

TALKING TREND

Climate Change Health Impacts to be Aware Of



The health consequences of climate change vary based on factors such as age, medical condition, income, and location. Published in a series of [articles by the Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA), this section highlights four key impacts:

- 1. Extreme Weather and Safety Risks:**
 - More frequent and intense extreme weather events pose risks to health and safety.
 - Droughts generate dust, which can lead to respiratory illnesses, while storms and floods can cause injuries and infections.
 - Disrupted services particularly affect vulnerable groups requiring regular medical care.
- 2. Water, Food, and Air Quality Threats:**
 - Children, especially, face increased vulnerability to lung illnesses and asthma complications due to ground-level ozone and wildfire smoke.
 - Rising temperatures impact water, food, and air quality, causing harmful algal blooms, contamination of water resources, and changes in food production.
 - Climate-related extreme weather and heat worsen air quality, contributing to various health risks.
- 3. Insect- and Tick-Related Diseases:**
 - Warmer temperatures expand the range of ticks, which can lead to increased Lyme disease transmission.
 - Climate change influences conditions favorable for mosquitoes, potentially causing more frequent outbreaks of diseases like West Nile virus.
- 4. Mental Health Challenges:**
 - Immediate and long-term effects of climate change can contribute to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress.
 - Natural disasters disrupt stability and community, which can lead to prolonged psychological impacts, including increased tobacco and alcohol use, domestic violence, and overall violence linked to heat.

Climate change poses multifaceted threats to health, impacting safety, water, food, air quality, disease spread, and mental well-being. Addressing these challenges is crucial to safeguarding public health.

Centene works with local organizations and healthcare partners to evaluate environmental Impacts on Health. [Environmental Sustainability](#) is a large part of Centene’s day-to-day business operations.

INDUSTRY NEWS

Biden Administration Announces New Measures to Lower Health Care and Prescription Drug Costs by Promoting Competition



The White House issued a [fact sheet](#) announcing new actions to promote competition in health care and support lowering prescription drug costs for the public. These actions include:

- **Clarifying March-In Rights** – The Departments of Commerce (DOC) and Health and Human Services (HHS) released a [proposed framework](#) for agencies on the exercise of march-in rights that specifies for the first time that price can be a factor in determining that a drug or other taxpayer-funded invention is not accessible to the public.
- **Scrutinizing Anticompetitive Acquisitions and Anticompetitive Practices** – The Department of Justice (DOJ), the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), and HHS will issue a joint Request for Information to seek input about how private equity and other corporations’ increasing power and control of health care is affecting Americans. HHS, DOJ, and FTC announced that they will engage in data sharing to help the antitrust enforcers identify potentially anticompetitive transactions. CMS also announced that it will release ownership data on Federal Qualified Health Centers and Rural Health Clinics, as well as take steps to improve Medicare Advantage data transparency.
- **Building on Existing Steps to Lower Health Care Costs and Improve Access** – The Biden Administration announced 10 prescription drugs for which Medicare will negotiate prices directly with manufactures. The FTC will also increase enforcement activity on pharmaceutical companies that improperly delay the approval of competing drug products. Among other things, the Administration will also make hearing aids available over the counter without a prescription, crack down on nursing homes that endanger resident safety, and address anticompetitive misuse of the patent system.

HEALTH NET NEWS


First Quarter 2024 Drug Coverage Updates

This update applies to Health Net Health Plan of Oregon, Inc. " Health Net" Commercial Plans.

Prior Authorization Changes to Physician-Administered Medication
[See the table in the First Quarter 2024 Drug Coverage Updates document \(PDF\)](#) for a list of new HCPC codes. These codes now require prior authorization for coverage for Health Net Commercial Plan members.

Quarterly Update on Drug Coverage Guidelines
[See the table in the First Quarter 2024 Drug Coverage Updates document \(PDF\)](#) for all the updated or new Health Net coverage guidelines that were approved by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee in the fourth quarter of 2023. All coverage guidelines will go into effect January 1, 2024 and will become available to view in their entirety on [our website](#) approximately two weeks prior to the effective date.

Additional Information
For questions regarding the information contained in this update, please contact the Health Net Pharmacy Department at [1-888-802-7001](#).



TOOLS YOU CAN USE

Teladoc Updates: Flyers and FAQ Now Available



With Teladoc, Health Net members can get convenient, quality care wherever they need it. They can talk to a doctor, therapist or medical expert anywhere in the U.S. by phone or video. Teladoc virtual medical visits are a convenient option for 24/7, on-demand, nonemergency care anywhere, anytime. Scheduled behavioral health services are available 7 days a week from 7 am to 9 pm (Pacific Time). For most Health Net members, there is no cost to use Teladoc Health.

For more information, contact your Health Net Account Representative or visit the support tools drop down menu [here](#); [Teladoc Support Tools](#)

WELLNESS

10 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables¹

If your New Year’s resolution was to lose weight and/or eat healthier, you already know you need more fruits and vegetables in your diet.

Here are 10 tips to make eating healthier easy.

1. Stock your freezer with frozen vegetables to steam or stir-fry for a quick side dish.
2. Keep cut vegetables handy for mid-afternoon snacks or a quick nibble while waiting for dinner. Ready-to-eat favorites: red, green, or yellow peppers, broccoli or cauliflower florets, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, or snap peas.
3. Use vegetables as pizza topping. Try broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms, and zucchini.
4. Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
5. Grill colorful vegetable kabobs packed with tomatoes, green and red peppers, mushrooms, and onions.
6. Wake up to fruit. Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt, or toaster waffle.
7. Mix up a breakfast smoothie made with low-fat milk, and frozen fruit - try strawberries and banana, or mango with pineapple or peach.
8. Keep a bowl of fresh, just ripe whole fruit in the center of your kitchen or dining table for a snack-on-the-run.
9. Grill kabobs with pineapple, peaches, and banana. Grill on low heat until fruit is hot and slightly golden.
10. Make fruit your dessert: Slice a banana lengthwise and top with a scoop of low-fat frozen yogurt. Sprinkle with a tablespoon of chopped nuts.



Need more help? Health Net has teamed with WeightWatchers to help you reach your weight loss and wellness goals. The WW program allows you to lose weight while eating the foods you love. It also guides you toward:

1. Eating healthier
2. Moving more
3. Having a positive mindset

All Health Net Commercial Plan Members get an exclusive discount of 50% off the retail price and can join now for as low as **\$8.48** per month.

For more information and to enroll, members can visit the [WW/Health Net website](#).

Already a WW member? You can sync your current WW account to get this discount online or by contacting customer service at 866-204-2885.

¹Authored by Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics staff registered dietitian nutritionists.

JUST FOR FUN

Sending Roses for Valentine’s Day?



Roses weren’t always the go-to Valentine’s flower. In the 19th century, bouquets could contain a variety of flowers, each chosen to convey a specific meaning. Different types of flowers as well as their colors carry implications and symbolism. For example, **1. Roses** are notorious for conveying passion, admiration, and love.

Here are just a few examples of different flowers and their meanings according to the [Old Farmer’s Almanac](#).

- 2. Tulips.** Tulips' meanings are often derived from their colors. For example, red tulips signify true love, and yellow tulips express cheerfulness. White tulips symbolize forgiveness.
- 3. Daisies.** Most commonly, daisies denote beauty, innocence, or new beginnings.
- 4. Carnations.** Like tulips, the meaning of carnations depends mainly on their color. Purple carnations represent capriciousness and are perfect for an adventurous loved one; pink carnations represent gratitude; and white carnations are ideal for wishing someone special, 'good luck.'
- 5. Orchids.** Orchids have various meanings, such as appreciation, respect, unity, or fertility. White orchids, specifically, symbolize new beginnings so they’re great for anyone starting a new chapter in their life.
- 6. Hibiscus.** The tropical blooms of a hibiscus flower can symbolize delicate beauty, hospitality, or friendship. Like many other red flowers, red hibiscus flowers can symbolize passionate love.
- 7. Lilies.** In Greek mythology, lilies are a symbol of femininity and fertility. According to Christian tradition, lilies represent purity, innocence, devotion and rebirth. However, you can send a pink lily as a token of affection, admiration, pure love.
- 8. Peonies.** Peonies are often given to express goodwill and joy. In China and Japan, they represent wealth, honor, and fortune.
- 9. Lavender.** This lovely purple flower is associated with devotion, grace, calmness, and a higher purpose.
- 10. Daffodils.** Daffodils often symbolize new beginnings and rebirth. In Victorian England, daffodils expressed admiration and respect. You can communicate hope, new beginnings, self-admiration, or affection with a bouquet of daffodils.