





#### AMIDA CARE, WITH OFFICES NEAR YOU

#### **Main Office**

248 W. 35th Street, 8th Floor New York, NY 10001 Phone: (646) 757-7000 Fax: (646) 786-1801

#### **Bronx Borough Office**

349 East 149th Street, Suite 401 Bronx, NY 10451 Phone: (646) 757-7007

#### **Brooklyn Borough Office**

81 Willoughby Street, 7th Floor Brooklyn, NY 11201 Phone: (646) 757–7009 YOU CAN ALWAYS CALL MEMBER SERVICES AT: 1-800-556-0689

OR VISIT US ONLINE AT: www.amidacareny.org

#### **Photographic Image Disclosure**

The photographs used herein are for illustrative purposes only; they do not imply any particular professional credential or health status on the part of any person depicted. Some of the persons depicted are models, who are neither employees nor enrolled members of Amida Care.













# Contents

THE AMIDA CARE VIEW FALL 2014/VOL. 24

- Letter from the CEO
- 4 Reach Out and...
- We Celebrate Life!
- Member Services Updates
- 3 Steps to Prevent Diabetes
- I Think I Have the Flu
- It's Flu Season!
- Healthy Rewards: Live Life Plus
- Asthma
- Generic vs. Brand Name
- Ready to Quit?
- **30** Fall Craft Project
- ZEN in the City





Dear Amida Care Members,

Welcome to the latest issue of **The Amida Care View.** Summer came and went, and although
we enjoyed a nice, mild summer, we are very
happy that fall – a favorite season for many –
is finally here!

As we look forward to this new season of cooler temperatures and colorful leaves, we fondly look back at the good times that summer brought, especially Amida Care's annual **Summer Life Celebration**. We were so happy to see so many of you there! If you missed it, or would simply like to remember the fun times we had, check out the photo album on page 6.

The Life Celebrations and monthly Live Your

**Life events** are always a great

opportunity to reconnect with

old friends and meet new ones. Feeling connected and having a community of support is important to be happy and stay healthy. Read

about how you can Reach Out and

expand your social circle, on page 4.

Another highlight of this year's celebration was the official introduction of Amida Care's **Healthy Rewards** program, which we first introduced in the last issue of your member magazine. This program celebrates you taking care of yourself!

Check out the ways you can earn rewards, on page 19.

Many of us are familiar with the old saying "every rose has its thorn," well, in fall's case, this thorn is called **FLU SEASON**. It can be tricky for many of us to know if we have the common cold, the flu, or even pneumonia. When should we call our doctor? Turn to page 16 for some tips on what to do if you get sick this season. Remember, your wellness is our shared priority and we urge you to be prepared.

Aside from the flu, we have included other important topics, in this issue, such as **Diabetes** (page 14), **Asthma** (page 22), **Smoking Counseling** (page 28), and a FAQ sheet about **Brand-name vs. Generic** medication (page 24).

We hope you enjoy this issue of **The Amida Care View**. Thank you for being a valued member of Amida Care. We are happy to serve and continue to go **ABOVE AND BEYOND** for you.

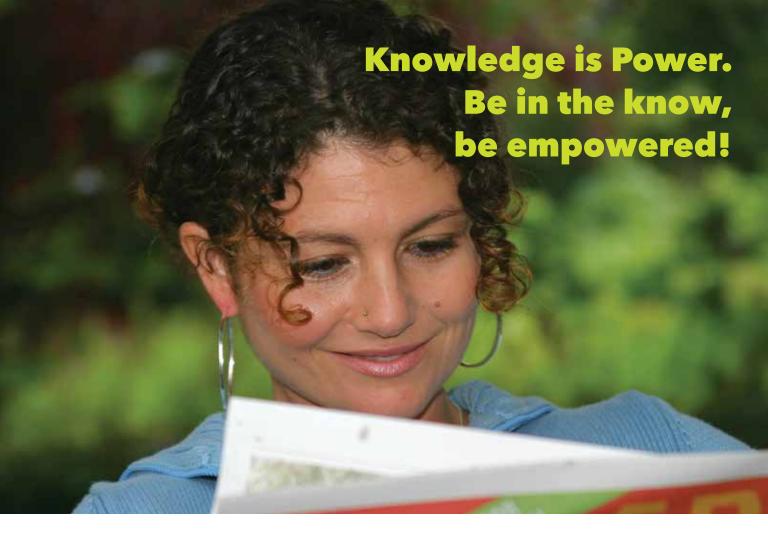
Stay warm and dry this fall, and hope to see you at the Winter Life Celebration!

Abrazos,

Doug Wirth

President & CEO

DougWirth



# **Amida Care Resource Library**

# GET THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO BE AN ACTIVE PART OF YOUR CARE TEAM.

At Amida Care, we have clear and easy to read info packs on a variety of health topics:

- Asthma
- Colonoscopy
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Women's Health
- Mammography

- Men's Health
- Immunizations
- Safer Sex
- Healthy Goals
- Flu and much more.

Call our Member Services Department to request the information you need to stay healthy.

1.800.556.0689

Call us with suggestions for other topics!

# Reach out and ... EXPAND YOUR SOCIAL CIRCLE.

Introduce yourself. Do you know your neighbors? You never know when friendships may bloom. Amida Care's monthly *Live Your Life* events are a great and fun opportunity to meet other members.

Smile. A smile can make you seem friendly and more approachable to potential new friends.

Try new things. There are many free events and activities sponsored by the city. They also provide opportunities to meet new people. Call 311 to find free events near you.

Pick up a phone. Go through your old address book and reconnect with those you haven't heard from recently. There are reasons why you made those friendships in the first place.

Go online. Use the Internet to connect with friends and family. Most people nowadays have email or are part of an online social network.

Help someone. Helping people or asking for help is a great way to make friends. Everyone likes to feel useful.

Volunteer. Doing something you enjoy, with others, not only gives you a chance to meet people who support a good cause, but also contributes to keeping your community healthier.

HAPPIER of HEALTHIER





Amida Care wants to give a big thanks to every member who attended this year's Summer Life Celebration at the Copacabana, on August 12, 2014. You made this party the best one to date! New and familiar faces beamed from all over the room and the positive energy was exalting. There was no shortage of tasty food and refreshments, great music and dancing, and of course, laughter.







This was truly a celebration of life and wellness. It was also the perfect opportunity to highlight Amida Care's Healthy Rewards Program, which rewards you for taking care of yourself, so you can continue to live life more fully. Our staff and members had a lot of fun identifying the health services displayed on the Healthy Rewards t-shirts. Of course, each member received his or her very own Healthy Rewards t-shirt.







We hope to see you at the Winter Life Celebration!



# We Celebrate Life!



# I am Robert Brooks: I know who I am

It took Robert almost 4 years to rebuild his life after a HIV diagnosis,, bouts with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and a fire that destroyed everything.

Now Robert is employed at Housing Works as a Mental Health Advocate, but the journey was not easy. Here's a glimpse into Robert's quest to navigate the healthcare system, find housing, and ultimately, return to work.



'I leaped forward with the goal of rebuilding myself"

#### Getting His House in Order

In 2011, Robert was diagnosed with HIV. But according to him, his biggest challenge has been surviving a devastating fire, in which he lost everything. He found himself unemployed, homeless, HIV positive, and from the weight of these crises, concerned about his mental health. Always a driven person, Robert started tackling one issue at a time. He gained access to life-saving benefits and started living in a Single Room Occupancy (SRO), but was determined to have a home of his own.

So, Robert began advocating for himself. He made weekly trips to his HASA worker to check on the status of his housing applications. Then Robert heard about Housing Works' Congregate Housing Program by word of mouth. He learned more about the program and the supportive services they offered. "I leaped forward with the goal of rebuilding myself," he recalls. Within a short time, Robert had his housing and benefits in order. He then joined Amida Care and gained access to a network of health care providers and services.

continued on page 10



#### Robert, the Advocate

It wasn't long before Robert learned how to navigate Housing Works and the healthcare system. He set a goal of learning about his community. After all, this was all new to him. First, he studied Housing Works – the groups, the Adult Day Healthcare Program, etc. Next, he joined the Community Advisory Board at Housing Works, which led him to Amida Care Town Hall Meetings. From bringing up issues at the meetings, to passing on information, it was a natural progression for Robert to serve on the Member Advisory Council at Amida Care. He serves on the Board and is committed to learning as much as he can, to be able to empower others by passing along information.

#### Journey Back to Work

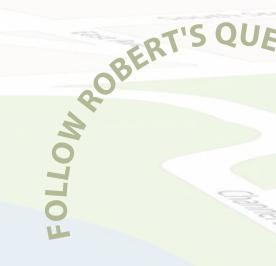
Robert began working at the very young age of 14! He worked at fast food restaurants throughout his teenage years, and by age 18, he had earned a promotion to manager. As a young manager, he brought out the best in his team by caring

for them and applying the philosophy of "opening doors for others," and of "paying it forward." After college, Robert's love of business and details led him to work in Finance as an Analyst/Business Manager, and it was during this time that things took a turn for the worst.

Robert met many obstacles, but he was able to overcome those obstacles with great determination and a support team. He was then ready to re-enter the workforce. If anyone asked Robert why he was on a journey back to employment, he replied in a confident voice, "There is no reason why I shouldn't work. I am Robert Brooks, and I know who I am." Yet, before he could take the final step in going back to work, Robert had to confront one more fear, the fear of losing the safety net he had worked for so hard.

# Why did Robert want to work at Housing Works?

For Robert, Housing Works, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing a comprehensive array of services for vulnerable New Yorkers, was the ideal place to work. He believed in the organization's mission, he used the services, and he knew what it took to help someone else in need.





#### Robert, the Mental Health Advocate

In January of 2014, Robert decided it was time for him go back to work. He said to himself, "I am 36 years old and I don't want to lose myself in this moment. This is NOT the end for me." He paved his way back to work by serving as a peer managing the front desk, and by volunteering in different departments. His experience in navigating the healthcare system, managing his mental health concerns, and advocating as an advisory member helped Robert fine tune his skills and uniquely equipped him to fill the position of a Mental Health Advocate at Housing Works. Today, Robert is excited to be able to make a difference in his community.

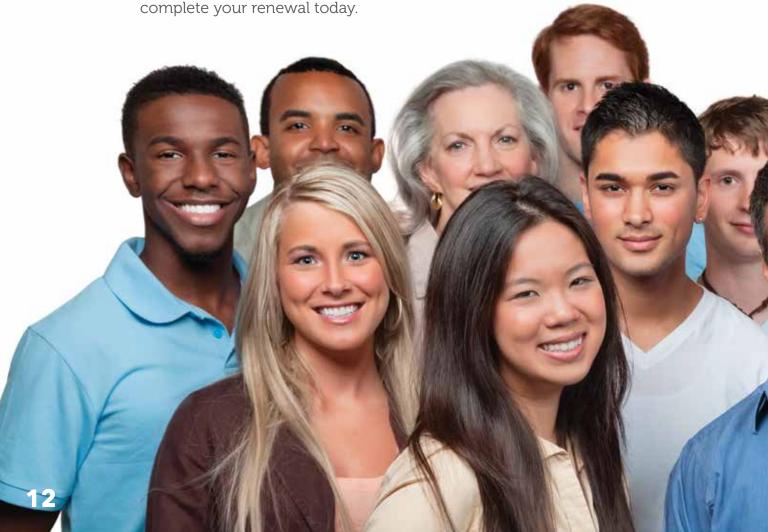
#### Checklist for Returning to Work

- **■** Take Care of Your Health
- Have a Support System in Place
  - Someone to talk to about the transition back to work the pros and cons
  - Case Manager, Social Worker can all help with mapping out the blueprint of going back to work
  - Have good relationship with your PCP
  - Engage in Mental Health Services as necessary
  - 1:1 therapy is a great tool to process the transition
- Use your tools to navigate the stress of the transition
  - If possible, volunteer before you apply for the position
    - Volunteering helps you foresee any transitional challenges and can help you navigate them better.

# MEMBER SERV

#### **RENEW YOUR COVERAGE**

Once a year, the New York City Human Resource Administration will send you a recertification, or renewal form, to continue your health benefits. It is very important that you complete and return your renewal form as soon as you get it. Amida Care wants to help you keep your benefits and can help you complete your renewal form. We have representatives throughout New York City that can help you complete the renewal form. You can also get help with other questions you may have about your Amida Care plan. Don't delay,



# ICES UPDATES

#### **EXTENDED HOURS FOR MEMBER SERVICES**

As of **October 1, 2014**, Amida Care's Member Services department is available from 8am to 6pm, Monday through Friday, by phone at 1-800-556-0689. You will also receive a new Member ID card which replaces the one you currently have. Your member ID number has not changed, but the address for submitting claims has changed, effective October 1, 2014. The new card also has a group number to help providers identify your benefits. Please remember to destroy the old ID card when you receive the new one.



BEFORE PEOPLE DEVELOP DIABETES, THEY ALMOST ALWAYS HAVE "PREDIABETES." PREDIABETES MEANS THAT YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS ARE HIGHER THAN NORMAL BUT NOT YET HIGH ENOUGH TO BE DIAGNOSED AS DIABETES.

IF YOU MONITOR YOUR BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL AND MAKE SOME IMPORTANT LIFESTYLE CHANGES, YOU MAY PREVENT GETTING DIABETES.





There are a few things that raise our risk for prediabetes (and diabetes). You should think about getting checked if you:

- weigh too much;
- are not active;
- are 45 years of age or older;
- have a mother, father, brother, or sister with diabetes;
- are African or African American, Latino, Native American, Asian, or Pacific Islander;
- are a woman who had diabetes while pregnant (gestational diabetes);
- have high blood pressure (140/90 mm Hg or higher);
- have low good cholesterol and high triglycerides (fat).



LOSE 5 TO 10 PERCENT OF YOUR WEIGHT IF YOU WEIGH TOO MUCH.

If you weigh 250 pounds, try to lose 12 to 25 pounds

EAT
HEALTHY
FOODS LOW
IN FAT AND
CALORIES,
AND HIGH
IN FIBER.

Vegetables and greens are low in fat and high in fiber





GET MORE ACTIVE BY TRYING TO EXERCISE MODERATELY FOR AT LEAST 30 MINUTES A DAY. A BRISK WALK IS GREAT.

Try getting out of the subway 2 or 3 stops before your final destination and walking there

# I think I have the flu Should I call the doctor?

The symptoms of a cold, the flu, and pneumonia could be very similar. You need a health professional to correctly diagnose them, but you **should** call your Primary Care Provider if you have any of the following **severe** symptoms:

**High fever** – This can be a sign of another bacterial infection that should be treated. If you've had a fever for more than 3 days or the fever is over 102° F, you should call your doctor.

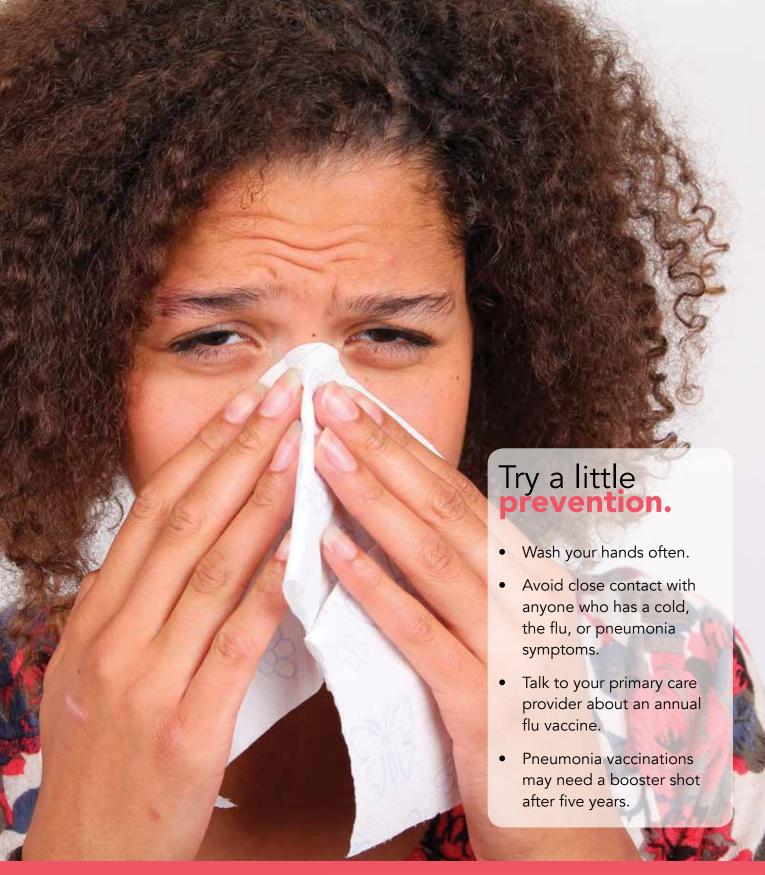
**Painful swallowing** – Although a sore throat from a cold or flu can cause mild discomfort, severe pain could mean strep throat; which may require treatment by a doctor.

**Frequent coughing** – When a cough doesn't go away after two or three weeks, it could be bronchitis; which may need an antibiotic. Postnasal drip or sinusitis can also result in a persistent cough. Asthma is another cause of persistent coughing.

**Bad congestion and headaches** – When colds and allergies "plug you up," they can lead to a sinus infection (sinusitis). If you have pain around the eyes and face, with thick nasal discharge after a week, you may have a bacterial infection and possibly need an antibiotic.

#### Call 911 or go to an Emergency Room if you have:

Severe chest pain • Severe headache • Shortness of breath Dizziness • Confusion • Persistent vomiting





#### The Pneumonia Vaccine

is covered by our Healthy Rewards program. For more information turn to page 19.



Remember to call your PCP and schedule your flu shot. Vaccination is the BEST way to protect yourself against the flu.



We are happy to announce that as an **Amida Care Live Life Plus** Member, you are now eligible to earn up to \$125 in gift cards per year, just for taking care of yourself and meeting your health goals. Members will receive rewards based on our monthly review of doctors' claims by the Plan. There are no more forms to be filled out because Amida Care is working with your doctors to make sure you receive the incentives you deserve.

For more information please call Live Life Plus Member Services at 1-800-556-0689

# It pays to take care of yourself ...

# Primary Care Physician (PCP) Monitoring Visits

**\$25** per visit - Up to 2 visits per calendar year



PCP visit between January-June Requires a PCP medical check up, a Viral Load Test, and a CD4 count



PCP visit between July-December Requires a PCP medical check up, a Viral Load Test, and a CD4 count

#### **Cancer Screenings**

\$20 per screening



**Annual Mammogram** Women ages 40-69



**Annual Colonoscopy** Ages 50-75



**Annual Cervical Test**Women ages 21+



Annual Anal Test Ages 21+



## Health Screenings and Services

\$15 for each of following services:



Dental Check Up



**Dilated Retinal Eye Exam**If Diabetic



Case Management Assessment



**Hepatitis B Vaccine** If indicated



Pneumonia Vaccine



**STD Screenings**Syphilis, Gonorrhea,
Chlamydia, HPV



**Hepatitis Screening**When indicated



Cholesterol Screening



**Bone Density Testing** 

For women over 60 years old, or anyone, if medically indicated

For more information please call Member Services at

1-800-556-0689

# ... and your children

# Child and Adolescent Well Care Visits\*

**\$25** per visit - Up to 6 visits per calendar year



# Preventive and Scheduled PCP Check Up

Children 0-24 months old

\$65 per year



# Preventive and Scheduled PCP Check Up

Children 2-21 years old

#### **Preventive Care**

\$25 for each of the following services:



## **Annual Lead Screening**Children under 2 years old



#### **Annual Dental Visit** Children 2-21 years old



#### **Annual Adolescent Preventive Care**

Children 12-21 years old Assessment, counseling, education on risk behaviors, such as tobacco usage, substance abuse, depression and sexual activity, provided by a PCP



#### Annual Pap Test

Ages 18+ or sexually active

**Important:** The child needs to be an active member of Amida Care Live Life Plus to participate in the Healthy Rewards program.

#### Weight and Nutrition

**\$35** per year



# For annual weight, nutrition and physical activity assessment, and counseling

BMI Percentile, Counseling for Nutrition and/or Physical Activity provided by a PCP

#### **Immunizations**

**\*5** for each of the following immunizations:



#### For children under 2 years old

Tetanus/Diphtheria, whooping cough, chickenpox, flu, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, Hep. A and B

**Prior to the child's 13th Birthday** Meningitis, Tetanus/Diphtheria

For a complete list of included immunizations, talk to your PCP or Member Services.

\$25 for HPV immunization



#### For Children 9 – 18 years old Human Papillomavirus Vaccine (HPV) - All 3 doses

**\*Well care visits** are preventive and routinely-scheduled doctor appointments, and are a very important part of a good health strategy.

#### WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a condition in which the walls of your airways swell and block the flow of air. This can make breathing difficult. Asthma cannot be cured, but it can be controlled.

#### **SYMPTOMS**

Asthma symptoms can range from mild to very bad. You may experience:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest tightness
- Trouble sleeping caused by shortness of breath, coughing, or wheezing
- Whistling or wheezing sounds when breathing

#### **ASTHMA TRIGGERS**

These can cause your asthma or make your symptoms worse:

- Exercise
- Dry, cold weather
- Hot, humid weather
- Chemicals, like household cleaning products or workplace chemicals or fumes
- Dust, pollen, animal dander, mold
- Colds
- Smoking

#### **TREATMENT**

Treatment includes avoiding triggers that cause coughing, wheezing, and difficulty breathing. Treatment can include inhalers, pills, and/or a home nebulizer machine. Bad asthma attacks can be life-threatening.

Work with your doctor so that you know what to do if your symptoms get worse.

#### CALL YOUR DOCTOR OR GO TO THE EMERGENCY ROOM IF:

- Your shortness of breath or wheezing gets worse
- You don't feel better after using a quick-relief inhaler, such as albuterol
- You have problems breathing when you are doing regular activities, like making the bed

#### **HELPFUL TIPS**

- Talk to your doctor to make an asthma action plan and discuss the best treatment for you.
- Know your asthma triggers and avoid them; stop asthma attacks before they start.
- Use an air conditioner to reduce the amount of pollen in your home.
- Use a dehumidifier or air conditioner if you live in a humid environment.
- Clean damp areas frequently; like the kitchen and bathroom, in order to prevent mold.
- Dust can trigger asthma; clean your home at least once a week.
- STOP SMOKING.



# Generic vs Brand Name



Generic medicines are just as good as the brand-name medicines, at a much lower price

#### New Medicines, Patents and Names

#### **All New Medicines Have Patents**

When a drug company discovers a new medicine it gets a patent. The patent makes that drug company the only owner of the new medicine. No one else can make it or sell it. Patents are good for about 20 years.

#### Only the Owner of the Medicine Can Use the Brand Name

Drug companies give their own names to their new medicines. That is what we call a brand name. A medicine brand name is owned by the drug company that discovered it. No one else can use the brand name. Drug companies advertise and sell new drugs under the brand name.

#### **Generic Name is the Common Name of a Medicine**

Besides a brand name, all new medicines are given a generic name. Each medicine we use has a unique generic name. The generic name is the official name for a medicine. Nobody owns the generic name.

#### **FDA Approves All New Medicines**

To make and sell the new medicine, the drug company needs to prove to the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) that the medicine works.

#### **Generic Medicines are Good**

After 20 years or so, the patent for a new medicine usually ends or expires. That means that other drug companies can make the same medicine using the generic name only. They can't use the brand name.

#### **FDA Also Approves Generic Medicines**

These generic medicines also go through a strict FDA approval process before they are allowed to be sold in pharmacies.

#### **Savings**

Generic medicines usually cost a lot less because the generic drug companies have fewer expenses. Generic drug companies do not pay for advertising or pay to develop new medicines. They just make the medicines that others discovered, after the patents ends.



#### Generic vs. Brand Name



#### What makes brand-name and generic medicines different?

Although they are called by different names, generic and brand-name medicines are basically the same. They both have the same kind and the same amount of medicine or active drug ingredient. They help your health the same way. This is regulated by the FDA.

#### Are brand-name medicines better than generics?

Generic medicines are just as good as the brandname medicines, at a much lower price. The FDA works to make sure that you are getting the best quality possible when taking generics.

# What about the news reports about certain generic drugs being much worse than brand-name ones?

There can be times when the generic version of a medicine made by one drug company turns out to be different than the brand-name version. When that happens, the medicine or drug is recalled (removed from pharmacies). In most cases, the problem is with the manufacturer. The company that makes the medicine made a mistake. The FDA monitors and reviews the facilities where all medicines available in pharmacies in the US are made. The FDA works to prevent and correct these kind of problems, in both branded and generic medications.

Contributing Author - Kenny Ng

#### I feel like my new generic medicine isn't working well for me, what should I do?

If you feel this way after taking your generic medicine for 5 days or more, you can talk to your pharmacist to see if he or she can order your generic medicine from a different drug company. If this doesn't work, talk to the doctor that prescribed the medicine so that she/he can determine whether another drug might work better for you.

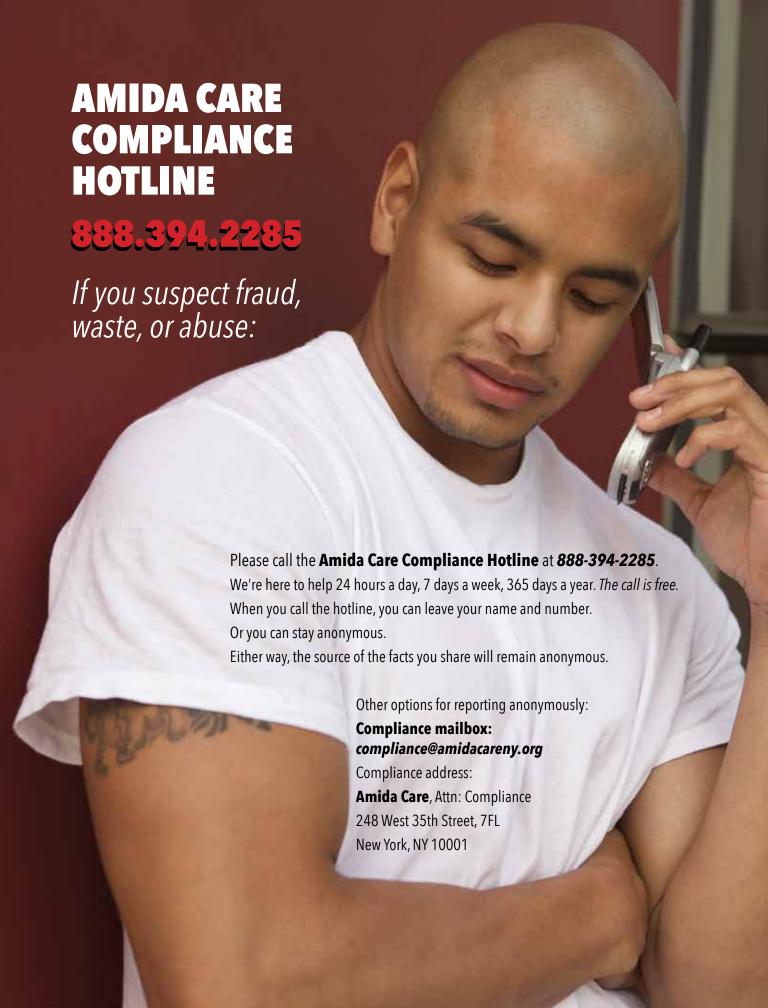
#### Why does my generic medicine look different all of a sudden?

Sometimes your pharmacy may switch your medicine produced by one generic drug company to another generic drug company. As a result, your new prescription or refill for the same medicine could have a different shape, color, or size.

If this happens, you should tell your pharmacist that your medication looks different from what you have been taking. Your pharmacist will work with you to make sure all of your worries and issues are addressed.

#### My doctor wrote me a prescription for the brand-name medicine, why did my pharmacy give me the generic?

By law, all pharmacies in New York must give you the generic medicine unless your doctor notifies the pharmacist. If you are still receiving a brand-name medicine from your pharmacy, the generic is most likely not available yet.



# READY TOUI QUITTING ALONE CAN

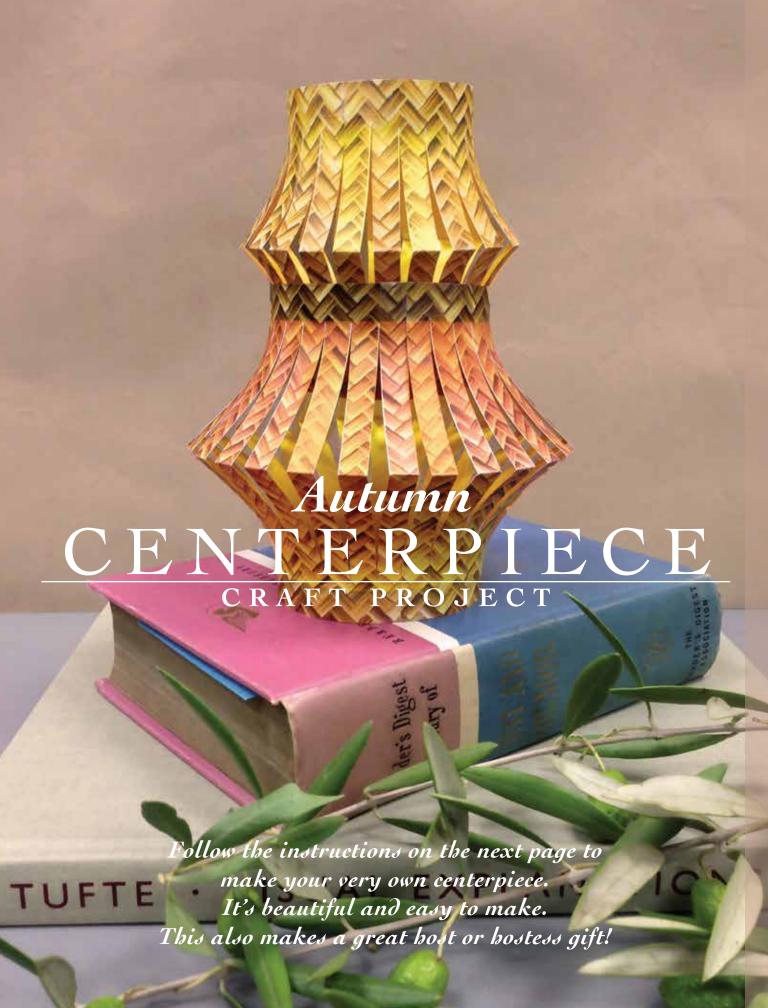
Counseling can help you quit smoking by helping you:

- recognize your triggers or situations that cause you to smoke
- create coping strategies to avoid those triggers
- decide which quit-smoking products to use
- form a support network to help you quit
- redirect your need for tobacco into other more positive ways
- stay motivated, and provide ongoing support

Your Amida Care team is here for you. For more information about smoking cessation counseling, call Member Services at **800-556-0689** or talk to your PCP.

A combination of counseling and medication can make quitting smoking easier.



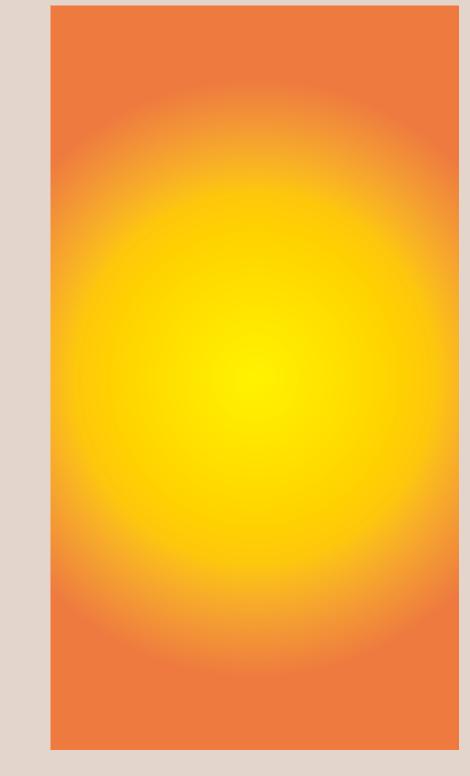




EDGE 2

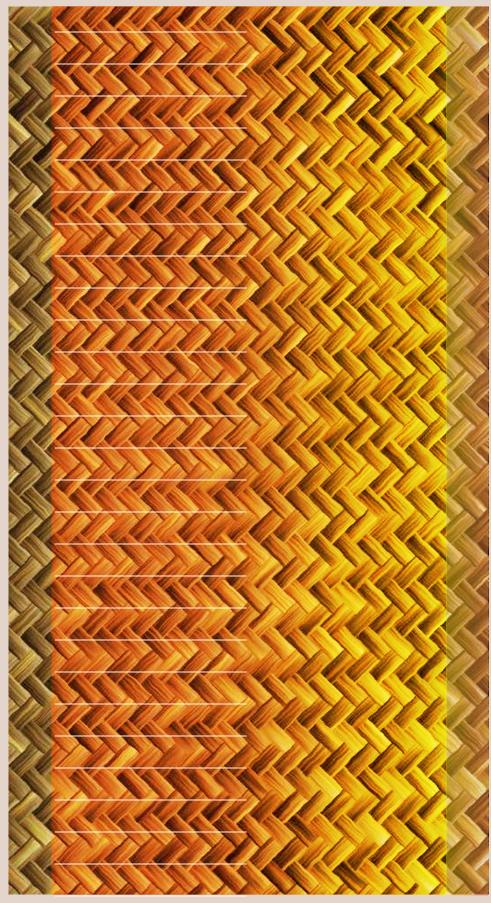
#### **Instructions:**

- 1. Cut around the big rectangular shape.
- 2. Fold the rectangle horizontally down the middle.
- **3.** With the shape folded in half, cut along the printed white lines.
- **4.** Unfold the shape. Overlap **EDGE 1** over **EDGE 2**, creating a cylinder. Tape or glue the edges together.
- **5.** Repeat steps 1-4 with the small rectangle and then stack the smaller piece on top of the bigger piece.
- **6.** Enjoy your beautiful centerpiece!





Autumn Centerpiece



EDGE 2



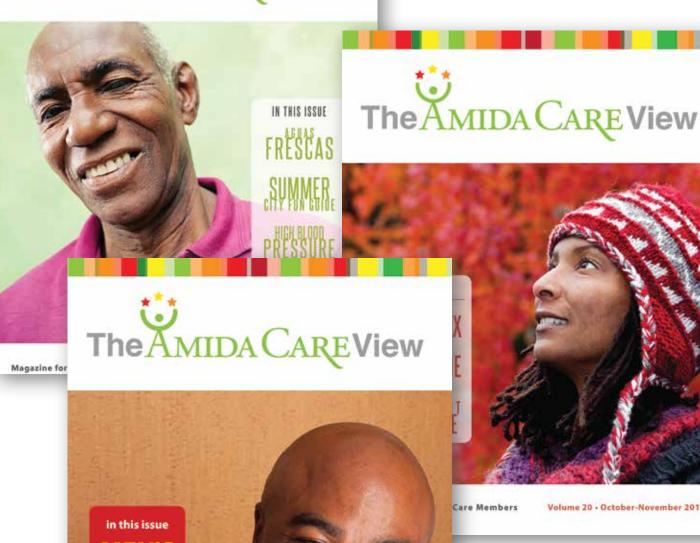
Autumn Centerpiece

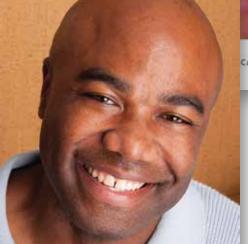




#### YOUR FREE MEMBER MAGAZINE!

Our articles contain clear and important information that will support you in your pursuit of healthy living.





Volume 20 · October-November 2013

#### **VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR PREVIOUS** ISSUES!

LIVELIFEPLUS.AMIDACARENY.ORG/MEMBERS-NEWSLETTERS.HTM

