

Healthy CONNECTIONS



Straight Talk From Your Health & Welfare Fund

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Alaska Electrical Health & Welfare Fund

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There's a Light at the End of the Tunnel

Let's Finish Strong

The future looks promising, after a year of battling COVID-19. As more people get the COVID-19 vaccine, the rate of new infections is slowing down, and the U.S. is beginning a gradual return to "normal."

Get vaccinated when you are eligible. There is no cost to you. Go to dhss.alaska.gov to view eligibility guidelines, make an appointment and get information.

Protect yourself and others. Be vigilant as new variants spread. The CDC recommends that everyone (even those who have been vaccinated) continue to wear masks in public, stay six feet apart, and avoid crowds.

Your benefits. Cost-free COVID-19 testing and increased telehealth benefits continue to be in effect. See details at aetf.com.

“THE U.S. COULD ACHIEVE herd immunity BY FALL if the VACCINE ROLLOUT goes according TO PLAN.”

—Anthony Fauci, White House Chief Medical Advisor

Get Care

But Don't Share Your Germs

Virtual care is safe and effective for many issues. Talk to a doctor online or by phone who can diagnose and prescribe medication for minor illnesses.

■ **Teladoc.** Go to Teladoc.com, download the app, or call 1 (800) TELADOC (835-2362). There is no cost to you. (Teladoc is not available to Medicare Prime Retirees.)

■ **Telehealth.** Call your regular doctor's office for a virtual visit, if available. You'll pay your usual office visit copay.

Have an in-person visit only when necessary. Schedule an office visit for things like urgent care and preventive services.

■ **The Wellness & Minor Care Program.** Find the clinic nearest you at aetf.com, Health & Welfare, Medical Benefits, Wellness and Minor Care. You pay a \$20 copay (\$0 for preventive services); no deductible required.

■ **Any qualified provider, such as a doctor or nurse practitioner, is covered by your Health Plan.** A provider in the Aetna network may save you money. Search for one at aetna.com, *Health & Welfare, Medical Benefits, Using Preferred Providers Outside of Alaska.* Choose Aetna's Choice POS II (Open Access) network.

Stressed Out?

These One-Minute Strategies Can Help

It's been a year since the pandemic began, and the challenges we continue to face can be stressful, overwhelming, and have a negative impact on our overall health. The good news is that you can manage stress—and stop letting stress manage you.

Try adding these one-minute stress strategies to your routine throughout your day:

- **Get up and move.** Even a brief walk, stretching, or simple exercises can help shake off stress.
- **Tense up and release.** Inhale and tense one large muscle group at a time (start with your shoulders, neck and back, then your core, then your legs), hold for 10 seconds, exhale and relax.
- **Deep breathing.** Slowly exhale through your mouth to the count of eight, inhale through your nose to the count of four, hold your breath to the count of eight, then fully release. Repeat a few times.

If stress continues without relief, it can cause a headache, stomach pain, sleeping problems, muscle pain and tension, a rash, and illness. It can also make you feel moody, anxious, restless, unmotivated, irritable, sad, or depressed.

A few sessions of talking with a mental wellness professional may be all it takes for you to start feeling like yourself again. You have the option to meet with a counselor via video chat from home, by phone, or in person.



- **Teladoc** gives you convenient access to professional counselors seven days a week at no cost to you. Go to [Teladoc.com](https://www.teladoc.com), download the app, or call 1 (800) TELADOC (835-2362). *Note:* Teladoc is not available to Medicare Prime Retirees.
- **Any qualified provider**, such as a psychiatrist, psychologist, or licensed therapist, is covered by your Health Plan. You pay the same coinsurance as you would for a doctor visit.
- **A provider in the Aetna network** may save you money. Search for a counselor or therapist at [aetna.com](https://www.aetna.com), *Health & Welfare, Medical Benefits, Using Preferred Providers Outside of Alaska*. Choose Aetna's Choice POS II (Open Access) network.

Nearly 8 in 10 adults say the pandemic is a significant source of stress in their life.

Source: American Psychological Association

Skin Cancer Q & A

A Few Precautions Can Reduce Your Risk

If you've ever had a serious sunburn that caused blisters, even as a child, you have an increased risk for skin cancer. Your risk is also higher if you have fair skin that easily burns, a family member with skin cancer, are over age 50—or simply spend a lot of time in the sun.

What should I watch for?

Use the "ABCDE rule" to identify suspicious moles:

A **symmetry:** When divided in half, it doesn't look the same on both sides.

B **order:** Blurry or jagged edges.

C **olor:** Multiple colors or changes in color.

D **iameter:** Larger than 1/4-inch in diameter.

E **levation:** Raised above the skin, with an uneven surface.

What causes skin cancer?

Every time you tan, you increase your risk of getting skin cancer. Harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays from sunlight cause skin damage, which can lead to skin cancer. Sunburns, tanning, too much sun exposure, and artificial light from sunlamps and tanning booths can cause skin damage.

How can I reduce my risk?

Prevent skin cancer by protecting your skin from sun damage:

- Stay in the shade or avoid outdoor activities from 11 a.m.–3 p.m.
- Use a UVA/UVB sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.

- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes before going outside and reapply every two hours.
- Wear protective clothing and a wide-brimmed hat.

When to See a Doctor

Talk to a doctor if you notice suspicious moles (use the A-B-C-D-E rule listed at the left), new moles, or any other skin concerns. Annual skin cancer screenings may be beneficial if you have a higher risk for developing skin cancer.

Don't delay! Early detection can make a life-or-death difference.

- **Show a mole or skin condition to a Teladoc doctor.** Go to [Teladoc.com](https://www.teladoc.com), download the app, or call 1 (800) TELADOC (835-2362). Teladoc is not available to Medicare Prime Retirees.

For a complete skin exam, schedule an in-person visit. Any qualified provider, such as a dermatologist, is covered by your Health Plan. A provider in the Aetna network may save you money. Search for one at [aetna.com](https://www.aetna.com), *Health & Welfare, Medical Benefits, Using Preferred Providers Outside of Alaska*. Choose Aetna's Choice POS II (Open Access) network.

Be Your Best

Your Wellness Goals Are Within Reach

The Fund has added a health coaching benefit to help you and your dependents (18 years and older) be your healthiest. There's no cost to you, and it's confidential and convenient to use. (Unfortunately, this benefit is not available to Medicare Prime Retirees.)

A health coach can help you lose weight, reduce stress, improve diet and exercise, or quit smoking. If you have an ongoing condition, such as diabetes, high blood pressure or high cholesterol, a health coach can help you reduce your risks with lifestyle changes that help you follow your doctor's advice.

Here's how it works:

- You'll start by creating a personal action plan with realistic goals.
- Your health coach will help you be accountable to your plan with one-on-one phone calls and/or live chats through a mobile app.
- If you get off track, that's no problem. Your health coach can help you get started again.

For more information:

- us.mywell.site/hfit/AlaskaElectrical
- 1 (877) 290-9992



Healthy CONNECTIONS



Healthy Connections provides general information about the Alaska Electrical Health & Welfare Fund. For more information, please refer to the Summary Plan Description book available by calling the Administrative Office. In the event of conflicting information, Plan documents and Plan booklets will govern.

Alaska Electrical Trust Funds
701 E. Tudor, Suite 200
Anchorage, AK 99503

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



Remember...

If you are Medicare eligible, you must enroll in both Part A & Part B



Healthy Reminders

Coalition Health Center: New Fairbanks Location

The CHC in Fairbanks is still in the Ridgeview Business Park, but in a larger space to better serve you.

- 570 Riverstone Way #3
Fairbanks, AK 99709
- (907) 450-3300
- coalitionhealthcenter.com

Important Note: The Coalition Health Centers have changed their delivery of care due to COVID-19. Please check their website for temporary, updated hours of operation and availability of walk-in care.

Secure Online Access to Your Personal Information

Zenith American Solutions (the Fund's claims administrator) gives you online access to your personal information through two online portals. Register, then log in with your secure password.

- Go to aetf.com and click the **Participant Edge** link to update your personal information and access your work history, eligibility, and pension estimate.
- Go to abpa.com to view the status of pending claims, see your claim history or print an Explanation of Benefits (EOB).

BridgeHealth Surgery Benefit

Save money and expand your provider options to top-rated hospitals, surgery centers and doctors nationwide. Your BridgeHealth benefit gives you another option in addition to using the Plan's PPO hospital in Anchorage. When you choose a BridgeHealth provider, the Plan covers your surgery at 100% and pays for airfare, lodging and a meal allowance for the patient and a companion. To learn more:

- BridgeHealth.com (register with company code WSQXO)
- 1 (855) 423-1299
- AETF@bridgehealth.com

