

You FIRST

Your Month of Wellness

Issue XXI—September 2022

September: Self-Improvement Month

Did you know September is recognized as Self-Improvement month? This health observance serves as a timely reminder for us to assess where we are, and where we would like to be. It is a time to care for ourselves and focus on improving our personal, mental, and physical health.

Physical and Mental Health:

- **Adopt an exercise routine.** Exercise releases feel-good chemicals called endorphins that not only help to keep you physically healthy, but also improve your mental well-being!
- **“Let Food be Thy Medicine.”** Eating a balanced, nutritious diet containing protein, essential fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, minerals and water aid in the prevention of chronic conditions, as well as numerous mental health conditions.
- **Get a good night’s sleep.** Sleep has a tremendous effect on our mind and body. This is the time where everything from blood vessels to the immune system takes time to rest and repair.
- **Practice Self-Care.** Self-care looks different for everyone. It’s important to take time for you! This can be anything from gardening, to visiting a friend, yoga/meditation, etc.

Financial Well-Being

- **Financial wellness:** Satisfaction with current and future financial situations.
- **Actions that could improve your financial well-being** include creating a budget that works for you, building up a savings (every little bit counts!), and setting aside money for emergencies.
- **Knowledge is power.** This is especially true when it comes to solving financial issues. Take control today through SmartDollar, a **free** online financial program available to you through your CareFirst Well-being platform! Get tips for budgeting, saving and more!
- **Log in or create your account.** Navigate to the *Achieve* section, select *Programs*, then click *Financial Well-Being*.



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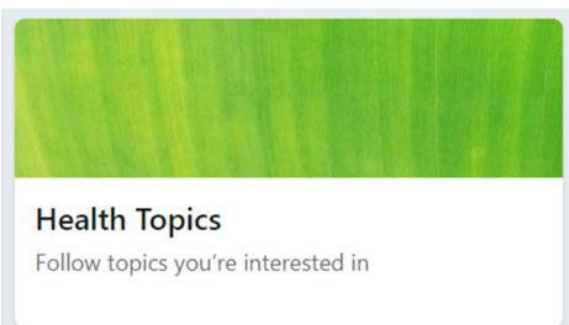
Know Your Numbers!

September is also recognized as National Cholesterol Education month. According to the CDC, approximately 38% of American adults have high cholesterol. Too much cholesterol puts you at risk for both heart disease and stroke, two of the leading causes of death in the United States.

High cholesterol has no signs or symptoms, which is why it is so important to get your cholesterol checked regularly and know your numbers! Honor this month's theme of self-improvement by connecting with your primary care provider to check your cholesterol levels. If needed, your provider can work with you to create a plan to improve your numbers.

Optimal Cholesterol Levels	
Total cholesterol	About 150 mg/dL
LDL ("bad") cholesterol	About 100 mg/dL
HDL ("good") cholesterol	Greater than or equal to 40 mg/dL in men and 50 mg/dL in women
Triglycerides	Less than 150 mg/dL

[Getting Your Cholesterol Checked | cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)



Looking for information specific to cholesterol? [Log in](#) to your CareFirst wellness platform to find resources such as:

- Cholesterol guidelines
- Personal stories
- Tips to lower cholesterol
- Healthy recipes & diet plans

Go to the "Discover" tab and click on "health topics" to get up to date information in your timeline pertaining to high cholesterol.

CareFirst Resources:

Looking for more information on improving your health, but not sure where to start? CareFirst is here to help! Check out a few of the many resources offered through the well-being platform below:

- **Health coaching:** Receive individual coaching, targeting areas like: Healthy Eating, Weight or Stress Management, and Tobacco Cessation.
- **Scale Back:** Reduce your disease risk and lose weight with Scale Back! Work collaboratively with a registered dietitian to learn how to eat healthier, lose weight, and maintain your weight loss!
- **Craving to Quit:** Find support through mindfulness tactics and support tools with the Craving to Quit tobacco cessation program.