can use the search tool at <https://safe.pharmacy/drug-disposal/>. Also, keep in mind that most CVS pharmacies and police departments will take back expired drugs and dispose of them properly.

The US Family Health Plan pharmacy runs a report on medications when they’re prescribed in order to check for drug interactions or duplication of medications. The pharmacists may reach out to the prescribing provider or to the member if they have questions. We’ve also implemented a program for some medications that have had a high risk of side effects. With these medications, the pharmacists call members and discuss the importance of adherence, potential side effects, and manufacturer-based clinical resource programs that are available for some drugs.

Please remember: Medications can be a blessing to patients who require them for their medical conditions, but it’s best to treat them with caution. ■

Lifting for Strength and Mood

You probably know about the physical benefits of strength training. It increases muscle mass and strengthens bones. It can also help you climb stairs more quickly, keep your balance, and maintain a healthy weight. Now research shows another possible upside of strength training: improved mood.

Authors of a clinical-trial review found that people with mild to moderate depression who did resistance training two or more days a week showed a significant reduction in their symptoms compared with people who didn’t do the training. Other research shows that strength training can reduce feelings of anxiety, too.

Sources:
Gordon, et al., Efficacy of resistance exercise training with depressive symptoms, *JAMA Psychiatry*, June 2018.

National Institutes of Health, go4life.nia.nih.gov.



Getting Started

If you haven’t worked strength-training into your routine, you may want to start. You can use:

- **Elastic resistance bands or tubes.** These are less expensive than commercially made weights and easier to travel with.
- **Weights.** You can buy these in graduated sizes — or you can use canned goods.
- **Weight machines.** You’ll find these at gyms and YMCAs.

How heavy and how many repetitions?

The National Institutes of Health offers these suggestions:

- **Start with a weight that you can lift only 8 times,** and use that weight until you can lift it easily 10 to 15 times.
- **When you can do two sets of 10 to 15 repetitions easily,** add more weight so that, again, you can lift it only 8 times.
- **Repeat** until you reach your goal.

How often?

Try to do strength exercises for all of your major muscle groups on two or more days per week, but don’t exercise the same muscle group two days in a row.

Which exercises?

- **If you have access to a gym,** a trainer can get you started.
- **Your local library** will have books with basic strength-training exercise. Try *Strong Women Stay Young* by Miriam Nelson, or books by Vonda Wright, MD.
- **If you’re a senior,** you may want to start with the exercises at go4life.nia.nih.gov/exercise-type/strength.

Before you start any new exercise program, including strength-training, be sure to talk with your doctor about what is healthiest for you. ■

According to the World Health Organization, only about 50 percent of patients take medications as prescribed.

Spearheading Spring



Asparagus, one of the earliest spring crops in New England, has deep roots in colonial history. Legend has it that Diederick Leertouwer, a Dutch immigrant who is buried in West Brookfield, first imported it to Massachusetts in the late 18th century. West Brookfield honors him and his favorite vegetable in May with an asparagus festival (search “West Brookfield” and “asparagus” to find out more).

If you were raised on boiled or steamed asparagus, which can easily become bloated and floppy, you’re in for a treat if you roast it instead. Roasting caramelizes the spears ever so slightly, coaxing out the sweetness while leaving the crispness and the nutrients in.

Quick, Delicious Roasted Asparagus

4 servings

1 bunch of asparagus (about 18 ounces)

2 teaspoons olive oil, plus a little more for oiling the baking sheet

Freshly ground black pepper to taste

Grated zest from one lemon

2 tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

Preheat your oven to 425° and lightly oil a baking sheet big enough to hold the asparagus in one layer. Arrange the asparagus on the baking sheet and toss with 2 teaspoons of the olive oil and the black pepper. Place in the oven and roast until the stalks begin to shrivel and brown just a little (about 10 minutes). Transfer to a serving dish and sprinkle the grated lemon zest and parmesan over the top.

Switch it up

Instead of lemon zest and parmesan, sprinkle the asparagus with a little chopped thyme or chili pepper flakes while it’s still hot from the oven. ■

Asparagus spears are more than delicious. They’re also good sources of potassium, fiber, thiamine, and vitamins A and C.

at ease

...Perpetual optimism is a force multiplier.

— General (Ret.) Colin Powell





Origami "U" folded by K'von Williams, age 10, from Quincy, MA (designed by Fumiaki Shingu).



A Little "U" Time

April is a great time to honor a child with the gift of your time. A board game, a walk through a park, baking some cookies or bread — in the long run, the gift of being listened to and valued is worth far more than a material object.

Not long ago, I was lucky to spend an afternoon with K'von Williams, the son of our Senior Retention and Education Specialist, Elaine Williams. K'von is fond of origami. His patience and skill have led him to fold all kinds of models, from the letter "U" shown here, to more complex pieces with moving parts.

Thank you, K'von, for your curiosity and enthusiasm. It brightened up my day just as it has brightened up our magazine!

How about you? Did an adult in your life spend time with you in a special way when you were a child? Let me know at Kerry.Tucker@usfamilyhealth.org.

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Managing Editor/Senior Writer

Five Line Creative
Design

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