



COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM GUIDE

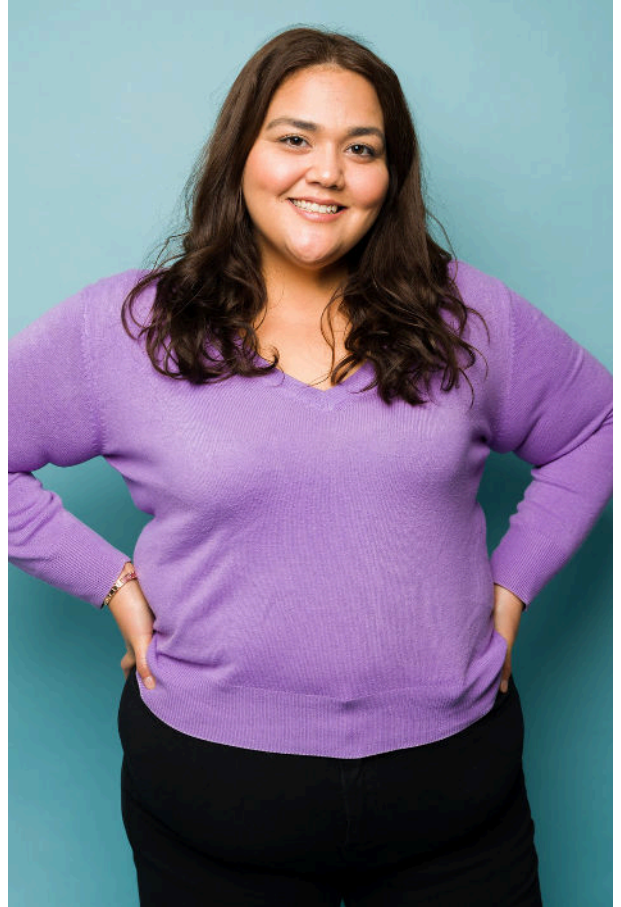
SUCCESS BEYOND THE PRESCRIPTION

Table of contents

Welcome Message	3
Preparing to Start Medications	4
Medication Options	5
Medication Costs	7
Refill Requirements	8
Classes	9
Lifestyle & Diet Recommendations	11
Additional Services	18
Managing Side Effects	19

Welcome to your personalized journey with weight loss medication!

Congratulations on taking the next step in your journey toward improved health. This program is designed to support you with compassion, evidence-based tools, and a team committed to your success. We're here to help you build confidence, create lasting habits, and use medication as one part of a bigger, supportive plan. We'll take it step by step, celebrate the wins, troubleshoot the tough moments, and keep you moving forward in a way that feels realistic for your life.



This booklet will guide you through:

1. Information about weight loss medications and side effects
2. Program and refill requirements
3. Lifestyle and diet recommendations that support your success

Preparing to start your medication

As you think about your journey, it's important to reflect on what you truly want to achieve. Is your goal a number on the scale—or is it about feeling better, moving easier, and living more fully? Our goal is to support you in focusing on the important ways to take care of your health to achieve what matters most to you!

What is one health goal that is important to you right now?

Why is that goal important to you?

How would it add meaning to your life?



As you use medication for weight management, you are likely to notice many impacts beyond the scale. We encourage you to celebrate your successes at each step of the process. We'll be encouraging you to consider a holistic approach that focuses on your fitness, sleep, lifestyle, nutrition and more. Our recommendations are based on addressing the whole you.

Oral Medications

There are many different types of medications available, all with different effects or benefits. Your provider will discuss your needs with you to determine the best fit.



Oral
Medication
Video

Phentermine

Appetite suppressant that may reduce hunger. Physical stimulant that may increase movement throughout the day and decrease food noise which may reduce cravings. Not for those over 65 or with heart disease. May raise blood pressure or cause dry mouth, heart palpitations, or restlessness.

Topiramate

Reduces appetite and improves sleep. Side effects may include drowsiness, tingling, and a metallic taste. Avoid if you have glaucoma or kidney stones.

Contrave (Naltrexone and Wellbutrin)

Appetite suppressant that may reduce hunger. Anti-depressant that may reduce symptoms of depression. Decreases food noise and may reduce cravings. Nausea, constipation, dizziness can occur. Not for those using narcotics or with seizure history.

Metformin

Appetite suppressant that may reduce hunger. Enhances insulin sensitivity and may reduce a1c. Lowers glucose production and may reduce blood sugar levels. Can cause diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, abdominal discomfort, and flatulence.

Tenuate

Appetite suppressant that may reduce hunger. Physical stimulant that may increase movement throughout the day. Can cause insomnia, dry mouth, headache, nausea, and anxiety.

Vyvanse

Appetite suppressant that may reduce hunger. Physical stimulant that may reduce symptoms of depression. Decreases food noise and may reduce binge eating. Not for those over 65 or with heart disease. May cause insomnia, dry mouth, headache, nausea, and anxiety.

What questions or concerns about the medication can the physician address with you?

Injectable Medications

These medications reduce appetite, slow digestion, support blood sugar regulation, and reduce food noise or cravings. They may also reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke. You will begin at a lower dose and may increase every 4 weeks depending on any negative and positive effects you experience.



Injectable Medication Video

Semaglutide (Ozempic/Wegovy)

This is a GLP-1 medication. In general, people can expect about 10–15% weight loss over 68 weeks. At 4 years, we see an average of 10% body weight reduction and 20% reduction in major adverse cardiovascular events.

Tirzepatide (Zepbound/Mounjaro)

This is a GLP-1/GIP medication. In general, people can expect about 15–21% weight loss over 38 weeks. At 88 weeks, we see an average of 25% body weight reduction.

Injectable Medication Side Effects

Common Side Effects:

GI discomfort, including nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhea.
Skin reactions at injection site
May be strongest on the days after your shot

Rare Side Effects Needing Immediate Attention:

Vision changes (seek emergency care for sudden vision loss)
Permanent gastroparesis (chronic constipation or obstruction)
Increased risk of thyroid cancer (check neck for nodules)

Not recommended for individuals with personal or family history of:

Medullary Thyroid Cancer
Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia (MEN)

Your physician will help you decide if these types of medications are a good fit for you. Discontinuation of the medication often leads to weight regain. Up to 40% of weight loss may come from muscle if you are not strength training. Prioritize strength training and protein intake using resources described in this booklet. Please inform us if you decide to stop your medication so we can support you in finding options to minimize weight regain.

What questions or concerns about the medication can the physician address with you?

Medication Costs*

Insurance Coverage

Kaiser Permanente covers weight loss injectables ONLY if you have a BMI > 40 OR BMI > 30 with one of the following:

- A history of a heart attack or stroke
- Moderate to severe sleep apnea (AHI > 15)
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Severe peripheral vascular disease

Injectable weight loss medications are not covered by Medicare or Medi-Cal for obesity alone. To qualify, you must also have one or more of the following:

- A history of a heart attack or stroke
- Moderate to severe sleep apnea (AHI > 15)
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Severe peripheral vascular disease
- Liver fibrosis (level 2 or 3)

Self Pay

Tirzepatide (Zepbound/Mounjaro) – Eli Lilly Call: 833-432-4322

Pharmacy: LillyDirect pricing examples:

- 2.5 mg vial: \$299/month
- 5 mg vial: \$399/month
- 7.5–15 mg vials: \$449/month

Semaglutide (Wegovy/Ozempic)– Novo Nordisk Call: 833-949-5527

Pharmacy: Novocare pricing examples:

- Any dosage: \$349/month; first 2 months: \$199/month

FYI: Oral semaglutide usually has similar coverage to injectables.

For more information about your health plan and coverage, please call member services at 1-800-464-4000 or visit kp.org/supportcenter. *Medication costs often change.

If you experience a coverage change, loss of coverage, or decide to stop your medications for weight loss, we recommend scheduling an appointment to talk with the provider who prescribed your weight loss medications. They can help you identify options that might be right for you including other medications, classes, consultations, medically-supervised meal replacements, or bariatric surgery.

Medication & Refill Requirements

The following requirements must be met to receive your prescription and refills:

1. Ongoing Monitoring and Labs
2. Weight and Blood Pressure Checks
3. Class Completion

1. Ongoing Monitoring & Labs

As part of our monitoring process, you will need to have labs drawn every 3–6 months so we can make sure the medication is working well and not causing any problems. Depending on your needs, you might have some or all of the following: liver and kidney function tests, electrocardiogram, full urine drug screening, a pregnancy test, sodium and potassium levels, and vitamin B12.

2. Weight & Blood Pressure Checks

These are required monthly in person at either a nurse's clinic or a Target clinic to continue receiving your medications. We cannot accept self-reported measurements.

- **Target Clinic:** This option is convenient for scheduling a visit with shorter wait times and evening and weekend appointments are available. Find a location and **schedule a visit at <https://kptargetclinic.org>**
- **Nurse Clinic:** Visit your local KP medical office; hours of operation vary. Please expect longer wait times as walk-ins are seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

To make sure the medication is working safely and effectively, we anticipate at least 5% weight loss within the first 3 months. If that goal isn't met, we'll stop the medication and explore other options that may work better for you.



Clinic locations

3. Class Completion

The physician who prescribed your medication would like to see you enrolled in a comprehensive program to optimize your results. Completing Healthy Balance classes (or the equivalent for bariatric patients) is required to receive ongoing refills of your medication.

If you need a note for work or school to attend your classes, we are happy to help—just let us know.

Classes That Support Success

The physician who prescribed your medication would like you enrolled in a comprehensive program to optimize your results.



Enroll today

Start with Healthy Balance

Your first step is to complete Healthy Balance. Managing weight requires a balance of many factors and our Healthy Balance program is here to support you on your health journey. These classes meet weekly, either online or in person, for 16 weeks. If you've already completed Healthy Balance in the past two years, additional options are available, including Renew (see below).

Have you had bariatric surgery?

Healthy Balance may not be the right fit after surgery. Find bariatric specific support in one of our other Bariatric Programs or start with our Renew Class (see below). Visit our Bariatric Surgery page to view and enroll in bariatric programs. Most physicians suggest attending at least 10 sessions of our support programs.



Bariatric Support

GLP-1 Strong: Success & Support Group

Are you on injectable weight loss medication and want some support specific to your experience? This group is designed to offer support around side effect management, emotional and lifestyle issues, and medication education. **You may begin attending these groups while completing Healthy Balance or any bariatric surgery approved session.**

Renew

This 15-week class is designed to support your weight-loss goals and help you build a healthy, balanced relationship with food and your body. The program is divided into three, 5-week modules that progressively develop your health skills while supporting you throughout your GLP-1 experience. **You must have completed Healthy Balance or have had bariatric surgery to enroll.**

Which class option is best for you?

Additional Classes

Your provider may recommend that you attend additional support classes to continue receiving your medications. We offer classes and 1:1 services to meet you where you are at.



[View classes](#)

Meal Planning Series

A 4-session educational and support class led by a registered dietitian where you can create meal plans based on our nutrition recommendations. Can be taken in conjunction with Healthy Balance or any other program.

Joy & Movement (JAM)

Move your body for 30 minutes and then stay for a 30-minute Q&A session on fitness related topics with our exercise physiologist. Open and accessible to all, no cost to attend. Can be taken in conjunction with Healthy Balance or any other program.

Additional fitness services: With weight loss, muscle mass loss can occur. Muscle mass is important for maintaining metabolic and overall health. We offer body composition testing and fitness guidance as part of our fee-based programs. We also include several on-demand fitness videos. Visit positivechoice.org/fitness for more information.

Making Peace with Food

This 10-session class centers on the principles of Intuitive Eating and provides a compassionate space dedicated to fostering understanding, growth, and healing in your relationships with food and yourself. No cost to attend.

Booster Seminars

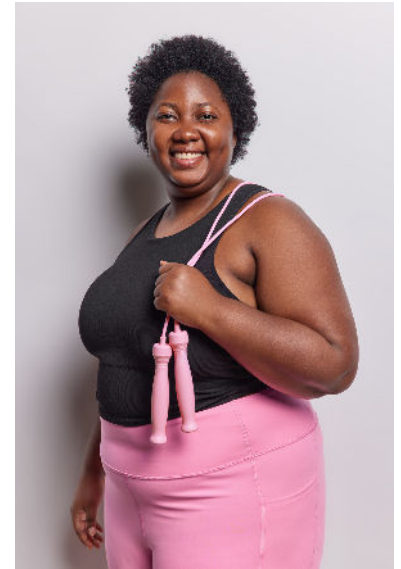
Purchase a membership to our Booster series to gain unlimited access to nutrition, fitness, stress management, and behavioral support classes and groups. Our educator team includes dietitians, nutritionists, exercise physiologists, counselors, health educators and more who are here to support your personal goals.

Solutions: Emotional & Binge Eating Support

A 12-week class that provides education and support for emotional, compulsive, and binge eating. Explore the biological, psychological, social, and cultural roots of your relationships with food, the impact on your mental and physical health, and develop new strategies to manage triggers and take care of your needs well. This is a fee for service program.

Lifestyle & Diet Recommendations

Lifestyle and diet habits play a major role in the success of your health journey. While medications can provide powerful support, pairing them with thoughtful daily routines like balanced eating, regular movement, and sustainable behavior changes helps maximize results and maintain progress over time. This section outlines simple, practical strategies to help you feel your best and set yourself up for long-term success.



While using medications:

- Stay upright for at least 2 hours after eating—avoid lying down right away
- Eat slowly-- chew each bite well or sip water between bites
- Avoid skipping meals or going long hours between meals or snacks
- Drink at least 64 ounces of water daily, especially before you start to increase protein or fiber
- Start a fiber supplement, ideally 1 week before starting medication (aim for 10 grams per day using options like Benefiber, Metamucil, keto bread, flax or chia seeds; see our Fiber section)
- If you feel constipated, try 2 tablespoons of liquid magnesium citrate daily while increasing fiber. You can also use options like the Calm brand powdered magnesium citrate (follow label instructions). See our Side Effects section.

If you are using an injectable medication:

- Let your provider know if you notice any changes in your vision
- Check your neck regularly for any lumps or nodules
- Wear sunscreen every day to protect your skin
- **Use reliable birth control—oral pills may not work as well during treatment**

Success Strategies

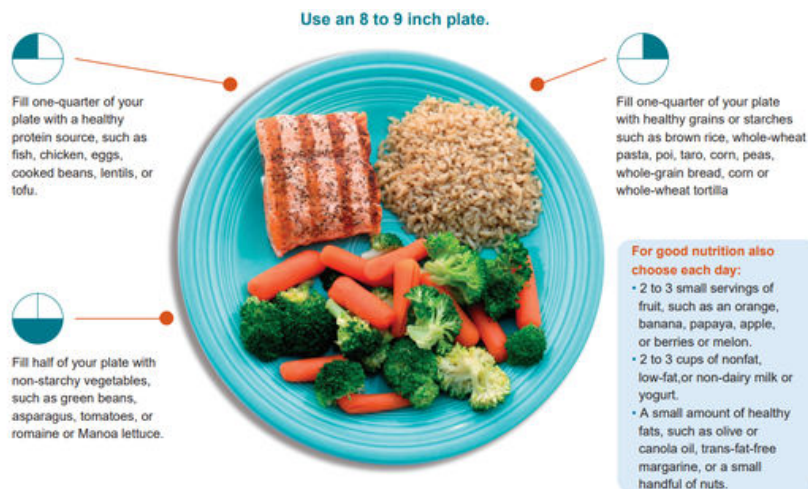
	Prioritize Protein	Aim for 80-100 grams per day
	Focus on Fiber	Aim for 25-35 grams per day
	Strength Train	Aim for 2-3 times per week
	Move Your Body	Aim for 30 minutes each day
	Drink Water	Get at least 64 ounces per day
	Sleep	Aim for 7-9 hours per night
Attend Support Groups		

Feeling your best requires daily routines that support your mind and body. This guide will not only help you get the best possible results but also reduces side effects or negative experiences. Our classes and support groups are available to help you every step of the way.

NUTRITION RECOMMENDATIONS

Gentle nutrition allows you to think about how different foods support your body and how it feels. Listen to your body's cues of hunger and fullness to support your eating choices.

Allow yourself to have enough food and a wide enough variety of foods to keep your body satisfied and nourished. Having choices supports a better connection to your hunger and fullness cues.



Tracking & Troubleshooting

If you've been consistent with the above and still aren't seeing results, it might be time to track your food and intake more closely. Find a free app (like MyFitnessPal or MacrosFirst). Then measure portions and log food and drinks for one week. Send your prescribing physician a screenshot of your weekly food log or share it in your weekly classes or support group.

It can also be helpful to log your daily movement, mood, and sleep to get a fuller picture of the factors and patterns impacting your body and health.

Importance of Protein

Getting enough protein each day is important once you starting taking medications. It is beneficial to overall health and to maintaining muscle mass during the weight loss process.

Goals

You can focus on adequate protein by:

- Aiming for 1-2 servings of lean protein with every meal and snack or
- Aiming for 20-30 grams of protein per meal and 5-10 grams per snack

If food sources are not enough, consider adding supplements:

- Protein powders or drinks (<200 kcal, >20g protein, <5g sugar)
- Protein bars (<200 kcal, >13g protein, <8g sugar)

Protein Examples

Plant-Based Protein Sources

- Tofu ½ cup; 10g
- Tempeh (organic) ½ cup; 15g
- Edamame ½ cup; 9g
- Chia Seeds 2 Tablespoons; 5 g
- Garbanzo beans ½ cup; 10g
- Lentils (cooked) ½ cup; 12g
- Lentils (raw) ½ cup; 20g
- Beans (various) ½ cup; 8g
- Green peas ½ cup; 4g
- Hemp seeds ½ cup; 25g
- Seitan ½ cup; 21g
- Quinoa ½ cup; 4g
- Nutritional yeast
- High-Protein Almond Milk 1 cup; 5–10g
- Soy Milk 1 cup; 8g
- Soy, hemp, or pea protein powders

Animal-Based Protein Sources

- Chicken (lean) 4 oz; 26g
- Ground turkey (lean) 4 oz; 26g
- Tuna 4 oz; 23g
- Salmon 4 oz; 21g
- Egg 1; 6g
- Whey or egg protein powders

Dairy-Based Protein

- Limit cheese to once per day.
- Babybel Cheese 1 piece; 6g
- Ricotta (light) ¼ cup; 7g
- Cottage Cheese (low-fat) ½ cup; 13g
- Goat Cheese ¼ cup; 5g
- Feta Cheese ¼ cup; 5g
- String Mozzarella 1 piece; 7g
- Cheddar (low-fat) 1 oz; 7g
- Gouda 1 oz; 8g
- Yoplait 100 1 container; 14–15g
- Oikos Triple Zero (Greek) 1 container; 15g
- Fage (Greek) 1 container; 18g
- Dannon Light & Fit 1 container; 12–14g
- Cow's Milk (1% or skim) 1 cup; 8g
- Fairlife Milk 1 cup; 13g
- Lactaid 1 cup; 8g

Importance of Fiber

Goals

Getting enough fiber intake each day is important once you starting taking medications. It is beneficial to overall health but also prevents or manages common side effects. Aim for 25-35 grams of fiber daily to:

- Prevent constipation
- Feed beneficial gut bacteria
- Reduce inflammation
- Cleanse the colon
- Help you feel full with fewer calories

Fiber Tips

- Start your day strong: Choose steel-cut oats, whole grain bread, or cereal with at least 5g fiber per serving
- Lean on legumes: Add beans, lentils, and peas to soups and salads
- Switch to whole grains: Try brown rice, barley, bulgur, or whole-wheat pasta
- Eat the rainbow: Fruits and veggies are fiber-rich and nutrient-packed

If food sources are not enough, consider adding supplements:

- Benefiber
- Metamucil
- Psyllium husk
- Flax or chia seeds (soaked overnight)

Start Slow

- Increase fiber gradually to avoid bloating or cramping
- Drink extra fluids because fiber absorbs water. Without enough fluids, you can become bloated and constipated.
- Prioritize fiber from whole foods—overuse of powders/pills may block nutrient absorption
- If you're already constipated, begin magnesium citrate before adding fiber. You can purchase this at a pharmacy.
- For severe constipation: take one full liquid bottle
- For mild symptoms: take 2 tablespoons daily for one week while introducing fiber and increasing water intake

Examples

- Keto Bread 1 slice; 10g
- Chia/Flax Seeds 3 tbsp; 10g
- Potato (baked w/ skin) 1 medium; 5.0g
- Pinto beans 14g
- Raspberries 1 cup; 8.4g
- Prunes (dried) 10 pieces; 6.0g
- Artichoke 1 medium; 6.2g
- Pear 1 medium; 4.0g

Moving Your Body

Regular physical activity supports health by improving cardiovascular and immune function, disease prevention, strengthening bones and muscles, boosting mood, enhancing brain function, and promoting better sleep. These benefits help maintain independence as you age, improve life satisfaction, and increase longevity of life.

Activity Goals

Aim for 150 minutes of activity per week. Start with 5-10 minutes per day of exercise that works for you. Focus on joyful movement and activities that feel best for your body to encourage consistent movement.

As you progress, choose exercises that make conversation difficult—this means you're working hard enough! When that activity starts to feel easy, increase the time or the intensity. Kaiser Permanente members get gym discounts, log in to KP.org and visit the Health & Wellness section for details.

Strength Training

We recommend starting a strength training routine to combat muscle loss and improve healthy muscle tissue and strength. If you are new to strength training, start with finding a class, either in person or online. Complete that class 2-3 times per week, with 1-day rest in between.

Online suggestions:

Looking to exercise from home? We have free YouTube exercise videos to help you get started. Visit [positivechoice.org/medications](https://www.positivechoice.org/medications)



Strength Training Videos

Strength Training Tips:

- Start with light weights, body weight, or resistance bands.
- Increase the weight or resistance as the exercises become easier.
- Fatigue is the goal. Use enough weight or resistance so that your last repetition feels challenging.

Working on building your fitness routine?

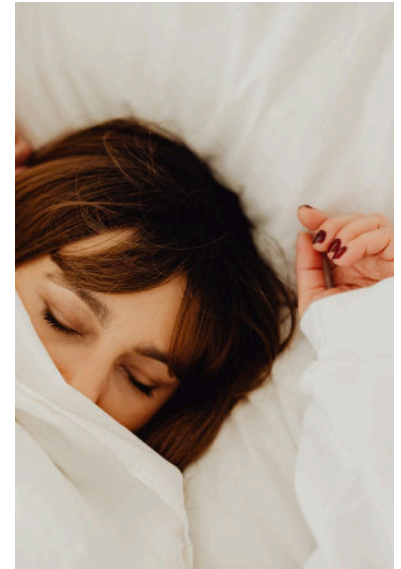
You've got this, and we are here to help! The Positive Choice Integrative Wellness Center offers many individualized support options that can help you on your journey. If you are seeking additional support with fitness or seeking a body composition evaluation, visit [positivechoice.org/fitness-services](https://www.positivechoice.org/fitness-services) to view all options. Fees apply and discounts are available when you bundle options.



When it comes to fitness, what can you start right away that will make a difference?

Getting A Good Night's Sleep

Quality sleep is essential for mental and physical health. It impacts mood, motivation, concentration, memory, problem-solving abilities, relationship satisfaction, and cardiovascular health. Lack of sleep can impair metabolism, cause inflammation, raise blood pressure, and increase your risk of cardiovascular diseases. For best results and overall health, aim for 7 -9 hours of sleep per night.



Improve sleep quality with these habits:

- Avoid screens, liquids, and exercise 2 hours before bed
- Keep your room cool and bed comfortable
- Use your bed only for sleep—not work or entertainment
- Find a consistent schedule and wind down with calming activities
- Consider using melatonin for a short-time to get you on track (available over-the-counter)
- For factors like sleep apnea or anxiety, consider working with a health professional to learn strategies for feeling more rested



Join our sleep class:
Sleep Well, Live Well

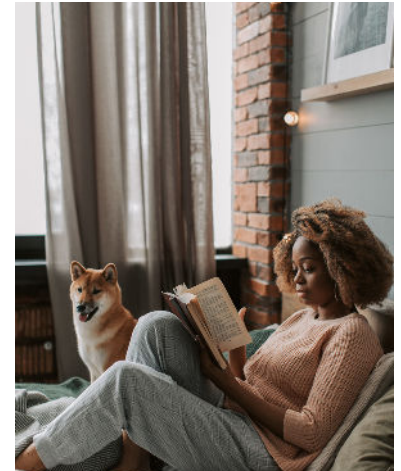
Focus on what you can control

If there are reasons for your sleep deprivation that are out of your control (working multiple jobs, children waking you up in the night), see if you can offer yourself compassion for the impact these factors have on you. If thoughts are keeping you up, try writing a list of thoughts as they come up or start a journaling practice.

If you would like to improve the quality of your sleep, what is thing you can do now that would help?

Managing Stress

Stress is unavoidable. However, chronic stress can hurt your mind and body. Understanding your stress triggers and how you respond is key to physical and emotional wellness. Mindfulness practices and mental health supports can help.



Mindfulness Practices

- Try 10 minutes of meditation in the morning and evening
- Use imagery: visualize thoughts floating away in a stream or balloon
- Enroll in 1:1 mindfulness coaching (fee based) at postivechoice.org/stress-management

Free Mental Health Apps for Kaiser Members

- Calm – #1 app for sleep and meditation
- Headspace (formerly Ginger) – 24/7 emotional support with trained coaches
- Rootd – Personalized tools for anxiety and stress



Digital mental health tools

Biofeedback

Try Biofeedback to understand and support your stress response well. You can get a referral from your Primary Care Provider.

Who can support you along your wellness journey?

How can we best support you?

Additional Services

Positive Choice Integrative Wellness Center offers a variety of services for nutrition, fitness, and stress management.

Build Your Own Wellness Package

Build Your Own Wellness Package allows you to personalize a program that fits your goals, lifestyle, and needs. Whether you're looking to improve your nutrition, enhance fitness, practice mindfulness, and/or track body composition, we're here to help you design a plan that works for you.

One on One Consults

Elevate your fitness journey with a personal training appointment or work with a dietitian on an eating plan. Each session includes customized support to keep you motivated and stay on track.

Body Composition Testing

SECA analysis determines with accuracy your muscle mass, body fat, and body water composition. The SECA analyzer accurately estimates daily caloric needs and gives a measure on overall cell health – a strong indicator of health status.

Metabolic Rate Test

Managing your weight is challenging, but this test can support you with that. Metabolic rate testing tells you the calories you need each day and how many calories you need to burn to meet your weight management goals. This service includes the test and a consultation.

To schedule for any of our Fitness Services, please call (858) 616-5514 or you can use this form to get started.



Constipation

Prevention

Consume plenty of fiber, including:

- Psyllium Husk
- Ground Flaxseeds
- Fruits, veggies, beans

Stay well hydrated, including:

- Water
- Fruits and veggies
- Non-caffeinated drinks

Engage in regular, daily physical movement

- Exercise increases movement of the bowels

Treatment

Liquid Magnesium Citrate

- Purchase from the pharmacy. Take 2 TBSP per day until relieved

If you don't have a bowel movement after 3 days, contact your prescriber.

Nausea

Prevention

- Avoid going too long between meals, empty stomach can cause nausea The lack of hunger can lead to forgetting to eat.
- Minimize fatty foods and limit them amount when you eat them.
- Eat until you feel 80% full.
- Slow down eating, chew food to an applesauce texture, and eat slower.

Treatment

- Ginger chews or ginger tea.

If these do not work for you, contact your prescriber.

Hydration

Staying hydrated can be challenging if your medication makes you feel less thirsty. It's important to have a plan to monitor your fluids daily to avoid fatigue and nausea or other side effects. Limit alcohol and caffeinated beverages.

Fatigue

Prevention

- Common around your shot day
- Can be worsened by under eating
 - Include regular meals with plenty of protein, veggies, and fruit.
- Drink plenty of fluids

Treatment

You can change the timing of your shot so you feel less fatigued during the day. If fatigue persists, contact your prescriber.

Heartburn

Prevention

- Avoid eating too much food
- Sit upright for 2 hours after eating
- Avoid eating too close to bedtime

Treatment

Improve your diet choices through focusing on lean proteins, plenty of fruits and vegetables, and minimize fatty or highly processed foods

Low Blood Sugar

Symptoms

- Increased heart rate
- Feeling clammy
- Extra sweating
- Lightheaded

Treatment

Increase food intake

- Eat meals with carbs, protein, and fat.
 - Have a meal or snack 1-2 hours prior to exercise.
-