



Better Choices,  
Better Health®

A Living Well Program brought to you by **DC | HEALTH**  
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



## Frequently Asked Questions about Better Choices, Better Health.



### What is self-management?

Self-management might sound complicated, but if you have an ongoing health condition, you're likely doing it every day – you're doing what's needed to live with your condition as best you can.

You take your medicine. You stay informed. You try to eat right and exercise. You talk with family and friends to get support.

The fact is, 95% of care for an ongoing health condition like high blood pressure, diabetes, arthritis, or heart disease takes place in our own homes and communities – not in doctor's offices, hospitals, or other health care settings.

But while we all "self-manage" our health, most of us can benefit from learning how to do it even better.

### What are the benefits of better self-management?

Learning better self-management skills can help you:

Manage challenging health conditions by taking your medicines correctly, exercising more, eating better, and communicating more effectively with your family, doctors, and health care providers.

Deal with difficult symptoms such as pain, anxiety, and fatigue.

Cope with feelings related to your health condition, such as anger, fear, or uncertainty about the future.

Carry out normal activities such as chores, work, and socializing with friends and family.

Feel happier and more confident.

If you're one of the millions of Americans who struggle every day with health challenges, learning and practicing good self-management skills will help you live a better life. You'll be able to do the things you want to do and feel more in control of your life and your health.



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## Is there any cost to the workshop, and do I need to buy any materials?

Better Choices, Better Health®, is currently available for free to all eligible members of NMDOH. When you join a Better Choices, Better Health® workshop online, you will be mailed a free copy of the companion book, Living a Healthy Life with Chronic Conditions.

## Do these workshops replace my doctor or medical provider?

No. These workshops help you work with your doctor to get the care that best meets your needs. Self-management skills enhance your regular medical treatment. These skills are especially helpful for people with more than one chronic condition who are likely dealing with several doctors, nurses, and other professionals at the same time.

## Do these workshops work?

Yes! The Stanford University self-management workshops have been studied for more than 30 years and have helped hundreds of thousands of people all over the world improve their health and quality of life.

## Where are these workshops conducted?

The workshop developed by Stanford University is offered via the internet under the name Better Choices, Better Health®. This self-management workshop is done entirely online and has about 25 participants per workshop. You can choose the days and times that are most convenient for you. You simply log on 2-3 times each week for a total of 1-2 hours per week for six consecutive weeks. The web-based workshops are secure and meet government privacy requirements.

## What topics are covered in the workshop?

No. These workshops help you work with your doctor. Topics include:

How to deal with frustration, fatigue, pain, and isolation.

Ways to maintain and improve your strength, flexibility, and endurance.

Healthy eating and exercise.

Managing your medications.

How to communicate more effectively with family, friends, and health professionals.

How to better determine whether a new treatment or medicine is right for you.

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## Who teaches these workshops?

No. These workshops help you work with your doctor. Volunteer lay leaders, many of whom also have ongoing health issues, help guide the workshops, facilitate discussions, and provide support.

What makes these workshops so successful is that the "group" is the teacher. The workshop is set up to provide many opportunities for members to learn and problem solve together. Group members also help each other stay on track with action plans, goal setting, brainstorming, and general support.

## Is this program right for my specific condition?

If you have a chronic health condition the Better Choices, Better Health program is proven to be effective to help you develop skills to better manage your health. Designed by Stanford University to help people with a wide range of conditions such as Anxiety, Arthritis, Asthma, Cancer, Cancer remission, Chronic fatigue syndrome, Chronic pain, COPD, Depression / mental health, Diabetes (type 1 and type 2), Fibromyalgia, Hyperlipidemia, Hypertension, Ischemic heart disease, Metabolic syndrome, Multiple sclerosis, Osteoporosis and many more. If you are unsure if the program is right for you, please contact us at [betterchoices@selfmanage.org](mailto:betterchoices@selfmanage.org).