



Better, stronger, faster can be do-it-yourself

“Steve Austin, astronaut... a man barely alive.”

“We can rebuild him. We have the technology. We can make him better than he was.

Better... stronger... faster.”

So began each episode of *The Six Million Dollar Man*. If you were alive in the mid-1970s, you might remember this TV series. *The Six Million Dollar Man* was Steve Austin, played by Lee Majors. Barely surviving a spacecraft crash-and-burn, Austin was surgically reconditioned for duty with a six-million-dollar makeover to prepare him for a new top-secret assignment with a government agency.

Austin’s right arm, both legs and left eye were retrofitted with high-tech bionic implants that gave him superhuman strength, speed and vision. His powerplant was said to be atomic. No wonder the operation cost \$6 million.

The immediate popularity of *The Six Million Dollar Man* prompted ABC to launch a second series: *The Bionic Woman*, about a former tennis pro (Jaime Sommers, played by Lindsay Wagner) who received bionic implants following a near-fatal skydiving accident.

In this issue

Better, stronger, faster can be do-it-yourself

Men’s Health Month: 5 ways to improve productivity

Kick the can with Quit For Life

\$200 incentive for Nurtur condition management

Are you ready for your next appointment?

Hypertension: Medication is not the only way

Ask Mayo Clinic for quick, credible answers

Both series were cancelled in 1978, but their themes still have relevance today as consumers deal with the economic realities of our current healthcare system.

Today, technology continues to expand treatment choices for patients, making it more challenging than ever to make informed healthcare decisions. In real life, patients need to do their homework and engage in the decision-making process, rather than rely completely on the opinions of their physicians.

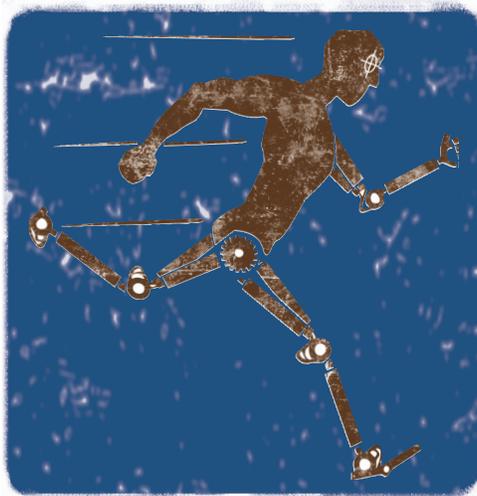
The fictional lives of *The Six Million Dollar Man* and *The Bionic Woman* also highlight present-day concern about

the healthcare needs of people with chronic illness. Today, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 75% of our nation’s \$2.6 trillion healthcare bill goes toward the treatment of patients with chronic illnesses, many of them preventable.

Even by today’s standards, a six-million-dollar surgery still seems unfathomable. However, with life expectancy now topping 78 years for men and women, and with healthcare costs rising 7–8% annually, it is possible that a person’s healthcare expenses, lost productivity, and lost wages due to illness and injury

could reach \$6 million over his or her lifetime.

In reality, most people don’t need expensive medical treatments to become better, stronger, or faster. Improving your health and your performance can be a do-it-yourself job when you’re committed to preventing health risks from becoming health disasters and making decisions that offer the best outcomes.



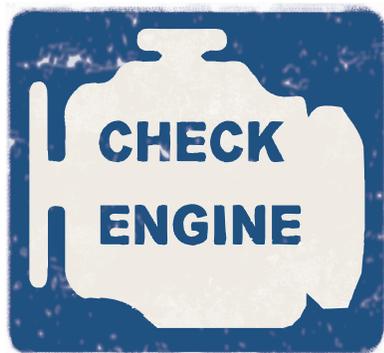
Men's Health Month: 5 ways to improve productivity

A strong and healthy body is vital to a carpenter's prosperity and quality of life. When a body is neglected and abused, it becomes unreliable. When reliability suffers, productivity suffers—and as the saying goes, unproductive means overpaid. Good health is more than job security. It can add years to your life so you get more value from your union retirement benefits—and Uncle Sam's, too (Social Security). June is **Men's Health Month**. It's the month of Father's Day, too. Both are good reasons to get focused on the important things. Here's a five-step plan to get you started.

1. Do a systems

check. A complete physical exam can identify health risks and medical conditions before symptoms develop. Screenings for cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose, and triglycerides

provide a dashboard of numbers to monitor your health. Remember, preventive health services for eligible carpenters, spouses, and domestic partners are not subject to the annual deductible, office visit copayment(s) or annual coinsurance. (All services are subject to the Preventive Health Benefit Schedule.)



2. Fuel up. You are what you eat, remember? Log on to **EmbodyHealth** (see below) and look under the Health Information tab for tools and information that can help you load up on healthy eating.

3. Drink from the fountain of youth. Alcohol is not a performance-enhancing drug. Exercise, on the other hand is the ultimate wonder drug. It can reduce stress, control blood pressure, improve cholesterol, burn calories, put a spark in your sex life, and so much more. Check out My Fitness Solution, a self-guided program



on EmbodyHealth designed to help you create a plan, track your progress, and keep you focused.

4. Reduce payload.

Airline baggage restrictions were put in place make planes

lighter, but it's the passengers that are often carrying too much weight. A healthy weight lowers your risk for high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, and other illnesses. Log on to EmbodyHealth (see below) and look under the Health Information tab for tools to help lighten your load and ease wear and tear. Use the BMI Calculator to find out if your body mass index is in the safe zone. Check out My Weight Solution if you want a simple, self-guided program to help you improve eating and exercise.



5. Stay calm. Chronic stress wears out your body from the inside out. Heart disease, obesity, diabetes, digestive disorders, male impotence, and Alzheimer's disease



are just a few health conditions linked to chronic stress. Use EmbodyHealth's Stress Self Assessment to get a quick read on your current stress level. My Stress Solution, under Health Coaching, is a self-guided program that can help identify areas

of stress, explain basic coping strategies, and create an action plan to manage stress.

EmbodyHealth reminder: Eligible carpenters, spouses and dependents need their 11-digit Member ID to register and use Mayo Clinic's **EmbodyHealth** website (www.CarpentersHealth.org). The Member ID can be found on any Explanation of Benefits (EOB) statement mailed to you. You can also contact **Participant Services** at (800) 552-0635.

Kick the can with Quit For Life

The Major League Baseball season is now in full swing. With 2,430 games during the regular season (many broadcast in high definition) the images of tobacco-spitting players will be hard to ignore.

Tobacco products have been banned in the minor leagues for 20 years now—on the field, in the clubhouse, and during team travel—but the Majors continue to reject proposals to adopt the same restrictions.

Nicotine is highly addictive, and smokeless tobacco packs quite a dose. Holding an average-size dip in the mouth for 30 minutes delivers as much nicotine as smoking three cigarettes. Two cans a week is the equivalent of smoking a pack and a half a day.



Little wonder, then, that baseball's major league refuses to ban tobacco. Cravings and withdrawals could get ugly, to the point of sinking player performance to the level of the Bad News Bears.

Nicotine withdrawals and cravings can be very intense. According to Surgeon General, quitting nicotine is as difficult as quitting heroin or cocaine. This is why "cold turkey" is virtually impossible.

The **Quit For Life** tobacco program (1-866-784-8454) is different. It combines nicotine replacement medication with telephone coaching to offer eligible carpenters, spouses and dependents the best chance of quitting for good.

Nicotine patches or gum are free for program participants. Medication is an option, too. You can get Wellbutrin (bupropion) or Chantix without a copay if your doctor writes the prescription.



With cravings and withdrawals under control, it's easier to focus on your Quit Plan. You'll get help identifying thought patterns and situations that trigger your desire to use tobacco. During your five scheduled coaching sessions, you and your Quit Coach will also work on coping strategies. You can talk to a Quit Coach any time you need help getting through a tough situation. The online tools and support can be helpful, too.

Quitting is tough, even with great support. It might take several attempts to quit for good, so don't give up if you strike out the first time. You can enroll and re-enroll as many times as you need. In other words, keep swinging.

Eligible health plan members can join Quit For Life for free. Call 1-866-784-8454 or visit www.quitnow.net/ctww.



Quit For Life[®] Program

\$200 incentive for Nurtur condition management

Do you have diabetes, heart failure, or heart disease?

Do you have asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)?

Do you have low back pain?

Living with any of these can involve serious challenges. Fortunately, serious help is available. Here are 10 good reasons to participate in a Condition Management program from **Nurtur** (1-877-676-7700).

1. It helps you take control.

Learning more about your condition and how to manage symptoms empowers you to enjoy a better quality of life.



2. It's confidential. Nothing is shared with your union or your employer.

3. It's specialized. A Health Coach is a health care professional who specializes in your particular illness or condition. Depending on your situation, your Health Coach may be a registered nurse, certified diabetes educator,



exercise physiologist, respiratory therapist, or dietician. They know what they're talking about. They know how to help.



4. It's what the doctor recommended. Condition Management doesn't replace your doctor's treatment

plan—but it does make your doctor's plan more effective.

5. It's good for busy people.

Coaching is done over the phone, so you get individual assistance without the hassle



and expense of driving to appointments. Calls are usually scheduled once a month and last about 15 minutes.

6. It's help from someone you can trust. You don't have to go through it alone. Coaches are experienced clinicians who are passionate about helping people improve their health.



7. It has fewer side effects.

A Condition Management program can teach you how to control symptoms on your own, with fewer medications or none at all, with your doctor's approval.

8. It can lower medical expenses. Learning to manage symptoms helps you avoid unnecessary office visits, hospital stays, procedures, and days off work.



9. It's free. There is no out-of-pocket charge to participate. It is part of your fringe benefits package.

10. It comes with a \$200 reward. Receive a \$200 Hallmark gift card for completing a health assessment call and six additional calls with a Health Coach. This incentive is available to eligible, non-Medicare participants, spouses, domestic partners, and dependents, including parents of non-adult children in the asthma program. There is no deadline for completion of your calls.



For more information about treating chronic conditions, visit the Carpenters Trusts of Western Washington website: www.ctww.org/nurtur.


nurtur

Are you ready for your next appointment?

What you do leading up to your health care appointment can improve communication with your doctor. Better communication can help you stay as healthy as you can.

- 1. Find information to help you understand your health condition, symptoms or treatment choices.** It will help you engage in a productive dialogue with your doctor. The internet is full of unreliable websites so stick to credible sites like Mayo Clinic's **EmbodyHealth** website, created especially for members of the Carpenters Health and Security Plan.
- 2. Prepare a list of questions you want to ask during your visit.** The information you find may raise more questions than it answers. Being curious and asking your doctor about them can establish a meaningful conversation about your health.
- 3. Make a list of all the things you want to tell or show your doctor.** What you include on your list will vary depending on your health condition and the reasons for your visit. For example, you can write down your symptoms, when they started, and how they may have changed over time. If you're managing a chronic illness, write down the challenges or difficulties you are experiencing.
- 4. Bring a list of medications you are currently taking.** This includes all prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins, herbs, supplements and homeopathic remedies. The **ExpressScripts** website (www.express-scripts.com) is a convenient way to access to pharmacy claims, medication history, handy tools and information.
- 5. Ask a friend or family member to go with you to your appointment.** This can be a great help if you are having serious health problems or feeling confused, concerned or overwhelmed. This person can help you listen carefully, ask good questions and take notes.

Hypertension: Medication is not the only way

They call high blood pressure "the silent killer." Controlling it is essential, but doing it with blood pressure medication can bring uncomfortable side effects. Irregular heartbeat, cough, fever, congestion, diarrhea, constipation, headache, nausea, dizziness, nervousness, anxiety, sexual dysfunction, skin rash, fatigue, drowsiness—these are known side effects of medications prescribed for high blood pressure. With a doctor's help, high blood pressure can be controlled without medication. Here are 10 things you can do on your own, recommended by the doctors at Mayo Clinic. Go to Mayo Clinic's **EmbodyHealth** website (www.CarpentersHealth.org) for articles, tips, and tools to help you manage your health.

- 1. Maintain a healthy weight**
- 2. Exercise regularly**
- 3. Eat a healthy diet**
- 4. Reduce sodium in your diet**
- 5. Limit the amount of alcohol you drink**
- 6. Avoid tobacco products and secondhand smoke**
- 7. Cut back on caffeine**
- 8. Reduce your stress**
- 9. Monitor your blood pressure at home and make regular doctor's appointments**
- 10. Get support from family and friends**





CARPENTERS TRUSTS

of Western Washington

PO BOX 1929, Seattle, WA 98111-1929

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS
U.S. POSTAGE
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 5544

Ask Mayo Clinic for quick, credible answers

When you have questions about a symptom, illness, or injury, **Ask Mayo Clinic** can help. Call the nurse line (1-800-903-1836) and program that number in your cell phone so it's handy the next time. If you don't feel like talking, visit www.CarpentersNurseLine.org for the online symptom assessment. Enter this access code to begin your session: carpenters. You'll get trusted guidance and peace of mind either way. It can save time and money, too.

