



# Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at **Ag Health Benefits Alliance**



## TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR HEALTH CARE

By taking a proactive role in your health care, you can make better decisions about your medical care and ultimately reduce your health care costs. Gain control over your care by following these recommendations.

### **Choose providers who understand your needs.**

At the very least, select a primary care physician and a pharmacist. Make sure each provider you work with understands what you want out of your medical and pharmacy care.

Visit the American Medical Association at [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org) to locate a physician by specialty, medical training, certification and practice. Make sure that your doctors are board-certified by visiting the American Board of Medical Specialties at [www.abms.org](http://www.abms.org).

You can also check the quality of hospitals in your area by visiting [www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov](http://www.hospitalcompare.hhs.gov).

### **Be honest with your doctor.**

Give all your medical information to your doctors so you can receive appropriate care. Make a list of concerns to discuss with your doctor. Be honest before and during the examination—if your doctor doesn't know about a problem, he or she will not be able to provide the help you need.

When you are confused or unsure about something your doctor tells you, ask questions. Visit the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality at [www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer](http://www.ahrq.gov/questionsaretheanswer) to create a list of questions for your doctor.

### **Find out about the best treatment available.**

Visit the National Guideline Clearinghouse at [www.guideline.gov](http://www.guideline.gov) to review the guidelines for a variety of medical conditions. These guidelines list the most successful and widely accepted care options that provide proven results for particular medical conditions. Also, make sure to review your options with your doctor—not all treatments are best for everyone.

### **Seek a second opinion.**

You may want to get a second opinion if any of the following applies:

- You have a serious medical condition.
- You are prescribed a treatment that comes with significant risks.
- You are told surgery is recommended for treatment.
- You have no improvement in a treated medical condition.
- You visited a doctor who could not diagnose your problem.



**Don't try to handle everything alone.**

If hospitalized, bring a friend or relative with you to help you understand medical information and assist in making health care decisions.

Sharing your situation and concerns with others provides you with a support system, so you don't have to worry about taking care of everything alone.

**Start a health care journal.**

This will allow you to monitor your health, become more informed on potential treatment options and learn how to manage your conditions more effectively.