

HEALTHY U

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

YOUR HEALTHPLAN **n**ews

ISSUE TWO | FEBRUARY 2023

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It's February – American Heart Month – a time when the nation spotlights heart disease, the No. 1 killer of Americans.



National Wear Red Day was the first Friday of February. On this day during American Heart Month, everyone across the country dons the color red to raise and spread awareness in hopes of helping eradicate heart disease and stroke in millions of women.

Cardiovascular disease causes 1 in 3 deaths yearly, making it the number one health-related killer in women. The good news is 87% of all heart issues are believed to be preventable, creating awareness, education, research, and resources vital to the cause this holiday supports.

Learn about heart disease and get resources at [heart.org](https://www.heart.org).

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CMO Message: Heart Health

Lead with your heart, not your head. Follow your heart. Your heart never lies.

The heart is the symbolic bedrock of emotion. It provides a barometer of how you are doing, whether you are thriving or just barely getting by. Your heart guides you in countless decisions both large and small - everything from your partner or career to what to wear today or how to spend a Sunday afternoon. You rely so much on your heart that feeling something is right often trumps knowing that it is.

When it comes to your physical health, however, your heart doesn't always show you the way. Just because you feel like your heart is healthy doesn't mean it or the rest of you is. By the time you notice that something is wrong with your heart, your body might have been suffering for years or even decades. There are so many "silent killers" that can harm your heart - diabetes, hypertension, abnormal cholesterol levels, smoking, excessive alcohol, chronic stress, and sleep deprivation - just to name a few. These conditions or lifestyle factors might not cause any symptoms at all until your body is damaged beyond repair. They don't just affect your heart either. They affect blood vessels throughout your whole body, which can lead to strokes, kidney disease, cancer, and blindness.

While the focus in February is on both the symbolic heart as well as the physical heart, remember that heart health equals overall health. At UnitedAg, we don't want you to just feel healthy, we want you to know you are healthy. The only way to know for sure is to stay up to date on your annual physical exam. If you aren't sure when you are due, contact your healthcare provider to schedule your appointment today. If you need help connecting to a provider, contact Member Services and we'll get you the care you need. Your heart will thank you.

Join Us Online for Healthchats

Led by our Chief Medical Officer Dr. Rosemary Ku, **HealthChats** is a bi-monthly webinar series designed to help you live your healthiest life.

Join us each month for a 30-minute conversation about the health issues affecting our community, and get tips on how to manage and prevent them.

Healthy Eating

April 20 at 10 am

Mental Health

May 18 at 10 am

Immunizations

August 17 at 10 am

Diabetes Awareness

December 14 at 10 am

To register, visit our website unitedag.org/events



Rosemary is a practicing physician with dual-board certification in Internal Medicine and Preventive Medicine. She majored in Molecular Biology with a Certificate in Neuroscience at Princeton University and went on to obtain her MD/MBA from Columbia University and Masters in Public Health in Health Policy and Management from UC Berkeley.

Rosemary joined the UnitedAg team as Chief Medical Officer in 2019.

Contact Dr. Ku | Email dr.rosemary.ku@unitedag.org



The Importance of Cardiovascular Health

We don't often think about our blood vessels but they are critically important for the functioning of all our organs including our heart and brain. Without adequate blood supply to deliver oxygen and nutrients and get rid of waste, the tissue of these vital organs can get damaged and die. When this happens in the heart, it's known as a heart attack. When this happens in the brain, it's known as a stroke.

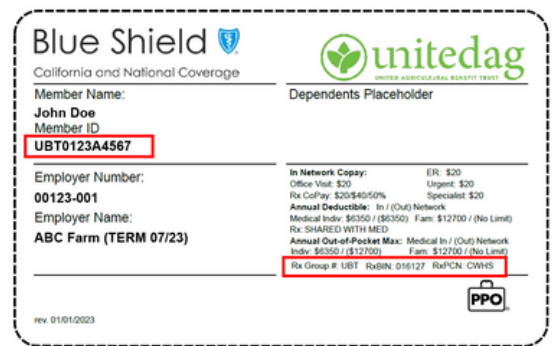
While there are several different mechanisms by which the blood supply to organs can be compromised, the most common is related to a condition called atherosclerosis where there's a buildup of plaque in the blood vessels. This buildup develops over years and is caused by a combination of genetics in lifestyle factors. Heart attacks and strokes can run in the family, but 80% of cardiovascular disease is preventable. The major lifestyle factors that put you at higher risk of heart disease and stroke include smoking cigarettes, excessive alcohol consumption, poor nutrition, low physical activity, high stress, and inadequate sleep.

In addition, several chronic conditions, if uncontrolled, damage blood vessels and lead to atherosclerosis. These conditions include diabetes, hypertension or high blood pressure, and abnormal cholesterol levels. If untreated, the consequences of these conditions aren't just limited to increase risk of heart disease and stroke. They also increase risk for kidney disease, dementia, and even certain types of cancer.

If you have any chronic conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure, talk to your doctor to make sure your risk factors are under control. Our lifestyle management program at the Health & Wellness Centers is also available to help optimize your health. If you have a family history of heart attack or stroke, you might be at a higher risk of these conditions and might need additional screening. If you smoke cigarettes or drink alcohol regularly, discuss ways to cut back with your provider. Cardiovascular disease is highly preventable and we at UnitedAg are here to make sure you stay as healthy as possible!

Important Notice: Member Health ID Cards Now include an Alpha Prefix

Effective February 3, UnitedAg member ID cards will now include an alpha prefix of **UBT** that will be required when processing prescriptions and verifying pharmacy benefits. Please refer to the sample ID card below.



Questions?

Contact our Member Services Team at 800.223.4590.



Recipes for a Healthier Heart

For this month's featured healthy recipes, visit our website at unitedag.org/healthyrecipes

There is no shortage of healthy eating tips out there - control your portion sizes, load up on veggies, stay hydrated, limit alcohol, don't let yourself get too hungry, etc. While following these tips can be helpful for maintaining your weight and blood glucose levels, it can be daunting to remember all these different strategies. Healthy eating boils down to the simple principle of mindfulness.

Being mindful of how hungry or full you are can inform you of when you need a snack or when you should put your fork down. Having awareness of why you are eating, whether it's true hunger, boredom, or social pressure, can help you make better choices. Knowing when you are actually dehydrated so you can grab water instead of another cookie can prevent a spike in blood glucose.

In addition, if you have specific nutritional needs due to health conditions such as a diet that's gluten-free, low sugar, or low sodium; avoid using the holidays as an excuse to indulge in foods you know you can't have. These dietary indiscretions aren't just a few extra calories. They can lead to inflammation, gut dysfunction, or a medical emergency if your vital signs reach dangerous levels. Even too much alcohol can lead to an abnormal heart rhythm that might require hospitalization.

Food can serve as medicine but it can also be a poison if your body doesn't react well to certain ingredients. Take this time to explore self-care rituals, experiences that spark creativity, and foods that truly nourish you and make you feel your BEST.

Meet Our Wellness Team



Suyang is one of three clinicians at our Salinas Health & Wellness Clinic. He has over four years of experience in primary care/family medicine. His practice style is collaborative, as he believes each patient is unique, requiring personalized care to achieve their health goals. When Suyang isn't busy, he likes to travel, spend time with family, and play basketball.

Schedule an appointment at your local Health & Wellness Clinic today! Call 877.877.7981 or use the QR code below to visit our appointment portal.



Visit ua.clinic

SPD Changes for 2023 a & Distribution Methods

The SPD for 2023 includes a series of updates and changes, including the No Surprises Act. We encourage you to watch the [recording](#) and download the [slide deck](#) and [Q&A Summary](#) for reference.

Please email your questions regarding the SPD changes to Jayson Welter at jwelter@unitedag.org.

AutoPay Now Available for UnitedAg Trust Contributions

The new UnitedAg payment portal is now live! New enhancements include the ability to schedule recurring payments. Download the [user guide](#) on how to navigate the new payment portal.

Access the portal at billpay.unitedag.org.

Please note: All users are required to register for a new account.

February Rx Formulary

Download the latest formularies below. They are updated monthly basis. The coverage associated with each drug is noted on the formulary. Also included is information regarding which drug products are subject to prior authorization and quantity limits. The formulary document does not list every covered medication.

- [Complete Formulary](#)
- [Quick Reference](#)
- [Specialty](#)
- [Prior Authorizations](#)
- [Quantity Limits](#)
- [Step Therapy](#)

Team member of the month



CHRISTINA MORLEY

Client Services Manager

As Client Services Manager, Christina supports the overall member experience with UnitedAg. She serves as a liaison for members and works closely with our ambassador and service representative community. Her countless contributions have elevated our customer service levels, and because of all this, Christina is our Team Member of the Month!

Contact Christina by email at cmorley@unitedag.org

GET Proactive Wellness Campaign

90-day health challenge | January - March

Start 2023 right by getting your Annual Physical/Sports Checkup and **GET REWARDED** with UnitedAg swag! Your Annual Checkup provides an important baseline measurement for your health and helps you understand the risk of developing chronic conditions before symptoms are present, so you can be **PROACTIVE** and **TAKE ACTION**.

5 Benefits of Getting an Annual Checkup

- Establish a personal health baseline
- Learn about chronic disease risk and prevention
- Update your vaccinations and manage your medications
- Get tools to improve your health
- Become the best U!



Talk to Your Doctor About These Annual Screenings

Cholesterol Test

All women and men over the age of 35, every 5 years

Colorectal screening

All women and men age 50-75, every 10 years

Abdominal Ultrasound

One time in men age 65-75 who smoke or have previously smoked cigarettes

Pap Smear

All women from the age of 21-65, every 3-5 years

Mammogram

All women from the age of 50-74, every 1-2 years; women aged 40-49 should discuss frequency with their doctor.

Become the Best U by Getting Your Annual Checkup



Schedule your annual physical checkup anytime between January and March to help ensure a healthier whole self. Call today, use the QR code or go online to schedule your appointment.

Book online at ua.clinic

Call **877.877.7981**

Member Resources

Below are important links and information to help you understand and access your health benefits.

CONTACT INFORMATION

UnitedAg Member Services

Member Services	800.223.4590 memberservices@unitedag.org
Member Advocate Service	800.223.4590 memberadvocate@unitedag.org
SMS/Text Messaging Service	English: 949.594.0788 Spanish: 949.524.4877

UnitedAg Hours of Service

Monday - Friday	6:30 am - 5:30 pm
Saturday	7:00 am - 3:30 pm

**Service Hours may vary during observed holidays.*

Network Partners

UnitedAg Health & Wellness Clinics	877.877.7981
Blue Shield of California (Pre-Authorization)	800.541.6652
Blue Shield National Coverage Network (Out-of-State)	800.541.6652
SAIN (Mexico Network)	653.536.7800
Costco Health Solutions (Pharmacy)	877.908.6024
Costco Specialty Service (Specialty Pharmacy)	866.443.0060
Teladoc (Telemedicine)	800.835.2362
myStrength (Mental Health Care)	800.945.4355
First Dental Health (Dental)	800.334.7244
VSP (Vision)	800.877.7195

Q1 2023 OPS Forum Webinars

This monthly webinar provides an opportunity for members to access real-time information regarding new benefits and services and to dialogue with our leadership team.

Teladoc Health
February 16 at 10 AM

To register, visit our website
unitedag.org/events

HELPFUL LINKS

Member Health Portal
unitedag.org/healthportal

Health & Wellness Clinics
ua.clinic

Network Partner Directories
unitedag.org/networks

Summary Plan Description
unitedag.org/spd



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YOUR HEALTHPLAN news

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