



Wellness Starts with You

Your UI Benefits Can Support You in Your Wellness Journey

Caring for yourself is important to staying healthy. For example, you go to the doctor when you have a sore throat. You buy nasal spray for allergy season. While those examples of caring for yourself are important parts to staying healthy, there's much more to your overall wellbeing.

Your mental health and your environment affect your physical health. So, instead of only addressing your health when something goes wrong, think about your lifestyle and how you can take proactive steps toward practicing wellness.

Wellness is about your cultural environment and your physical, psychological and emotional needs—and the steps you need to take to improve these areas of your life.

Use the resources available to you to address physical and mental health concerns as they arise. That may mean taking a walk and practicing deep breathing, or paying attention to physical changes in your body and scheduling a visit with your doctor.

If you're dealing with depression or anxiety, it's important to find support—it'll help your physical wellbeing as well! Avoiding long-term stressors lowers your risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and more, according to the [American Psychological Association](#).

Several benefits, resources and programs are available to help you navigate everyday life challenges. Like your Employee Assistance Program, which offers up to eight free counseling sessions.

6 Wellness Resources to Know



Confidential Counseling at No Cost to You

Connect with a licensed counselor confidentially and pay nothing for up to eight in-person or telehealth counseling sessions. Speak with a counselor when you're in crisis or dealing with mental health and other stresses, including financial issues, relationship concerns, and feeling depressed and anxious. Bookmark eaphelplink.com (use company code: UI1) or call **1-800-999-1077**.

See [page 5](#) for details.

Care When You're in Crisis

No matter what, you're never alone. Several national, state and local support programs are available to you when you need them. Get information about [mental health hotlines now](#).

Practice Mindfulness from the Comfort of Your Home

Every Wednesday and Friday at noon (PT), practice meditation with UCLA-certified mindfulness teachers via [Zoom](#). Drop in for the first 20 minutes for a soothing meditation and then stay for an optional sharing/discussion session. All are welcome.

Help with Quitting Tobacco

Struggling to quit tobacco? If you or your dependents are enrolled in a University health plan, you can receive free nicotine replacement therapy with products covered under your prescription drug coverage. Plus, you can get tobacco-cessation assistance through the EAP. Learn more about all the [resources](#) available to you.

Blue Cross Members: Access Exclusive Resources and Tools

Maintain and improve your health through workshops, health coaching, a wellness library, and exercise and food tracking.

[Blue Cross of Idaho Website](#) (You'll need to register if you haven't already.)

Fitness Resources

Virtual workouts, indoor and outdoor activities, and Vandal community resources.

[UI Benefits Website](#)

Learn more about all your [University health and wellness resources](#).

Ask an Expert: Keep Your Eyes Healthy



Don't overlook the health of your eyes. Many of the things you can do to improve your overall health, such as keeping a healthy diet and not using tobacco, are also good for your vision. A healthy lifestyle and getting regular checkups can prevent vision problems later on. **If you have the University's VSP coverage, you're covered for an annual exam each year.**

Q How often should I go to the eye doctor?

A Get an eye exam each year. Conditions like macular degeneration and glaucoma are easier to treat when they're caught early. Call your vision provider right away if you're experiencing blurred or double vision, sensitivity to light, or poor night vision.

Q What are my out-of-pocket costs when I go to the eye doctor?

A You pay less when you use a VSP network provider. If you're enrolled in a University of Idaho vision plan, your annual eye exam is 100% covered after you meet your \$10 deductible. After a \$25 deductible, your vision plan also covers lenses every 12 months and frames every 24 months. You can use non-VSP providers if you want to, but you'll pay more.

Q I have good vision. Do I still need an eye exam?

A Even though you have good vision, you should still have your eyes checked once every couple of years. During an eye exam, your doctor is not just checking how well you see, but is also checking your risk for eye diseases, such as glaucoma and cataracts.

Q When should I wear eye protection?

A Wearing sunglasses when you're outdoors is more than just stylish—it's good for your eyes. The sun's UV rays can increase your risk of cataracts and macular degeneration. If you're working with wood, metal or chemicals, wear safety glasses to prevent debris from getting into your eyes. And never go swimming without goggles. Swimming pools may contain diseases, like conjunctivitis (pinkeye), and chlorine makes your eyes itchy and dry. If you're a VSP member, you save 20% on glasses and sunglasses at [Eyeconic](#).

Q What else should I know about eye health?

A Proper nutrition and exercise are good for your eyes—and every other part of you! Spinach, kale and other leafy greens contain antioxidants that keep your vision sharp. Fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids, such as tuna and salmon, protect you from chronic eye conditions. Physical activity prevents you from getting other conditions that affect your eyesight, like diabetes and high blood pressure.

Shop for Eyewear from Your Home



Your VSP vision benefits now include a convenient online eyewear store! **Eyeconic** offers an expansive selection of frames and lenses, and a Virtual Try-On tool to help you find the perfect pair. Plus, Eyeconic verifies your prescription with your VSP provider. All you have to do is start shopping.

Other advantages to using Eyeconic:

- 20% off glasses and sunglasses, even if you've already used your VSP benefits for the year
- If you find the same product elsewhere for a lower price, Eyeconic will refund you the difference
- Free frame adjustments and contact lens consultations
- Exclusively for VSP members

Download the VSP App



Access your vision benefits while you're on the go. With the redesigned VSP app, you can get exclusive member discounts, find a provider nearby, download your ID card, review a history of your previous visits to the eye doctor, and more.

Download today:



Talking Through Challenges from Your Home



Nearly **one in three Americans** have talked to a therapist during the COVID-19 pandemic—and 86% of them say that therapy helped.

Your mental health is nothing to ignore. Talking through your problems, confidentially, with a licensed professional has major benefits.

- **Verbalizing your story helps you understand it.** “Getting to the root of the problem” isn’t a therapy cliché. Humans have crowded minds, and mental health professionals are trained to guide you as you think through your experiences. Once you know where your feelings are coming from, you’ll be better equipped to resolve the issue.
- **You build trust with other people.** Having a safe and confidential space to discuss what’s going on in your life (without judgment) can play a big role in taking care of yourself. Plus, group therapy is available if you’d prefer to address your feelings in a community setting alongside people struggling with the same issue.
- **Therapy brings closure.** By addressing events in therapy, you can process and move past them.

Talk Therapy Is Free to Start

University of Idaho employees receive up to eight free, confidential counseling sessions per issue, per year. Counselors are available 24/7 to discuss anxiety, depression, substance abuse, grief, and anything else on your mind.

Connect Today

Visit eaphelpink.com (company code: UI1) or call 1-800-999-1077 to get started.

New to the University?

Register for an Employee Benefits Orientation

Learn how University of Idaho benefits—medical, dental, vision, life and disability insurance coverage—work. Plus, get an overview of the retirement plans and supplemental options available to you. Be sure to register ahead of the Zoom event. Before you attend an orientation session, view the **[online benefits orientation guide](#)**.

Make sure the date you select is on or after your first day of work in your benefit-eligible position.

Orientation dates are:

June 28 • July 12 • July 26





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Benefits Website

www.uidaho.edu/benefits

- Plan documents for core benefits
- UI education benefit for employees, spouses and dependents
- Retirement resources, information and links
- Register for orientation events
- Access wellness program and employee assistance resources
- Understand leave and time away from work benefits
- Find frequently used forms and FAQs