



Navigating health challenges

Resources to support you and your family as you manage health conditions and/or crisis

We have made every attempt to ensure the accuracy of this content. However, the most reliable and up-to-date information is guaranteed by contacting your health care provider directly.

Begin with your insurance provider

Navigating your health coverage can be daunting – but it doesn't need to be a source of added stress. Our health plan vendors encourage members to contact them with questions. In fact, they prefer to be your first call. That way, they can walk you through all of your coverage options, ensure you have the most up-to-date listings of in-network providers, and direct you to resources that will help you make decisions about your, or a loved ones, care.

In our listing of medical resources we've also included links to benefit overviews and online resources. If you feel more comfortable beginning with your own research, we still encourage you to call your provider and talk through your unique situation.

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Medical resources

Endowed Faculty, staff and covered dependents

The endowed health plans administered by Aetna provide coverage for medical services — the amount you pay varies depending upon if you choose to visit an in-network or out-of-network provider.

Where to start

Call Aetna toll free at 877-371-2007 to speak with a representative who can walk you through your coverage options on an individual basis. They will be able to identify in-network providers, advise about coverage under your plan, and let you know what steps, if any, that you can take to have a provider or service covered as in-network. When you call, have this information ready:

- the birth date of the member you're calling about
- the first and last name of a preferred provider

Questions related to medications and drug coverage must be directed to OptumRx. Gather your list of medications and questions, then speak with a representative toll free at 866-533-6977.

Benefit details available online

Each endowed health plan's Summary Plan Description will provide you with specifics regarding preauthorization and coverage. Find these documents under "Tools and Resources" on each plan's overview page or visit the direct link below:

- [Cornell Program for Healthy Living](#)

Summary Plan Description:

- [Schedule of Benefits](#)
- [Addendum](#)

- [Booklet](#)
- **[Aetna HSA](#)**
Summary Plan Description:
 - [Schedule of Benefits](#)
 - [Addendum](#)
 - [Booklet](#)
- **[Weill Cornell Medicine PPO](#)** — effective Jan. 1, 2017
Summary Plan Description
 - Summary of Benefits (*coming soon*)
 - Booklet (*coming soon*)

Provider directories

- The **Aetna** preferred provider list is available online through [Doc Find](#), searchable by provider type, condition, procedure, name and location.
- Call the **[Weill Cornell Referral Center](#)** (pdf) Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at 646-962-2000 or search their online “[Find a Physician](#)” database, filterable by specialty, name, insurance and more. More than 85 percent of Weill physicians are available through Aetna’s nationwide network of providers. The Weill Cornell Referral Center can help you find the right physician, within your coverage, for your specific needs.

Contract College Faculty, staff and covered dependents on the Empire Plan

The NYSHIP Empire Plan currently offers Centers of Excellence for cancer, transplants and infertility services. Paid-in-full benefits are available for services at a designated Center of Excellence when using these providers and calling in advance for preauthorization. If you do not use a Center of Excellence, benefits are provided in accordance with the plan’s Hospital Program and/or Medical/Surgical Program coverage.

In some cases, a travel, lodging and meal allowance may be available.

Center of Excellence listings are available by calling NYSHIP.

Where to start

Call The Empire Plan toll free at 1-877-7-NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) and follow the prompts to the appropriate program outlined below. A representative will then provide you with coverage details such as preauthorization requirements and the most up-to-date listing of the Centers of Excellence that pertain to your needs

- United Health Care Medical Program: home care services, out-patient chemotherapy, cancer or infertility
- Blue Cross, Blue Shield Hospital Program: transplants
- Beacon Health Mental and Substance Abuse Program
- CVS Caremark: prescription drug benefits and claims

Benefit details available online

Visit the NYSHIP [Health Benefits website](#) for an overarching view of your benefits and coverage:

- Select “I am a New York State Active Employee”
- Choose “Management/Confidential (M/C); Legislature” as your Group
- Select either “Empire Plan Enrollee” OR “HMO Enrollee”

Browse [At a Glance](#) for an overview of the plan.

Then review the [Certificate of insurance](#) for specifics regarding preauthorization, coverage and travel allowances

You can also visit UnitedHealthcare’s [myuhc.com](#) for additional details related to the Medical Program, including eligibility, deductibles, out-of-pocket limits, and a Center of Excellence (COE) listing. COE’s can be found by:

- Logging in
- Selecting “Benefits & Coverage”
- “Extra Programs”
- “Centers of Excellence Networks”

Online Provider directories

- **The Empire Plan [provider directory](#)** is available online, and filterable by specialty, location, conditions, procedures and name. Note that although the Centers of Excellence physicians will be listed, you cannot search by this option.
 - Call the **[Weill Cornell Referral Center](#)** (pdf) Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at 646-962-2000 or visit their online "[Find a Physician](#)" database, filterable by specialty, name, insurance and more. More than 85 percent of Weill physicians are available through Aetna's nationwide network of providers – they can help you find the right physician, within your coverage, for your specific needs.
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Contract College faculty, staff, covered dependents, and retirees in HMOs

Individuals covered under an HMO should contact their HMO for specific questions about coverage. The [2016 Choices Booklet](#) and [2017 Choices Booklet](#) provide summary information on the HMO Plans and the Empire Plan including contact information.

Retiree Endowed faculty, staff and covered dependents

Individual coverage may vary depending on which of our three retiree plans you are enrolled in. Refer to the owners manual you received by mail or the back of your Aetna ID card for your appropriate member services phone number, or log onto your secure Aetna [member account](#).

Retiree Contract College faculty, staff and covered dependents

Contact Benefit Services at 607-255-3936 or benefits@cornell.edu , or call your plan administrator.

Empire Plan retirees

Call NYSHIP at 1-877-769-7447 or visit the NYSHIP [Retirees Health Benefits website](#) for an overarching view of your benefits and coverage. Select "A Participating Agency (PA) with the Empire Plan."

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For those living with cancer

A cancer diagnosis hits you with a range of emotions and concerns. You need information and support — fast. We're here to help you find both. The health insurance resources above are the best place to begin with coverage or provider questions. If you'd like to connect with someone on campus to walk you through the many resources available, contact one of the individuals listed below under guidance and support, or call a member of the human resources staff with whom you feel comfortable.

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Care and support

Health plan coverage

See above.

Resources and Support

Connect with Cornell community members who are also diagnosed with cancer, or have family members and friends with cancer. You'll be able to share information and connect with others who are experience a similar situation. Subscribe to the **[cancer e-list and support group](#)** by sending an email to cancersupport-l-request@cornell.edu, type "join" in the subject and leave the body of the message blank.

Cancer Support Group: On-campus monthly meetings for faculty, staff, students, and retirees who have been diagnosed with or have had cancer.

Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes provides transportation, helping hands, supportive listening, financial counseling, seats on the G2C bus to NYC, support groups, and more. Contact them at 607-277-0960 or at info@crctl.net.

If you or a loved one is receiving cancer treatment in New York City, contact the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345 for information about free lodging at **Hope Lodge NYC**.

Contract College employees and dependents can also take advantage of Cornell's added coverage with the **Empire Plan's Cancer Resource Services and Cancer Support Program**. Call the NYSHIP general line at 1-877-769-7447 to have your eligibility confirmed, and you will then be transferred to a representative who will walk you through the package details which include:

- A nurse advocate who will provide support to the patient and family throughout treatment
- An assigned oncology support nurse

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Mental health and substance abuse

Our contract college and endowed health plans include coverage for mental health and substance abuse care.

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Provider directories

The endowed health plans administered by Aetna provide coverage for mental health and substance abuse benefits. You can [contact Aetna](#) to find a participating (in-network) provider or check [Aetna's Doc Find](#).

The Empire Plan Mental Health and Substance Abuse Program provides comprehensive coverage for mental health and substance abuse care, including alcoholism. You can find a provider in NYSHIP's [online directory](#).

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You're not in this alone — reach out for guidance and support

When you're going through a health crisis or an complex healthcare situation, community and support can be just as critical as your medical care.

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Support on campus

Cornell's **Work/Life Consultant** provides support to individuals as they navigate planned and unplanned life transitions and events. These situations may include self-care/health concerns, elder/adult care, child care, and many others. The consultant first seeks to understand all of the complexities of the situation and then identifies what resources and supports may be beneficial and available. These supports might include transportation, someone to care for children and/or pets, meals, legal/financial assistance, in-home care, long term care, and more. The support services that are identified may be located on campus, locally, or long distance (depending on where the individual(s) involved reside). Consultations are free and confidential. [Email](#) or call 607-255-1917.

HR's Medical Leaves Administration (MLA) provides personalized consultation, answering questions about providing resources related to job-protected leave, such as the university [Family Health Leave](#), the [Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#) and short- or [long-term disability](#). Contact Medical Leaves Administration at 607-255-1177 or email benefits@cornell.edu.

Balancing health issues of your own or a loved one with work is challenging. Don't go it alone: contact the [Faculty & Staff Assistance Program \(FSAP\)](#) at 607-255-2673 for free and confidential guidance and support to [benefits-eligible employees and their partners](#), including retirees and Cornell employees working in NYC and Geneva, NY.

[Mental Wellbeing Conversations and Workshops](#): gatherings and resources to support mental wellbeing for the Cornell community

[Mental Wellbeing](#) - Employee wellbeing resources to help with self-awareness, hopefulness, and agility in dealing with life challenges

In addition to FSAP, [eni Confidential Counseling Services](#) provides services at no cost to endowed and contract college faculty, staff and retiree. To reach a Confidential Counselor 24/7, call the toll-free number at 1-800-327-2255.

[Cornell Wellness](#) hosts a variety of [support groups and e-lists](#). Visit their website to connect with a community of people who are wanting to communicate with each other on common topics. Contact Cornell Wellness at 607-255-5133 or wellness@cornell.edu to discuss your overall wellbeing. They serve all staff, faculty, retirees, and their spouses/partners in the areas of fitness, nutrition and well-being including educational opportunities that empower individuals to make healthy choices for themselves.

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Resources in the community

[The Mental Health Association of Tompkins County](#) provides an [online listing](#) of local support groups.

Both the [Lifelong Senior Center](#), 607-273-1511, and the [Office for the Aging](#), 607-274-5482, provide Medicare Counseling.

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Getting around

Wondering how you'll get to New York City for your appointments at Weill Cornell? Or how you'll get around easily on campus with limited mobility? Check out the accommodations available on campus and in the community to ease your worry and burden.

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Travel and parking options

Inquire with your health care provider (outlined under "Medical resources" above) about possible travel reimbursement. Coverage will vary based upon plan, condition and/or the provider used.

Travel Assistance to NYC

[Travel Assistance to NYC](#): If you need to travel to New York City for medical care or other emergencies, please complete

this [Travel Assistance Form](#). Cornell University Transportation Services will provide round-trip bus tickets on the [Campus to Campus Bus](#) (C2C) to current employees, free of charge. After completing this request form, you will be contacted by one of the ticket coordinators.

[Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes](#) also offers vouchers for patients and family members traveling to Weill Cornell in NYC via the Campus to Campus Bus (C2C). Contact the Cancer Resource Center of the Finger Lakes at (607) 277-0960 or at info@crctl.net for more details.

Accessible Parking

[Accessible parking options](#) are available in both the long- and short-term to accommodate the commuting needs of individuals with disabilities or temporary mobility challenges by contacting Transportation Services at 607-255-4600 or through [their online form](#).

Wheelchair Accessible Taxi

To request a ride in your power or standard wheelchair on the MV-1 [wheelchair accessible taxi](#), call Ithaca Dispatch at 607-277-7777. Service is available 6 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.

Accessible Transportation Assistance

[Gadabout / ADA Paratransit](#) provides accessible transportation in Tompkins County for medical/dental appointments, getting to work, shopping, volunteer work, personal errands, social events. Call 607-273-1878 to schedule an ADA Paratransit ride.

[Friends in Helping \(FISH\) Transportation Service](#) provides rides to Tompkins County residents, primarily elderly citizens who may be frail or no longer drive, or residents who have limited transportation options and resources in need of medical and health related services. Call 877-211-8667 to schedule a ride.

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Managing your work schedule, and necessary time away

It has never been more important than now to find your work life balance.

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Benefits and options

Visit the [HR website Leaves and Disability](#) pages for information about your benefits and resources for personal, parental, and family health leaves; worker's compensation, short and long-term disability, and disability accommodations.

[Catastrophic Leave Donation](#): Running low on time off during a time of crisis? Ask your local HR representative about receiving leave donations from fellow employees. Find more information here, or contact the Medical Leaves Administration at 607-255-1177 or at benefits@cornell.edu.

Eligible employees may take [Family Health Leave](#) with reasonable advance notice and in consultation with supervisors.

Contact [Cornell Benefits Services](#) at 607-255-3936 or email them at benefits@cornell.edu for questions regarding leaves of absences and managing your benefits and pay.

[Flexible work arrangements](#) can help an employee align their work schedule and/or work location to accommodate life

needs. An agreement is reached collaboratively between the supervisor and the employee when the position allows for these modifications. Contact 607-255-5298 or email worklife@cornell.edu for guidance on flexible work.

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Finding help at home

There are a variety of groups and organizations that will provide you and your loved ones with a helping hand during difficult times.

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Caregiving resources

Visit the [Elder & Adult Care page](#) for information about the Caregiver Support & Education Network, workshops, support group meetings, elder/adult care e-List, and more. Individual, confidential consultations with [Cornell's Work/Life consultant](#) are free of charge. Resources are available both locally and long distance by calling 607-255-1917.

Care.com Membership: Need babysitting, pet care, house-sitting, errands, cleaning, or other assistance? Cornell provides free membership access to Care.com. Additional inquiries may be made at worklife@cornell.edu.

Next Step in Care provides convenient guides to help family caregivers and health care providers to work closely together to plan and implement safe and smooth transitions, such as from hospital to rehab or home, for chronically or seriously ill patients. You can contact them at nextstepincare@uhfnyc.org.

Share the Care is a not-for-profit organization that offers guidance and resources in a vast variety of specific illnesses, challenges, as well as helpful information, services and support for caregivers. It also provides tips on how to [organize meetings](#) for shared caregiving. You can contact them [here](#).

Tompkins County Office for the Aging offers resources and events listings for older adults and caregivers. You can contact them at 607-274-5492.

NY Connects is a directory for resources to long term care services and supports to help you or a family member stay at home, stay in the community, or stay independent in New York State. You can reach their Tompkins County office at 607-274-5222. Find the full list of county offices and contacts [here](#).

Finger Lakes Independence Center offers advocacy, referrals, events, in-home help, and other support for those requiring accessibility support and adaptive skills or equipment. Equipment and media are available for loan. You can contact them at 607-272-2433 or info@fliconline.org.

Visiting Nurse Service of Ithaca and Tompkins County offers a broad range of health care services to patients in their place of residence, whether it be at home, an adult home facility or a long-term care facility. You can contact them at 607-273-0466 and find additional contact information [here](#).

Hospicare: Hospice and palliative care services based in Ithaca and Cortland, NY to help you find physical, emotional, and spiritual comfort for people of any age with any terminal diagnosis. They specialize in relief of pain, symptoms, and stress at any point in an illness. You can contact them at 607-272-0212.

Foodnet Meals on Wheels serves older adults who have difficulty shopping and preparing meals throughout Tompkins County with nutrition services and hot meals. You can contact them at 607-266-9553 or at info@foodnet.org.

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The financial piece of the puzzle

Unfortunately, money often plays a large role in the stress surrounding health matters. Don't be afraid to ask questions on this topic either.

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Resources and contacts

Emergency CARE Fund (Cornellians Aiding & Responding to Employees) offers financial assistance to faculty and staff who have experienced a non-recurring sudden or emergency-related financial hardship due to an unforeseen or unavoidable event. Bills related to an ongoing medical condition is not included. Additional inquiries may be made at 607-255-2673 or at carefund@cornell.edu.

Financial advisors can be helpful in analyzing how to balance paying your immediate bills with saving for the future. All of our [retirement saving vendors](#) offer one-on-one consultations that may be helpful as you manage unexpected expenses.

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