

# Care Connect Times

www.hivcareconnect.com



## Fall 2020 Edition

Hope everyone is doing well and enjoying the cooler temperatures! SIHCC would like to welcome our two new Medical Case Managers, Megan Weston and Christina Urban. Clients who will be working with them should have received a letter in the mail.



Christina Urban

JCHD staff are still working full time at the office with limited public access. Eligibility Assessments that were due in October, November and December have been extended for another 6 months. This means clients do not need to see their case manager unless any of their information (income, insurance, residency) has changed. Clients are still strongly encouraged to reach out to their case manager to check in. If you have been impacted by COVID 19 financially or medically, please contact your case manager to see if the program can assist you. Shawnee Dental has started scheduling appointments again. They are contacting patients whose appointments were canceled starting back in March due to COVID 19.



Megan Weston

If you feel you need immediate dental services, please contact your case manager. Lastly, we strongly encourage you to get the flu vaccine this year. Many of the flu symptoms overlap with the COVID-19 virus symptoms, which makes it even more important to protect yourself and prevent these symptoms from occurring. The flu vaccine is safe and effective. It can help you from getting sick with the flu as well as protect the people around you who may be more vulnerable to illnesses. Here at the Jackson County Health Department we will be conducting a drive-thru flu clinic. Please call for more details and to schedule your appointment, 618-684-3143 ext. 150.

## Important Insurance Information

Anyone who is already receiving premium assistance should have received letters from IDPH with guidelines on information needed by IDPH. If you are needing premium assistance or planning to rollover your plan you must contact your Case Manager before the end of October.

- \* Medicaid open enrollment is ongoing all year.
- \* Medicare open enrollment dates are October 15 - December 7, 2020.
- \* Marketplace open enrollment dates are November 1 - December 15, 2020. The **DEADLINE** to get all documents to IDPH will be **December 18, 2020**. Please complete the documents that IDPH has already sent out and be in contact with your Case Manager for anything else. Ashtyn Toliver is the new Medical Benefits Coordinator and will be working through the open enrollments this year. If you need to contact her directly her extension is 168.



Ashtyn Toliver

## Easy White Chicken Chili

### Ingredients

- 1 pound lean ground chicken
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 cans (15 oz each) cannellini beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) reduced-sodium chicken broth



Optional toppings: Reduced-fat sour cream, shredded cheddar cheese and chopped fresh cilantro

### Directions

- In a large saucepan, cook chicken and onion over medium-high heat until chicken is no longer pink, 6-8 minutes, breaking up chicken into crumbles.
- Pour 1 can of beans in a small bowl; mash slightly. Stir mashed beans, remaining can of beans, chilies, seasonings and broth into chicken mixture; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, until flavors are blended, 12-15 minutes. Serve with toppings as desired.

Southern  
Illinois  
**HIV**  
Care Connect

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### What is HIV treatment and why is it important?

HIV treatment includes taking medications that slow the progression of the virus in the body. When a person with HIV is consistent in taking their medication, it can help build a strong immune system, reduce their low viral load and could help increase their CD4 cell count. When a dose is missed HIV has the chance to multiply and replicate causing the virus to be resistant to the medication. Consistently taking your medication offers better overall health.

### How can I remember my medications every day?

Taking medications may feel like another task to manage in a busy day to day life. Here are some tips to help you take every dose of your HIV medication and keep you healthy:

- **Create a Routine:** Add taking your medications to something you do every day. If the medication calls for you to take with food, make it a habit to take it with your first meal of the day.
- **Set an alarm:** On your phone, watch, or clock set a time for you to take your HIV medication.



- **Keep a daily log or use a calendar:** When you take your medication write down the date and time. This can help you remember to take your medicine but also help you if you missed a dose.



- **Ask a person you trust for help:** Asking someone you trust to encourage you and check up on how you are doing helps to remind you that it's important to stay on your medication and stay healthy.



- **Continue to see your health care provider regularly:** It is important to continue speaking with your provider especially if you are having problems remembering to take your medications. Speaking with them can provide medical support to help you stick with the treatment plan.

Source: "HIV Treatment Overview" HIV.org March 29, 2019  
<https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/staying-in-hiv-care/hiv-treatment/hiv-treatment-overview>

## Mark Your Calendars...

Oct 12	Columbus Day JCHD CLOSED
Oct 13	September Mileage Deadline
Oct 26	Heartland Clinic @ JCHD
Nov 10	October Mileage Deadline
Nov 11	Veterans Day JCHD CLOSED
Nov 17	<b>Advisory Board Meeting</b> Contact your case manager if you are interested in attending
Nov 23	Heartland Clinic @ JCHD
Nov 26	Thanksgiving Day JCHD Closed
Nov 27	JCHD CLOSED
Dec 5	<b>Santa Speedo Walk/Run Cancelled</b>
Dec 10	November Mileage Deadline
Dec 14	Heartland Clinic @ JCHD
Dec 24	Christmas Eve JCHD CLOSED
Dec 25	Christmas Day JCHD CLOSED



Due to Covid-19 the Santa Speedo and Mrs. Claus in Bras Walk/Run on December 5th, has been cancelled. We have made this difficult decision with the priority of everyone's health in mind. We look forward to seeing you next year!!

## Leaf Painting

Grab some leaves and try this fun fall craft.

### Supplies Needed:

- Pressed Leaves
- Acrylic Paints
- Paint Brushes
- Round Foam Brushes
- Toothbrush (optional)



### Directions:

1. Press your leaf - to do that make sure your leaf is fresh and not too dry. Place the leaves between a newspaper or cardstock and put a heavy book on top of them. Its usually best to leave them for 2-3 days to make sure all the moisture gets out of them.
2. Paint your whole leaf using a base color such as black or white.
3. Use a round brush to add color by lightly punching directly onto the leaf.
4. If you want to add splatters of paint you can use a toothbrush. Apply a small amount of paint to the toothbrush. Keep the bristles that are painted away from you and toward the leaf. Gently run your fingers up the bristles flicking paint onto the leaf, giving a splatter look.
5. Add additional details if desired using different sizes of paint brushes.
6. Let your leaf dry for a few hours.

<https://colormadehappy.com/leaf-painting-how-to-paint-galaxy-painted-leaves-how-to-paint-leaves/>

Dear Hannah,

Is it really that important to get my labs done every 6 months?

Thanks,

Sarah

Dear Sarah,

That's a great question! Even if you are taking your medication daily and on top of your health and well-being, it is still important to get your labs done every 6 months. Lab testing can help your doctor monitor your health and see how well your medication is working, to see how well your immune system is functioning, how rapidly HIV is replicating and overall how well your body is functioning. Lab testing will also look for other infections that can be associated with HIV. Two major tests that are completed every 6 months are a CD4 count and a viral load also known as HIV RNA:

### CD4

CD4 cells are also known as CD4+ T Cells. These are white blood cells that help fight off infections. The CD4 count can help your doctor see how well your immune system is functioning. There are factors that can affect your CD4 numbers. Taking medication properly can help keep your CD4 numbers high. Low CD4 numbers could mean that your medication is not working properly, that you are missing doses of your medication, or that you may have an acute infection.

### HIV RNA

HIV RNA viral load tests measure the amount of HIV in the blood. With this test, lower numbers are better than higher numbers. The overall goal of HIV medication is to reduce the HIV viral load to make HIV "undetectable". Taking medication properly is crucial to help your viral load remain low or "undetectable".

Sincerely,

Hannah

For more information on testing and treatment visit the CDC website at

<https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/default.html>