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## The Need for Blood and Platelets is Constant

The American Red Cross has a constant and ongoing need for blood and platelet donations. There is no known end date in this fight against coronavirus, and the Red Cross needs the help of blood and platelet donors and blood drive hosts to meet the needs of patient care.

The American Red Cross is testing all blood, platelet and plasma donations for COVID-19 antibodies. As part of that effort, plasma from whole blood donations that test positive for COVID-19 antibodies may now help current coronavirus patients in need of convalescent plasma transfusions.

Donating blood products is essential to community health and the need for blood products is constant. The Red Cross follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and volunteer donors are the only source of blood for those in need.

As hospitals resume surgical procedures and patient treatments that were temporarily paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic, donors are urged to give now to ensure blood products are readily available for patients.

source: [redcrossblood.org/donate/dlp/coronavirus--covid-19--and-blood-donation.html](https://redcrossblood.org/donate/dlp/coronavirus--covid-19--and-blood-donation.html)



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## Winter 2020 - 2021 Be Well Informed



## Handwashing: A Family Activity

Handwashing is an easy, cheap, and effective way to prevent the spread of germs and keep kids and adults healthy.

Parents and caretakers play an important role in teaching children to wash their hands. Handwashing can become a lifelong healthy habit if you start teaching it at an early age. Teach kids the five easy steps for handwashing—wet, lather, scrub, rinse and dry—and the key times to wash hands, such as after using the bathroom or before eating. You can find ways to make it fun, like making up your own handwashing song or turning it into a game.

Building handwashing skills takes time. At first, your child will need regular reminders of how and when to wash hands. It is especially important to remind children to wash their hands after using the bathroom, before eating, after touching pets, after playing outside, and after coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose.

Young children learn by imitating the behaviors of adults in their lives. When you make handwashing part of your routine, you're setting an example for your children to follow.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol, and wash your hands with soap and water as soon as you can.

Baby wipes may make your hands look clean, but they're not designed to remove germs from your hands. CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water when possible.

Remember to make handwashing a healthy habit at home, school, and at play!

Source: [cdc.gov/handwashing/handwashing-family.html](https://cdc.gov/handwashing/handwashing-family.html)  
MC2029

## Ways To Actually Achieve Your New Year's Resolutions

On January 1, everyone seems to have an idea of how they want their new year to look. But we've all made New Year's resolutions that we've quickly broken. If you want 2021 to be the year that you make and keep your resolutions, you need a strategy to hold yourself accountable.

1. **Write it down on paper:** It has been proven in studies that hand writing your goals or resolutions makes you more likely to achieve them.
2. **Make it fun:** Make goals inspiring and fun to accomplish with rewards.
3. **Make new week's resolutions:** Make commitments weekly. This might include renewing commitments from previous weeks.
4. **Skip resolutions, make declarations**
5. **Create a vision board:** Collect images and words that represent what you'd like to achieve and how you'd like to feel. Put these together into a collage. Put it somewhere you will see it every day.
6. **Prepare yourself for change:** The No. 1 reason resolutions don't stick is that people aren't prepared for change. Lasting change doesn't happen until your mind is ready.
7. **Make incremental goals:** It's helpful to have smaller milestones to limit procrastination and measure progress.
8. **Pay attention to your limiting thinking:** We consciously commit to our resolutions and at the same time we unconsciously commit to avoid rejection. This derails our ability to accomplish our resolutions.
9. **Evaluate your habits**
10. **Create a team of accountability partners**
11. **Set goals that align with your everyday life**
12. **Map it out and take action**
13. **Measure and share your progress**
14. **Aim to be better than you were yesterday**

source: [forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2020/01/07/15-ways-to-actually-achieve-your-new-years-resolutions-in-2020/?sh=4cc1eda82189](https://forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2020/01/07/15-ways-to-actually-achieve-your-new-years-resolutions-in-2020/?sh=4cc1eda82189)



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the newest issue of Be Well Informed.

In this issue, we offer tips for sticking to your 2021 resolutions, how COVID-19 affects heart health, and tips for speaking to a loved one about hearing loss.

Two quick reminders: Don't forget to get your flu shot and TRICARE Open Season ends Dec. 14.

As always, if you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact Member Services at **800.67.USFHP**.

Nothing means more to us than knowing we've helped make our members' lives better. We wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday season.

In good health,

Nancy Horstmann  
Chief Executive Officer  
CHRISTUS Health  
US Family Health Plan

## Fraud, Waste, or Abuse?

Report potential fraud, waste, or abuse in the CHRISTUS Health Plan Network by submitting details to the Special Investigations Unit via email, secure fax, or phone.

FWA Hotline: **855.771.8072**  
Email:  
ChristusHealthSIU@ChristusHealth.org  
Secure Fax: **210.766.8849**

If you prefer anonymity, call the Integrity Line at **888.728.8383** or visit ChristusIntegrityLink.org.

For compliance questions or concerns, you can email us at  
CHPCompliance@ChristusHealth.org

## Ask the Expert: When & How to Discuss a Loved One's Hearing Loss

Talking to a loved one about his or her hearing loss is one of the most difficult conversations a person can have. It is very common to notice a loved one's hearing decline gradually, and it often causes people to be unaware of the problem or to minimize its impact. The fact that you (and probably others) have noticed the hearing loss means it's time to do something about it. Following are five suggested steps to help you through the process.

### Step 1: Recognize the personal health consequences

Hearing loss can have a profound impact on various aspects of physical and mental health. Notably, numerous studies have connected hearing loss to dementia, depression and injury-causing falls. Unfortunately, the longer hearing loss goes untreated, the greater the risk of experiencing one or more of these serious, life-altering health issues.

### Step #2: Point out the impact on others

Hearing loss is often more obvious to family members and friends than it is to the person experiencing it. Maybe you've noticed that your loved one:

- Frequently asks you to repeat yourself
- Relies on you to be their "ears" in social situations
- Listens to the TV or radio at a volume that's too loud for you
- Avoids large family gatherings and other noisy settings

These behaviors are more than just annoying — they can detract from the quality of life of both you and your loved one.

### Step #3: Be compassionate and empathetic

It can be very frustrating to live with someone who has hearing loss, and you may be tempted to lecture or lash out. However, using compassion and empathy will help you have more meaningful conversations about the effects of their hearing loss.

### Step #4: Make a hearing test appointment

Once your loved one has acknowledged their hearing loss and has accepted the need for professional help, it's time to make an appointment with a hearing health care provider.

Frame the appointment in the context of finding out exactly what's going on with their hearing and what the solution may be. It's important that you accompany your loved one to the appointment, because the provider will want to get your perspective on their hearing loss and its impact on your everyday life.

CHRISTUS Health Plan Generations (HMO) offers a hearing benefit through Amplifon. Be sure to schedule an appointment with one of our participating providers. The Amplifon program includes follow-up care to help your loved one make a smooth transition to their new hearing aids, as well as a supply of batteries (or charging station) and a 3-year warranty covering loss, repairs or damage.

Source: [blog.amplifonusa.com/ask-the-expert-when-and-how-to-discuss-loved-ones-hearing-loss](https://blog.amplifonusa.com/ask-the-expert-when-and-how-to-discuss-loved-ones-hearing-loss)



## What COVID-19 is Doing to the Heart, Even After Recovery

A growing number of studies suggest many COVID-19 survivors experience some type of heart damage, even if they didn't have underlying heart disease and weren't sick enough to be hospitalized. This latest twist has health care experts worried about a potential increase in heart failure.

These complications, such as myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart muscle, could lead to an increase in heart failure down the road. There is also concern about people with pre-existing heart disease who don't have COVID-19 but who avoid coming into the hospital with heart problems out of fear of being exposed to the virus.

Nearly one-fourth of those hospitalized with COVID-19 have been diagnosed with cardiovascular complications, which have been shown to contribute to roughly 40% of all COVID-19-related deaths.

"There's a group of people who seem to be more affected from the cardiac point of view," said Dr. Mina Chung, a cardiologist and professor of medicine at the Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University. But, she said, it can be difficult to identify who is at risk, or for those recovering from the virus to know if they're having heart problems.

"A lot of people end up feeling exhausted for a while. They can't get up to the exertion level they were at before. But it's difficult to tease out whether or not it's the lungs taking a little more time to heal or whether it's a cardiac issue," said Chung, who is leading the coordination of more than a dozen ongoing COVID-19 research studies funded by the American Heart Association.

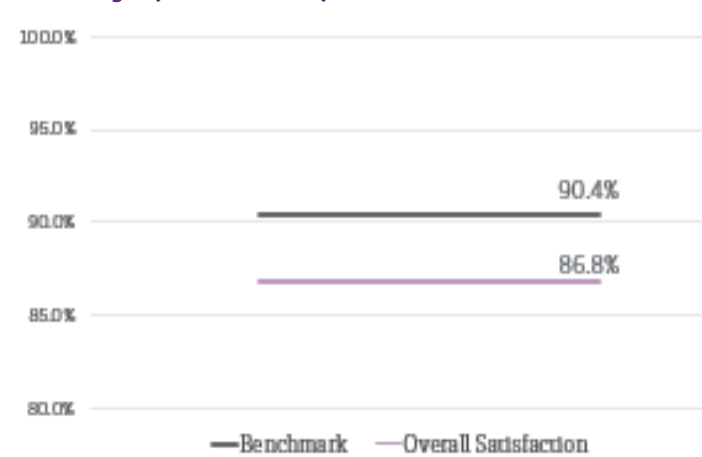
Doctors advise those recovering from COVID-19 to watch for the following symptoms — and to consult their physician or a cardiologist if they experience them: increasing or extreme shortness of breath with exertion, chest pain, swelling of the ankles, heart palpitations or an irregular heartbeat, not being able to lie flat without shortness of breath, waking up at night short of breath, lightheadedness or dizzy spells.

Source: [heart.org/en/news/2020/09/03/what-covid-19-is-doing-to-the-heart-even-after-recovery](https://www.heart.org/en/news/2020/09/03/what-covid-19-is-doing-to-the-heart-even-after-recovery)

## Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems Survey (CAHPS)

The graph (right) presents the 2020 Member Satisfaction Survey summary rates for CHRISTUS Health Plan's Member Rating of Health Plan response. This rating reflects our members' overall satisfaction with CHRISTUS Health compared to other Health Plans providing similar services. These scores are also available online at:

[ChristusHealthPlan.org/member-resources](https://ChristusHealthPlan.org/member-resources).



## Honor These Awareness Dates and Stay Healthy

### December

Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day (7)

National Guard Birthday (13)

TRICARE Open Season Ends (14)

First Day of Winter (21)

Christmas Day (25)

### January

New Year's Day (1)

Cervical Cancer Awareness Month

Glaucoma Awareness Month

National Blood Donor Month

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (18)

### February

American Heart Month

Black History Month

Go Red for Women Day (5)

Valentine's Day (14)