



transmed
MEDICAL FUND

TRANS care

THIRD
EDITION 2018

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IMPORTANT CONTACT DETAILS

SERVICES

Customer Service Department (general queries)
Chronic medication application (fax)
Hospital and major medical pre-authorisation
24-hour health advice line
Optical services (PPN)
HIV YourLife programme
Ambulance authorisation
KPMG fraud hotline

CONTACT NUMBERS

0800 110 268
0800 122 236
0800 225 151
0800 115 750
0860 304 060
0861 888 300
0800 115 750
0800 200 564

Welcome to the third
edition of TransCare
for 2018.

Welcome to the third edition of TransCare for 2018. Winter is the time for comfort and good food and warmth. As the cold weather settles in we urge you to take care of your health and keep warm.

Transmed hosted its Annual General Meeting in June 2018. Thank you to all the members who made the effort to attend.

September is Oral Hygiene and Heart Awareness Month and in this edition we focus on these two health awareness themes.

In light of Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, we provide details about the different ways to detect breast cancer and who is at risk.

We trust that you will enjoy this newsletter and would like to remind you that maintaining and improving your health are important.

We welcome any suggestions that you may have on articles or information on member benefits you would like to see published in future newsletters.

Please send your feedback and suggestions to suggestions@transmed.co.za or Suggestions, PO Box 32931, Braamfontein 2017.

Yours in good health

Warm regards

PETRUSWASSERMANN

PRINCIPAL OFFICER



Heart disease is one of the leading causes of death. The good news is that it can be prevented when people make healthy choices and manage their health conditions.

How can you reduce your risk?

- A: Aspirin:** Talk to your healthcare provider to see if taking aspirin each day is right for you.
- B: Blood pressure control:** High blood pressure is one of the leading causes of heart disease and stroke. One in three South Africans who is 15 years old and older has high blood pressure. Work with your healthcare provider to find out if you have high blood pressure.
- C: Cholesterol:** High cholesterol affects one in four South African adults. By getting a blood test you can know if you have high cholesterol. Your healthcare provider can suggest steps you can take to prevent high cholesterol or to reduce your levels if they are high.
- S: Smoking:** Smoking increases your risk of heart disease. If you are a smoker, try quitting as soon as possible, and if you don't smoke, don't start.



BLOOD PRESSURE

September is the first official month of spring and is also Heart Awareness Month. With high blood pressure being one of the leading causes of heart disease, read more about keeping this important aspect of your health in check.



WHAT IS BLOOD PRESSURE?

Blood pressure is the force of your blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. Each time your heart beats, it pumps blood into the arteries. Your blood pressure is highest when your heart beats, pumping the blood. This is called systolic pressure. When your heart is at rest, between beats, your blood pressure falls. This is called diastolic pressure.

Your blood pressure reading uses these two numbers. Usually the systolic number comes before or above the diastolic number.

HOW DO I KNOW IF MY BLOOD PRESSURE IS HIGH?

High blood pressure usually has no symptoms. So the only way to find out if you have high blood pressure is to get regular blood pressure checks from your healthcare provider. Your provider will use a gauge, a stethoscope or electronic sensor and a blood pressure cuff. For most adults, blood pressure readings will be in one of four categories:

- **Normal blood pressure**, which means: your systolic pressure is less than 120; **AND** your diastolic pressure is less than 80
- **Prehypertension**, which means: your systolic pressure is

between 120 and 139; **OR** your diastolic pressure is between 80 and 89

- **Stage 1 high blood pressure**, which means: your systolic pressure is between 140 and 159; **OR** your diastolic pressure is between 90 and 99
- **Stage 2 high blood pressure**, which means: your systolic pressure is 160 or higher; **OR** your diastolic pressure is 100 or higher

For children and teens, the healthcare provider compares the blood pressure reading to the normal reading for other children who are the same age, height and gender.

People with diabetes or chronic kidney disease should keep their blood pressure below 130/80.

WHY DO I NEED TO WORRY ABOUT PREHYPERTENSION AND HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

Prehypertension means you're likely to end up with high blood pressure, unless you take steps to prevent it.

When your blood pressure stays high over time, it causes the heart to pump harder and work overtime, possibly leading to serious health problems such as heart attack, stroke and heart and kidney failure.

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BLOOD PRESSURE

CONTINUES

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

There are two main types of high blood pressure: primary and secondary high blood pressure.

- **Primary** or essential high blood pressure is the most common type of high blood pressure. For most people who get this kind of blood pressure, it develops over time as you get older.
- Secondary high blood pressure is caused by another medical condition or use of certain medicines. It usually gets better after you treat the cause or stop taking the medicines that are causing it.

WHO IS AT RISK FOR HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

Anyone can develop high blood pressure, but there are certain factors that can increase your risk:

- **Age** – Blood pressure tends to rise with age.
- **Race** – High blood pressure is more common in African adults.
- **Weight** – People who are overweight or are obese are more likely to develop prehypertension or high blood pressure.
- **Gender** – Before the age of 55, men are more likely than women to develop high blood pressure. After the age of 55, women are more likely than men to develop it.
- **Lifestyle** – Certain lifestyle habits can raise your risk for high blood pressure, such as getting too much sodium or not enough potassium, a lack of exercise, drinking too much alcohol and smoking.
- **Family history** – A family history of high blood pressure raises the risk of developing prehypertension or high blood pressure.

HOW CAN I PREVENT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE?

You can help prevent high blood pressure by

leading a healthy lifestyle. This means:

- **Follow a healthy diet.** To help manage your blood pressure, you should limit the amount of sodium you eat and increase the amount of potassium in your diet. It is also important to eat foods that are lower in fat, as well as plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.
- **Get regular exercise.** Exercise can help you maintain a healthy weight and lower your blood pressure. Do any exercise in which your heart beats harder and you use more oxygen than usual.
- **Be a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese increases your risk for high blood pressure. Maintaining a healthy weight can help you control high blood pressure and reduce your risk for other health problems.
- **Limit alcohol intake.** Drinking too much alcohol can raise your blood pressure. It also adds extra calories, which may cause weight gain. Men should have no more than two drinks per day and women only one.
- **Don't smoke.** Cigarette smoking raises your blood pressure and puts you at higher risk for heart attack and stroke. If you do not smoke, do not start. If you smoke, talk to your healthcare provider for help in finding the best way for you to quit.
- **Manage stress.** Learning how to relax and manage stress can improve your emotional and physical health and lower high blood pressure. Stress management techniques include exercising, listening to music, focusing on something calm or peaceful and meditating.

If you already have high blood pressure, it is important to prevent it from getting worse or causing complications. You should get regular medical care and follow your prescribed treatment plan.

Take great care of your heart.

Source: <https://medlineplus.gov/howtopreventhighbloodpressure.html>

An elderly couple is jogging on a sandy beach. The man is wearing a light blue jacket and dark blue pants, and the woman is wearing a white jacket and light-colored pants. They are both smiling and looking towards the right. The background shows the ocean waves and a bright sky.

Be heart- healthy every day

Here are some
tips that can help
you to improve
your heart health
every day:

- Get regular health screenings.
- Have healthy snacks on hand.
- Get enough sleep.
- Lose weight.
- Get active.



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SIMPLE WAYS TO KEEP EYES HEALTHY

When it comes to your health, visiting your doctor regularly to make sure your body is healthy is important. What about your eyes? They are not always at the forefront of our minds, but they are just as important.

Eyesight is one of the most precious gifts a person can have.

- **Have a comprehensive dilated eye exam.**

A dilated eye exam is the only way to detect many common eye diseases, such as glaucoma, diabetic eye disease and age-related macular degeneration, in their early stages.

- **Know your family's eye health history.**

It's important to know if anyone has been diagnosed with a disease or condition, since many are hereditary. This will help to determine if you are at higher risk for developing an eye disease or condition.

- **Eat right to protect your sight.** Following a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, particularly dark leafy greens such as spinach, kale, or collard greens is important for keeping your eyes healthy, too. Research has also shown there are eye health benefits from eating fish high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as salmon, tuna and halibut.

- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Being overweight or obese increases your risk of developing diabetes and other systemic conditions, which can lead to vision loss, such as diabetic eye disease or glaucoma. If you are having trouble maintaining a healthy weight, talk to your doctor.

- **Wear protective eyewear.** Protective eyewear includes safety glasses and goggles, safety shields and eye guards specially designed to provide the correct protection for a certain activity.

- **Quit smoking or never start.** Smoking is as bad for your eyes as it is for the rest of your body. Research has linked smoking to an increased risk of developing age-related macular degeneration, cataracts and optic nerve damage, all of which can lead to blindness.
- **Be cool and wear your shades.** Sunglasses are a great fashion accessory, but their most important job is to protect your eyes from the sun's ultraviolet rays. When purchasing sunglasses, look for ones that block out 99 to 100 per cent of both UV-A and UV-B radiation.
- **Give your eyes a rest.** If you spend a lot of time at the computer or focusing on any one thing, you sometimes forget to blink and your eyes can get fatigued. Try the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes, look away about 20 feet (seven metres) in front of you for 20 seconds. This can help reduce eyestrain.
- **Clean your hands and your contact lenses properly.** To avoid the risk of infection, always wash your hands thoroughly before putting in or taking out your contact lenses. Make sure to disinfect contact lenses as instructed and replace them when the time comes.

These steps can help you keep your eyes healthy and prevent vision loss and blindness from diseases of the eyes

Source: <https://nei.nih.gov/health/healthyeeyes>

Oral HYGIENE

Here are
six ways to
improve senior
oral hygiene:



1. Cut out bad habits

There are dozens of reasons to quit smoking or chewing tobacco and the health of your mouth is no exception. If you're currently using tobacco products, talk to your doctor about healthy methods for quitting.

And as you likely remember from childhood, sugary foods like candy and soda can increase your risk for cavities. Committing to healthy eating isn't just good for your heart and waistline — it's great for your teeth, too.

2. Increase your fluoride intake

Many municipalities have fluoride added to their drinking water, but you can also incorporate a fluoride toothpaste or rinse to your daily oral care routine.

3. Be diligent about your teeth cleaning routine

It isn't enough to simply brush your teeth twice a day, every day. Additionally, you should floss at least once per day and consider rinsing with an antibacterial mouthwash. Make sure to replace your toothbrush or brush head every three months.

4. If you have dentures, clean them daily

Denture-wearers may have a different routine, but good oral hygiene is still a priority. Follow your dentist's instructions for keeping your dentures clean so the rest of your mouth also stays clean and healthy.

5. Keep your mouth hydrated

If you're prescribed a medication that causes a dry mouth, make sure you're taking extra steps to keep your mouth hydrated. Drink lots of water and switch to sugar-free gum, if you're a gum chewer.

6. Go to the dentist

Like scheduling regular check-ups with your primary care physician, going to the dentist is the single best thing you can do for your oral health. Not only can your dentist give your teeth a good cleaning, but he or she will also be able to identify oral health problems before they progress and give you tips for taking care of your teeth. While the minimum recommendation is once per year, many older adults prefer to see their dentist every six months just to make sure everything is going well.

Source: <https://sunhealthseniorliving.org/6-tips-better-senior-oral-hygiene/>



OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Early detection is the key to curing breast cancer. Everyone should know the symptoms and signs of this condition.

DETECTION METHODS

There are many ways to detect breast cancer. These methods are designed to save lives by detecting breast cancer early so it can be treated effectively.

Once a month – self-exams

Adult women of all ages are encouraged to perform breast self-exams at least once a month.

Changes to look out for when doing a breast self-exam:

- a lump or thickening in or near the breast or armpit area
- a change in the size or shape of the breast
- dimpling or puckering in the skin of the breast

- the nipple becoming inverted (turning into the breast)
- abnormal discharge from the nipple
- scaly, red or swollen skin on the breast, nipple or the dark area surrounding the nipple
- the skin of the breasts taking on an orange peel look or feel.

Check your breasts regularly, at the same time every month, and remember to check your armpits.

Clinical examination

A clinical breast examination involves a thorough physical examination of the whole breast area, including breasts, nipples, armpits and the area below the collarbone.

Mammograms

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast. Mammograms are used to check for breast cancer in women who show no signs or symptoms of the disease. This type of mammogram is called a screening mammogram. Screening mammograms usually involve two X-rays of each breast that are analysed by a radiographer for evidence of tumours.

Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI)

This is a way of producing an image of the inside of the body using magnetic fields.

Ultrasound

This method uses sound waves to outline a part of the body. A breast ultrasound is used to see whether a breast lump is filled with fluid (a cyst) or if it is a solid lump. An ultrasound does not replace the need for a mammogram, but it is often used to check abnormal results from a mammogram.

Biopsy

A biopsy is the removal of a small sample of tissue from the breast or lymph nodes, for examination under a microscope. Analysis by a pathologist will help diagnose both the presence of breast cancer and its type, which will help determine the appropriate treatment plan.

REDUCING YOUR RISK

Although you cannot prevent cancer, some habits that can help reduce your risk are:

- maintaining a healthy weight
- staying physically active
- eating lots of fruit and vegetables
- being a non-smoker
- limiting alcohol consumption.

Source: Cancer Association of South Africa – CANSA

ARE YOU AT RISK?

You have a higher risk for breast cancer if:	Why?
You are older than 50	The chance of getting breast cancer increases as you get older. However, even though most women are over 50 years old when they are diagnosed, women in their twenties or thirties are increasingly diagnosed with breast cancer.
You have a close family member with breast cancer	Your risk of breast cancer is higher if your grandmother, mother, sister or daughter had breast or ovarian cancer. The risk is even higher if your family member had it before the age of 50. Ask your health practitioner about genetic counselling.
You have a personal history of cancer and have received treatment for it	Women who have received high dose chemotherapy or who have had radiation therapy to the chest (including the breasts) before age 30 are at an increased risk for breast cancer. Studies show that the younger a woman is when receiving treatment, the higher her risk for breast cancer later in life.
Your breast tissue is very dense	Women whose mammograms show a larger area of dense tissue than those of women of the same age are at increased risk for breast cancer. An ultrasound may be required, as dense breast tissue can make it difficult to detect possible tumours.
You have never given birth or your first confinement was after the age of 35	Women who never had children are at an increased risk for breast cancer. Pregnancy reduces a woman's total number of lifetime menstrual cycles, which may be the reason.
You're using, or have recently used, birth control pills (oral contraceptives)	Studies have found that women using oral contraceptives have a greater risk for breast cancer than women who have never used it. The risk decreases if women stop using it for 10 years or more.
You are post-menopausal and use combination hormone replacement therapy (HRT) (combination of oestrogen and progesterone)	Breast cancer risk increases the most during the first two to three years of taking combination HRT. Combination HRT increases the likelihood that the cancer may be found at a more advanced stage, possibly because it reduces the effectiveness of mammograms by increasing breast density. Higher-dose combination HRT increases breast cancer risk more than lower-dose combination HRT. Breast cancer risk is reduced five years after discontinuing combination treatment.
You have two or more standard alcoholic drinks per day	The use of alcohol is clearly linked to an increased risk of developing breast cancer. The risk increases with the amount of alcohol consumed. Those who have two or more standard drinks daily have almost twice the risk of women who drink no alcohol. Excessive alcohol use is also known to increase the risk of developing cancers of the mouth, throat, oesophagus and liver.
Obesity	Obesity has been linked to breast cancer. Studies have shown that lack of physical activity increases cancer risk.



Fruit vegetable

& Safety

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Fruits and vegetables add
nutrients to your diet that
help protect you from
heart disease, strokes and
some cancers.



In addition, choosing vegetables, fruits, nuts and other produce over high-calorie foods can help you manage your weight. But sometimes raw fruit and vegetables contain harmful germs, such as *Salmonella* and *Listeria* that can make you and your family sick.

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**THERE ARE STEPS THAT CAN HELP KEEP YOU
HEALTHY AND YOUR FRUIT AND
VEGETABLES SAFER TO EAT FROM THE
STORE TO YOUR TABLE.**

**FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SAFETY AT THE
STORE OR MARKET**

- Check for bruises
- Choose fruit and vegetables that are free of bruises or damaged spots, unless you plan to cook them.
- Keep pre-cut fruit and vegetables cold
- Choose pre-cut and packaged fruit and vegetables that are refrigerated or kept on ice.

Separate

- Separate fruit and vegetables from raw meat, poultry and seafood in your shopping cart and in your grocery bags.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLE SAFETY AT HOME

Wash

- Wash your hands before and after preparing fruit and vegetables.

- Wash or scrub all fruit and vegetables under running water before eating, cutting or cooking.
- Fruit and vegetables labelled 'prewashed' do not need to be washed again at home.

Keep cold

- Refrigerate cut, peeled or cooked fruit and vegetables as soon as possible or within two hours. Refrigerate it within one hour if the temperature outside is above 32°C.
- Use a refrigerator thermometer to make sure the temperature stays at 4°C or below.

Separate

- Store fruit and vegetables away from, and not next to or below, raw meat, poultry and seafood. These items can drip juices that may have germs.
- Use a separate cutting board for fruit and vegetables that is never used for cutting or preparing raw meat, poultry or seafood.
- Wash cutting boards, counter tops and utensils with hot, soapy water before and after preparing fruit and vegetables.

LAUGHTER

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Humour is infectious. The
sound of roaring laughter is
far more contagious than any
cough, snuffle or sneeze.
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Laugh long, hard
and often. This
priceless medicine
is fun, free and easy
to use.

When laughter is shared, it binds people
together and increases happiness and intimacy.
Laughter also triggers healthy changes in the
body. Humour and laughter strengthen your
immune system, boost your energy, enhance
mood, regulate blood pressure and protect you
from the damaging effects of stress.

Quote

The **greatest gift** you can give to your
friends and family is a **healthy you**.

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