

Summer 2021

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 **EMPLOYEE
BENEFITS**

health happenings



2021 Wellness Program – You know the drill!

The 2021 Wellness Program will follow the familiar, consistent, and effective format from last year. Employees, retirees, and their spouses on an MMIA EB medical plan can earn up to \$200 each (\$50 for each activity below) on a physical gift card sent at the end of the calendar year, if they are still enrolled in the medical plan at the time the cards are sent.

1. Get a Health Screening between July 1 and September 30, 2021.
2. Watch the online education video and take the quiz by September 30, 2021.
3. Review your Health Screening results in a personalized, one-on-one follow-up phone call with a Take Control health coach by November 5, 2021. Make sure to schedule your appointment for a week after you get screened! Don't wait until the last minute, as scheduling availability is limited.
4. Achieve 80% or higher employee participation for your city/town in the Health Screening.



Additionally, we have added vitamin D testing to the Health Screenings this year. Vitamin D affects everything from mental health to chronic conditions to your chance of getting Covid-19! If your results test low, you can talk to your provider about options to improve your health.

Please note, if you are in a location that utilizes the Montana Health Center for Health Screenings, scheduling an appointment is different this year. You will need to create an account at www.mypremisehealth.com and select "Biometric Screening Visit" under "Schedule an Appointment."

MMIA is looking forward to another great year of wellness! Feel free to call Employee Benefits at 1-800-635-3089 option 4 if you have any questions.

This program is developed in compliance with the EEOC wellness rules. For more information, view our EEOC Notice at www.mmiaEB.net/wellness.

Can lifting weights help control your weight?

By Laura Del Guerra, RD, CDE, Take Control Health Coach

A recent study suggests a strong correlation between lifting weights a few times a week and weight control. The study looked into the relationship between lifting weights and waist measurement. The records of almost 12,000 mostly middle-aged participants were pulled from a previous study done between 1987 – 2005. In addition to the typical measurements of health and fitness, participants filled out a questionnaire which among other items, asked if they engaged in muscle-strengthening exercises and if they did – how often and for how long each week.

As researchers combed through the data, they found that about 19% of study participants became obese during the course of the study. However, regular weight lifting changed this outcome and lowered the risk of a participant developing obesity. Participants who lifted weights a few times a week for a weekly total of 1-2 hours were about 20% less likely to become obese based on BMI measurement and 30% less likely to become obese based on waist circumference or body fat percentage. What's more, the results did not change when factors like age, sex, smoking, general health, and aerobic exercise were controlled.

This is an exciting study because we know that many different factors are associated with successful weight loss, and now we can more confidently add weight lifting to the list. Further, this study suggests that you can get a lot of benefit from even a small amount of weight lifting.

Finally, this is one of the first studies that has specifically looked at weight lifting as a piece of the weight loss or weight control puzzle. It has long been known that weight lifting helps with mobility, strengthening of bones and joints, building muscle mass and more. While this study does not tell us how weight lifting influences body weight, we do know that lifting weights builds and maintains muscle mass, and that muscle burns more calories than fat. This may be why the decrease in obesity was observed.



The bottom line: exercise is an important part of our overall health and wellness. Adding a bit of weight lifting either before or after your usual daily activity will likely help over time with weight control. You can use your body weight as resistance, traditional weights or exercise bands either at home, outside, or in the gym. One to two hours a week of weight lifting is equal to 20-30 minutes-3 times a week (total body exercises) OR 12 to 24 minutes 5 times a week (various muscle groups each day).

For more information, and links to additional resources, please visit the weight lifting page on the Employee Benefits website at www.mmiaeb.net/weightlifting/

Did you know?

MMIA offers no- and low-cost benefits



Help your city reach 80% employee participation!

If 80% of employees in your city or town get a Health Screening, everyone (including spouses and retirees) who got a screening gets an extra \$50!

Half of the 85 municipalities with MMIA Employee Benefits program make it to 80%, including large cities and small towns. What they have in common is a culture where getting your screening is the norm. Here are four ways you can help your city get to 80%.



1. **Spread the word** – Talk to your coworkers about the Wellness Program. Remind them to sign up. Share the wellness website link where you can find all the details you need to know to earn up to \$200: www.mmiaEB.net/wellness.
2. **Help people sign up** – If you've signed up for your health screening, help a coworker, your spouse, or a retired friend on the plan do the same.
3. **Make it fun** – Whether you're going to a nearby town or just down the street, pile coworkers in your car when you go. Make it a fun outing and treat yourselves to a coffee or snack on the way back!

4. **Share your story** – Has getting an annual Health Screening helped you improve your health? Share your experience with your fellow employees to help them understand the importance of the Program.

Remember, all employees, spouses, and retirees on an MMIA Employee Benefits plan benefit from this annual no-cost Health Screening and will benefit even more if 80% of the employees in your town get one! Creating a culture that values wellness helps keep people healthy and saves your self-funded benefit pool money in the long run!

Visit www.mmiaEB.net/wellness for full program details.

A young girl with curly hair, wearing a white sweater, is smiling and reaching out her hands. The background is a bright, outdoor setting with trees and a fence.

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PO Box 6669
Helena, MT 59604-6669
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Save money on prescriptions

Have you ever gotten to the pharmacy and almost had a heart attack when they told you how much your prescription was going to cost? The good news is, as a participant of an MMIA EB plan, you have options. Follow these simple steps to make sure you're getting the best price on your medications.

1. **Check www.MMIAScripts.com** – Dozens of brand-name medications are available to MMIA EB participants at NO COST through this international mail order prescription drug plan.
2. **Call ProAct** - You can call them right from the pharmacy at the number on your benefit card (1-877-635-9545). A Proact customer service representative can talk with you, your pharmacist, and your doctor to see if there is a generic or alternative medication available that costs less.
3. **Go mail order** – If you take a medication regularly, you may be able to get a 90-day



mail order supply. This makes it easier on you and costs you and your self-funded benefits much less. Check out the mail order section at www.mmiaEB.net/prescription for details on how to sign up.

If your doctor prescribes a medication, you don't want to go without it because of cost. Following the three steps above can save you and your self-funded benefit plan hundreds or even thousands of dollars and most importantly, get you the prescriptions you need!