

# State of Michigan Employees For Your Benefit

provides a variety of timely information related  
to your health care benefits and needs



## Need durable medical equipment and medical supplies? You have SUPPORT

You need a hospital bed or a wheelchair. How do you get one? Whom do you call? Who will show you how to use it? Better yet, who will pay for it?

Getting medical equipment or supplies can be a confusing experience. But with the SUPPORT Program, you can be worry-free. SUPPORT (Select Utilization of Providers for Prosthetic, Orthotic and Rehabilitative Technology) is your provider for durable medical equipment and medical supplies under your State Health Plan PPO.

When you obtain these products in Michigan through the statewide network of independent medical suppliers, the SHP PPO covers the products and professional support services at no cost to you. The program applies to items used in your home that have been prescribed by a physician and have been purchased or rented from an independent medical supplier. The program doesn't apply to items you use during a hospital stay or purchase from your doctor.

### What's covered

The SUPPORT Program covers medically necessary items that your physician prescribes for use at home. Items can be rented or purchased, depending on the type of product and your medical need. Some diabetic supplies are also covered under SUPPORT program.

### Medical equipment and supplies outside of Michigan

The SUPPORT network doesn't apply outside Michigan. For medical equipment and supplies elsewhere in the U.S., you can minimize your out-of-pocket expenses by using suppliers that participate with the local Blue Cross Blue Shield plan. If you're eligible for Medicare, it's important to make sure the supplier accepts Medicare assignment.

### What you pay

If you use a SUPPORT supplier in Michigan for covered services, you'll have no out-of-pocket costs. If you use a non-SUPPORT supplier, you'll have to pay out-of-pocket costs equal to 20 percent of the approved amount, plus the difference between the supplier's charge and the approved amount.

The SUPPORT Program offers savings and convenience when you need medical equipment and supplies. Contact a SUPPORT representative for more information. Call 1-800-321-8074 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday for more information. There's also an updated SUPPORT Program brochure available at [bcbsm.com/som](http://bcbsm.com/som).



# Enjoy the season's bounty

Although summer is prime season for a variety of fruit and vegetables, there are still many options for fresh, in-season produce as cooler weather arrives. Fall fruit and vegetables are rich in nutrients, often bright in color, and ready to be incorporated into your favorite recipe or a new recipe you'd like try it. The next time you visit the grocery store or your local farmers market, consider some of the choices below — truly some of the best of the season's bounty.

**Sweet potatoes and yams** — These deep orange-colored vegetables are not only vitamin-rich, they're delicious. Sweet potatoes and yams provide more than five times the daily recommended amount of vitamin A and nearly two thirds of the daily recommended amount of vitamin C.

**Mushrooms** — Mushrooms are a good source of B vitamins. Although they aren't on the "brightly colored list," mushrooms boast nutrients you don't want to miss, including selenium, which helps protect cells against damage that can lead to cancer and heart disease.

**Brussels sprouts** — Brussels sprouts are an often under-appreciated cruciferous vegetable in the cabbage family. This leafy green is an excellent source of vitamin C and vitamin K, and can be quite tasty.

**Pomegranates** — The Pomegranate Council calls this fruit the "jewel of autumn." Both the pomegranate's flesh and hundreds of edible seeds are a source of fiber and vitamin C. So they're more than just one of the beauties of the fall produce aisle.

## Shopping at a farmers market

Fall is a great time to visit your local farmers market. Over the last several years, farmers markets have gained popularity. So, why all the hype? Shopping at a farmers market gives you access to fruit and vegetables that, oftentimes has not travelled hundreds or thousands of miles to get to you. This means fresher produce and fewer resources involved in transporting. They're not only environmentally-friendly, they're also intriguing places to shop. Farmers markets are often bustling places that attract a wide array of people and are a treat for the senses. Bright colors, interesting textures, delectable scents and crisp fresh air await you.

Not very excited by turnips and Brussels sprouts? In addition to produce, farmers markets offer homegrown treats like jams, pies and other baked goods. While shopping at the market, you may also find out information on events like cooking classes, trips to visit local farms and other community events.

Enjoy spending time shopping at your local grocery store or farmers market. It's not only good for you nutritionally, it can be a lot of fun.

### Sources:

<http://whfoods.org/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=64>

<http://pomegranates.org/>





## Here comes the common cold

Sneezing, scratchy throat, runny nose — you have a cold. The common cold is a leading cause of doctor visits and missed days from school and work. Colds are viruses that spread by contact. You can contract a cold virus by touching your skin or a surface such as a phone that has the virus on it and then touching your eyes or nose, or inhaling droplets that contain the cold virus.

### Now is the season

Most colds occur during the fall and winter when people tend to congregate. School is in session and students are together, backpack to backpack for hours every day. Also, as the weather gets colder, people tend to stay inside and are closer together. The virus is easily spread from one person to another.

### Prevention

Outside of total isolation and not touching anything, including yourself, there are no guarantees that you'll never catch a cold. But here's how you can improve your odds:

- Wash your hands. Cold viruses on your hands can easily enter through your eyes and nose, so wash your hands often and keep your hands away from your eyes and nose.
- If possible, avoid being close to people who have colds.
- If you have a cold, avoid being close to people.
- When you sneeze or cough, cover your nose or mouth and sneeze or cough into your elbow rather than your hand.

### Treatment

Although you tried not to catch a cold, it happened. There's no cure for the common cold, but here's how to relieve the symptoms:

- Rest — Allows your body to use its energy to fight the virus
- Drink fluids — Loosens congestion and prevents dehydration
- Gargle with warm salt water — Soothes a scratchy or sore throat
- Saline nasal sprays or decongestants — Help relieve nasal symptoms
- Petroleum jelly — soothes a raw nose
- Aspirin or acetaminophen — Tylenol®, for example — for headache or fever

#### Note: Antibiotics

Never take antibiotics to treat a cold, because colds are caused by viruses and antibiotics do not kill viruses.

There's no cure for the common cold. For all practical purposes, there's no way to totally avoid one. When you do catch a cold, make it easy on yourself by resting and drinking lots of fluids. You may find a bowl of chicken noodle soup and a pillow and blanket are your best friends.

**Sources:** National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, National Center for Health Statistics

# For Your Benefit

State of Michigan Employees

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## How to reach us

For benefit information or claim inquiries, call or write the BCBSM State of Michigan Customer Service Center.

## To call

1-800-843-4876

Our customer service representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday excluding holidays.

## To write

Please send all correspondence to:  
State of Michigan Customer Service Center  
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan  
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**For Your Benefit** is published by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan. It is meant to complement the advice of health care professionals and is not intended to take the place of professional medical care.

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