

HEALTH PLAN SELECT

Health Matters

AAHPS.COM | WINTER/SPRING 2012



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*Too much
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Dear Friends,

We all know what to do when it comes to exercise. So why don't we do it? Allow me to get personal. You know that I am a doctor, but you may not know that I am also married to a physician—I definitely know what I need to do for my physical wellbeing.

Even so, up until four months ago, I could best be described as an “accidental exerciser.” My goal was always to run, walk or hike several times each week, but the reality was that I would do something on occasion, when the spirit moved me. It was never a regular habit, so I might exercise or I might not. That was my routine, or lack thereof.

Things changed when a friend said, “Jeff, you should join me at boot camp workout sessions—they are great. We meet from 5:30–6:30 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays, then you are on your own for your weekend exercise.”

“Is he crazy?” I thought. “5:30 a.m. for an hour of exercise?”

I tried to put the suggestion aside, yet I could not come up with a reasoned response for declining his invitation.

Plus, he said this in front of my wife at our children's cross country meet. The fact was I was not regularly exercising and I needed the prodding, along with the power of peer pressure. I needed to get back in the game.

Fast forward three months; I have perfect attendance at our twice-weekly boot camp sessions, my mile times are improving, my core strength is up and my energy level is better. I still dread getting out of bed for those hour-long sessions, but now I can't stop. Too much is on the line to go back to my old, bad exercise habits.

Why am I succeeding now? I attribute it to the power of a set, sacred time, a coach who is always there with a creative, intense exercise plan and the combination of peer pressure and encouragement from my fellow boot campers. Everyone is regularly there at 5:30 a.m., ready to do the stretches, planks, pushups, overhead presses, curls, crunches, or reverse crunches and run the laps, hills or stair steps—or whatever Coach Michael has planned. I am proud of my results, but I share this story because my wish is that all of you will be inspired to take a similar first step to better health.

Be well,

Geoffrey Cole, MD
Chief Medical Officer
Health Plan Select

WINTER SKIN “Wonderfoods”

Between cold wind and indoor heaters, the air around you in winter is less humid—often leading to dry skin. In addition to using moisturizer daily and avoiding harsh soaps, try incorporating these foods into your diet to help your skin go from scaly to smooth this winter.

- » **Carrots, sweet potatoes and low-fat dairy products** all provide vitamin A, which aids in the production of a natural oil called sebum that helps skin retain moisture.
- » **Whole grains, along with other foods such as bananas and almonds,** contain vitamin H, also known as biotin, which can help keep skin and hair healthy even when the weather is dry.
- » **Leafy greens such as kale and spinach** contain vitamin E, an antioxidant that helps protect skin from damaging free radicals.
- » **Berries** offer antioxidants that can promote anti-aging properties in the skin.
- » **Green tea** warms you up from the winter cold and also has properties that can help protect skin against acne and other blemishes—and even melanoma.
- » **Salmon and trout** are high in omega-3 fatty acids, which help strengthen the membranes around skin cells for greater moisture retention.
- » **Red peppers, winter squash and citrus fruits like oranges** contain vitamin C, which helps form collagen—a protein essential to healthy skin—and also boosts your immune system.



Sizing Up Your Portions

When you're trying to eat nutritiously, serving sizes are key. These amounts can be found on food and beverage nutrition facts labels and are used to outline nutritional content in a given portion. For some foods, however, the recommended portion size might not be an accurate representation of the amount you would consume. This chart can help you determine healthy serving sizes of some basic foods.

TYPE OF FOOD:	REPRESENTATION OF PORTION SIZE:
pasta	tennis ball
lean meat	deck of playing cards
cheese	domino
fruit or vegetables	baseball
butter	game dice
peanut butter	golf ball
chocolate	pack of dental floss
baked potato	computer mouse
fish	checkbook

Always consult the nutrition facts label to understand the contents of what you are eating or drinking. If the portion you dish out differs from the recommended serving size, do a little math to determine the nutritional content of the amount you're actually eating compared to what you see on the label.



Your body may need nutrients to refuel in between meals, but snacking can sometimes be a healthful diet's downfall. Keep a supply of nutritious snacks in your desk, pantry or handbag so you're prepared when hunger hits. If a healthful snack is easily available, you are less likely to give in to the temptation of vending machine treats or fast food.

TO SATISFY A CRAVING FOR SWEETS, TRY:

- » a piece of dark chocolate
- » applesauce with no added sugar
- » fresh fruit
- » low-fat chocolate milk
- » low-fat yogurt with fresh fruit

IF YOU'RE IN THE MOOD FOR SOMETHING SAVORY, MUNCH ON:

- » hummus with pretzels
- » low-fat string cheese
- » olives or pickles
- » popcorn
- » unsalted almonds

Drinking plenty of water during the day will help keep you hydrated and will also keep you feeling full longer.

A Culture of Care

Fifteen years ago, Athens Area Health Plan Select (HPS) was launched as the area's only local option for health insurance, providing a health plan dedicated to improving the health of the community.

In the beginning, HPS offered a comprehensive network of physicians to businesses in Athens-Clarke County, as well as five surrounding counties. Today, the HMO offers a network of more than 1,000 physicians to businesses throughout Northeast Georgia. In fact, more than 90 percent of licensed physicians in Northeast Georgia are in the HPS Network.

RUNNING THE NUMBERS

HPS has consistently ranked in the top 10 percent of all health plans nationally for plan quality, healthcare quality, personal physician quality and customer service. That level of consistency is no small feat when you consider that HPS covers more than 23,000 individuals in the Northeast Georgia area.

"Our philosophy is simple—we care about our customers, the work we do and our service providers," says Charlotte Kiouisis, director of claims at HPS. "In essence, most—if not all—of our employees are also HPS customers. We approach every claim as if we were the customer on the other end of the line."

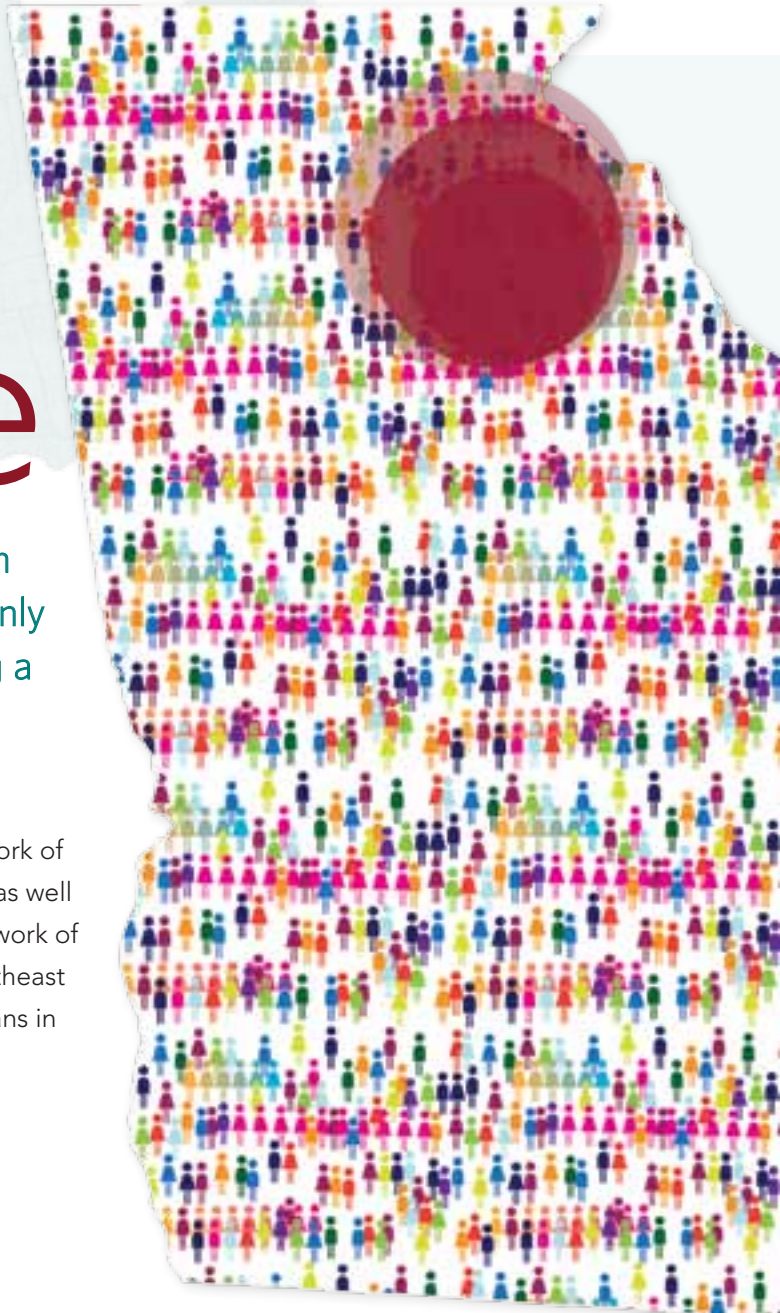
It's that approach that has once again earned HPS high rankings on the 2011 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) annual customer service surveys. Responses to these surveys are used to rate HMOs like Health Plan Select in several key customer service areas.

On the 2011 surveys, HPS received the highest rating among all other participating HMOs in four categories—Getting Care Quickly, Claims Processing, Plan Information on Costs and Shared Decision Making. The HMO also ranked third in the

categories of Getting Needed Care and overall Rating of Health Care, while finishing in the top 10 in five other categories.

"We are once again honored to find out how well we ranked on the CAHPS survey," says Jeff Kunkle, HPS executive director. "I believe the scores are a testament to the hard work and talents of the HPS team and our organizational commitment to caring for our customers as individuals."

Processing a claim quickly, accurately and definitely is truly a team effort, notes Ms. Kiouisis. "It takes coordination among physicians and nurses, the Claims Department, Quality and Utilization Management departments, and Provider and Member Relations."





Athens Area Health Plan Select

2011 CAHP MEMBER SATISFACTION SURVEY

Category	Industry Wide	AAHPS Results			NCQA Rating*
	Industry Average	2011 Results	2010 Results	2009 Results	
Getting Needed Care	85.8%	91.1%	87.7%	87.3%	90%
Getting Care Quickly	86.3%	91.3%	90.5%	89.7%	90%
How Well Doctors Communicated	94.2%	95.5%	92.4%	94.2%	90%
Customer Service	82.6%	89.3%	91.2%	93.1%	90%
Claims Processing	87.6%	95.3%	96%	95.2%	90%
Plan Information on Costs	63.3%	77.8%	77.8%	75.8%	N/A
Shared Decision Making	61.4%	68%	64.6%	63.1%	N/A
Rating of Personal Doctor	82.3%	87%	79.7%	83.9%	90%
Rating of Specialist	81.3%	86.1%	85%	81.1%	90%
Rating of All Healthcare	75.4%	82.4%	81.2%	81.2%	90%
Rating for Plan	60.1%	72.9%	70.8%	72.7%	90%

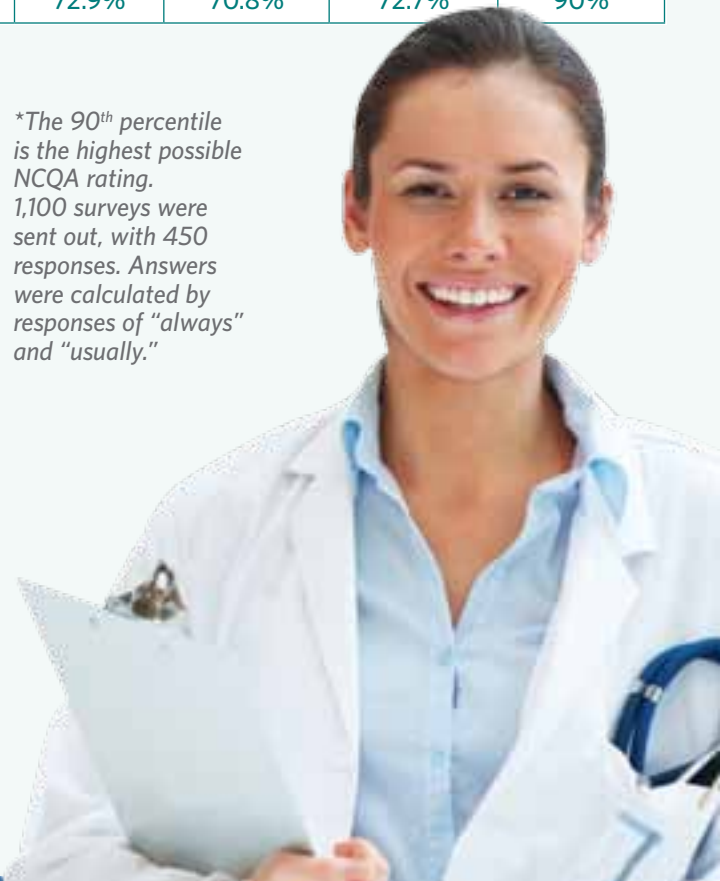
HOW CAN WE SERVE YOU?

In addition to offering a variety of HMO and point-of-service products, HPS offers an expansive network of primary care physicians and specialists, including cardiology, dermatology, pulmonology and many others.

Taking care of our members no matter where they are is central to our mission. While most conditions can be treated close to home, we also provide an extended network of specialty hospitals across the country to treat rare cases of cancer, leukemia and other such ailments. Additionally, we offer emergency coverage across the globe, so wherever you are, with HPS you're never far from care.

To find out more about Athens Area Health Plan Select, visit our website at aaahps.com.

**The 90th percentile is the highest possible NCQA rating. 1,100 surveys were sent out, with 450 responses. Answers were calculated by responses of "always" and "usually."*



Navigating Your Preventive Care

Did you know Athens Area Health Plan Select publishes and updates its own Preventive Health Guidelines?

We developed our guidelines based on medical journals and government recommendations to help you understand the screenings and immunizations you and your family need to stay healthy. These routine vaccines and tests are your first defense against some of the major health problems facing Americans today, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

WHY PREVENTIVE CARE?

“Like the old saying goes, ‘an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure,’” says Fred Young, MD, medical director for Health Plan Select. “People have known this truth for centuries, but only in recent generations have we gained the knowledge and tools to truly stay a step ahead of illness.”

Taking preventive measures to protect your health—rather than waiting to address problems after they become critical—is more cost effective in the long run. That’s where our Preventive Health Guidelines come in. By following these guidelines, you have a better chance of catching diseases in earlier stages—when they’re easier to treat—as well as knowing what risk

factors you may have for certain diseases, which can help you make appropriate lifestyle choices.

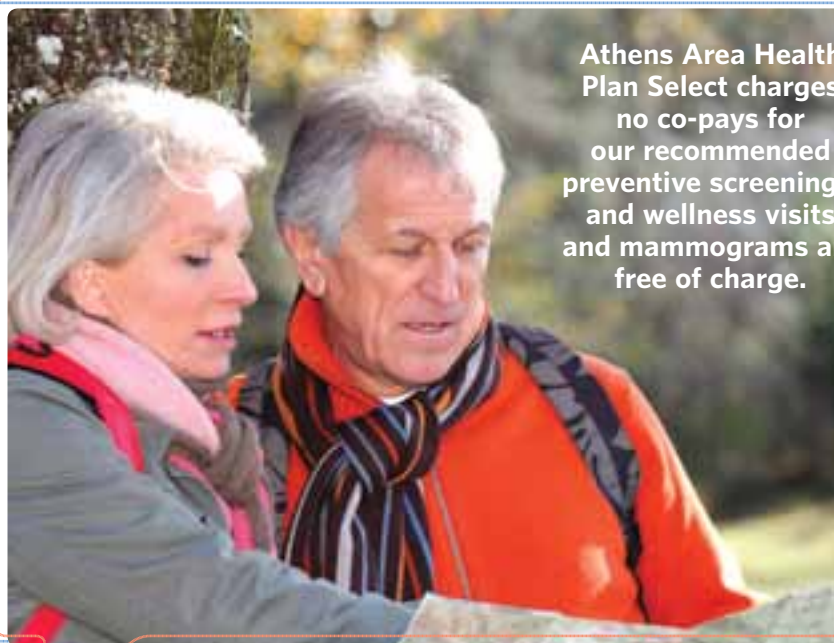
BUILDING A BETTER ROAD MAP

Our Preventive Health Guidelines are clearly formatted and easy to read. One glance will give you the information you and your family need, including what actions to take and when to take them. We developed and continue to update our Preventive Health Guidelines based on the latest information and most credible sources available, including:

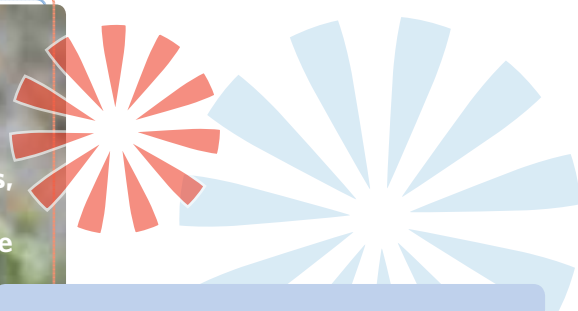
- » The American College of International Physicians
- » The American Cancer Society
- » The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

“We use the most up-to-date literature for preventive care because we want our customers to stay healthy as much as they do,” Dr. Young says. “These guidelines were developed with our customers’ best interests at heart.”

To view our latest Preventive Health Guidelines, visit aahps.com and select “Health Resources” under the “Members” tab.



Athens Area Health Plan Select charges no co-pays for our recommended preventive screenings, and wellness visits and mammograms are free of charge.



The latest version of our Preventive Health Guidelines features the following updates:

- Yearly influenza vaccination is now recommended for all adults. (Previously, the flu vaccine was only recommended for adults ages 19-49 if a specific risk factor was present.)
- HPV vaccination is recommended for males ages 9-18. (Previously, the recommended age range for males was ages 11-12.)



Athens Regional Medical Center Named Georgia's Hospital of the Year

Creating a hospital that supports leading-edge technology with passionate and compassionate care requires an unwavering commitment to excellence. For more than 90 years, Athens Regional Medical Center has provided the highest level of health care available to its patients.

improving the health of their communities, and being able to draw special attention to their commitment, innovation and dedication is a tremendous honor for me.”

BROAD RECOGNITION

Athens Regional is making national headlines as well. *U.S. News and World Report* named the hospital High Performing in the specialty areas of Gastroenterology and Pulmonology. The hospital was also named among the Top 100 Hospitals in the Nation for Patient Experience by WomenCertified®, a trusted referral source for top businesses and brands identified among women.

That's why, for the second time, the Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals has named Athens Regional Medical Center the 2011 Large Hospital of the Year for the state of Georgia.

“The Georgia Alliance of Community Hospitals is proud to recognize Athens Regional for its contributions to the Athens community,” says Alliance President Monty Veazey at the presentation ceremony. “Our state's not-for-profit hospitals are committed to

“It's an honor to be named Georgia's Large Hospital of the Year and to be among the top hospitals in the nation for Patient Experience. Our physicians and staff have a long-standing reputation for compassion for every person who walks through our doors,” says Jamey Thaw, president and CEO of Athens Regional Medical Center and Athens Regional Health System. “Recognitions like these and others we've received confirm our outstanding patient care and commitment to excellence.”

BY THE NUMBERS

As the second largest employer in the region, Athens Regional employs approximately 3,000 people and serves a 17-county area of Northeast Georgia. According to an annual community benefits statement prepared by the Georgia Hospital Association, Athens Regional generated more than \$825 million for the local economy in 2009, more than any other healthcare facility in the Athens area. That same year, Athens Regional provided nearly \$40 million in uncompensated and charity care, more than all other area healthcare facilities combined.

Athens Regional Medical Center is a 350-plus bed regional referral center and is the centerpiece of one of Northeast Georgia's largest health systems. In addition to the hospital, Athens Regional operates four urgent care centers, a health maintenance organization and boasts a medical staff of more than 350 quality physicians.



HEALTH PLAN SELECT
Athens Area Health Plan Select Inc.
Affiliated with Athens Regional Medical Center

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Heart-Healthy Sweet Potato Soup

Easy to make, easy to enjoy and easy on your heart, this flavorful soup can be prepared in less than an hour. Serve warm or chilled.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 3 medium-sized sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 3 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS

Sauté celery and onion in a large pot until tender. Add the remaining ingredients, and bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat and simmer until sweet potato pieces are tender, about 25 to 30 minutes. Discard the bay leaf and cool slightly. Process the soup in a blender or food processor until smooth. Return to pan and heat through. Makes 4 servings.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION:

Recipe Source: [all recipes.com](http://allrecipes.com)



1	=	133	5g	0g	4g	20g	116mg	4mg
SERVING		CALORIES	FAT	SATURATED FAT	PROTEIN	CARBS	SODIUM	CHOLESTEROL