

MSU Texas Human Resources

March 2022



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March Wellness Events! National Nutrition Month

Feeling healthy is dependent on what and how we eat. During the month of March, National Nutrition Month, re-dedicate yourself to improving eating habits with support from ERS Wellness Webinars.

In March, ERS is hosting dietitian Lindsey Menge for a cooking demonstration and two webinars:

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| March 11 th | Plant Power Cooking Demonstration Zoom Link with Lindsey Menge, MS, RD,LD |
| March 23 at 10am | Intermittent Fasting & Immunity with Lindsey Menge MS, RD, LD |
| March 30 at 10am | Eat more Plants! with Lindsey Menge MS, RD, LD |

Register at the links above or visit the [March Wellness Flyer](#) and register for the webinars that are of interest to you.

Also on the [ERS Wellness Events Calendar](#), you'll see the regularly scheduled webinars introducing HealthSelect's **no-cost** healthy lifestyle programs, **Wondr Health** and **Real Appeal**. These **free** HealthSelect programs can help you improve your eating habits in ways that work for you. Employees and dependents 18 or older who are enrolled in a HealthSelect plan may be eligible to participate at no additional cost in the **Wondr** program or the **Real Appeal** program.

Both programs are on-line programs. Please see the [March newsletter published by Lacy Wolff, ERS Health Promotion Administrator](#) for more information on these **free** HealthSelect programs.

Making Healthy Changes in Your Life

We all recognize that changing our behaviors and less desirable habits can be difficult. And if we are successful in changing those behaviors and habits, maintaining that change can be even more difficult. **"Be the Change You Want to See in Your Life"** by **Lacy Wolff, ERS Health Promotion Administrator**, has great information regarding goals vs. systems and how both are important to accomplish lasting, healthy changes. If interested in putting goals and systems in place to make healthy changes in your life, see Lacy's [newsletter](#).



Must I designate a Primary Care Physician (PCP)?

Participants enrolled in the HealthSelect of Texas Point of Service plan must designate a PCP with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas to access in-network services and get the highest level of benefits while spending the least amount of money out-of-pocket. Please visit the [ERS webpage regarding designation of a PCP](#) for instructions on how to accomplish the designation.

Consumer Directed HealthSelect, HealthSelect Secondary, and HealthSelect Out-of-State participants do not have to designate a PCP. But it's a good idea for everyone to have a trusted provider managing their care.

To spend the least amount of money out of your pocket, participants in all HealthSelect plans may want to consider using an in-network provider. Please visit the [HealthSelect of Texas provider tool](#) and choose the plan that you are enrolled in to search for a list of in-network providers.



Importance of an Annual Preventive Exam

Scheduling your annual preventive exam can be the most important thing you do to support your overall health. Visiting your Primary Care Physician (PCP) regularly can help to effectively manage any chronic conditions, like diabetes, hypertension, and high blood pressure or better yet, prevent them from occurring. Early detection can help you and your physician manage these conditions more effectively.

Your annual preventive exam with your designated PCP is available at no cost to you! That's right, no copay as long as you visit an in-network provider that is your designated PCP. For a complete list of preventive services covered at no cost to you, see the [HealthSelect of Texas Preventive Flyer](#).

For additional information regarding the importance of your annual preventive exam, please see the "[Wellness, The One Thing We Can All Do Today](#)" newsletter by Lacy Wolff, ERS Health Promotion Administrator.

As a reminder, having an annual preventive exam earns you 8 hours of Wellness Leave per the Worksite Wellness Policy. Visit the [Wellness Center webpage](#) for more information.



How to Avoid Long Wait Times and Missed ERS Callbacks When Calling ERS

The Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) Contact Center is ERS' front line in supporting State of Texas employees, retirees, and their dependents and survivors. But, like many organizations, ERS' Contact Center is facing pandemic-related staffing shortages. As a result, it's taking longer to answer calls and emails, and to process death benefits. ERS is asking for your patience.

When you call ERS customer service, the automated phone system might give you the option for a callback, rather than waiting on hold. If you choose a callback, you are encouraged to add ERS' customer service phone number, **(877) 275-4377**, to your phone's contact list. If ERS' customer service phone number is not in your contacts list, your phone may silence ERS' callback or send it straight to voicemail.

If ERS' callback does go to your voicemail, ERS will leave a message if your voicemail box is set up and receiving new messages. However, when you return ERS' call, you may have to wait on hold again. The best way to prevent having to call ERS back is to add

ERS' customer service phone number to your contacts list and keep your phone close by until you hear back from ERS.

Considering Retirement?

TRS participants can request a retirement estimate, which includes retirement forms, from TRS one year prior to their expected retirement date. It takes TRS approximately 90 days to process the request for a retirement estimate, so please keep this in mind. You can request a retirement estimate electronically by signing into your [MYTRS account](#) and clicking on the "Request Retirement Estimate" on the left hand side of the page. You can also request an estimate by completing and mailing the [TRS 18 Request for Estimate of Retirement Benefits](#) form.

ORP participants should contact their ORP vendor representative to discuss retirement plans and distribution options from their ORP account. You may want to consider starting this discussion with your representative a few years prior to your planned retirement date.

Please contact Judy Salazar, ext 4784 or judy.salazar@msutexas.edu, well in advance of your planned retirement date to allow for plenty of time for the proper paperwork to be completed. The normal timeframe to submit retirement paperwork to TRS and ERS is 90 days prior to your expected retirement date. This gives both agencies plenty of time to process the necessary forms.

Human Resources Contacts

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