



**NASI WELFARE FUND**  
We're Here to Help

**WHAT'S INSIDE?**

**What a Pain! How to Deal with Muscle Cramps** 1  
**Have You "Taken the Call?"** 2  
**Keep Us Informed!** 3



Welcome to the summer issue of *Sprinkler Fitter You*, our quarterly health and wellness publication exclusively for NASI Welfare Fund participants and their family members. If you have any questions or would like more information about what you've read here, please contact the NASI Fund Office at 800-638-2603. We're here to help!

## WHAT A PAIN! HOW TO DEAL WITH MUSCLE CRAMPS

You may be familiar with the agonizing pain of a middle-of-the-night leg cramp—a brief, involuntary, tightening of the muscles that may cause soreness even days later. Why does this happen? And what can you do to prevent it?

Although we know that muscle cramps happen when muscle gets tight and does not relax, there isn't always a clear explanation as to why a healthy person can experience them. The most commonly held belief is that muscle cramps happen when you haven't had enough fluids (dehydration) or when your electrolyte (potassium, calcium and sodium) balance is off. Low electrolyte levels may result from use of some diuretics, alcoholism, certain endocrine disorders or a vitamin D deficiency.

Muscle cramps can also happen during exercise. If you've overworked your muscles, it's common to experience painful cramping when you've had a difficult and taxing workout, especially if you haven't stretched properly before or after your workout.

### What to Do When a Muscle Cramp Hits

1. **Massage the muscle.** As soon as you're able, try massaging the muscle. Heat—even the heat of your own hands—will loosen up the muscle when the spasm begins.
2. **Drink your water.** Often, drinking water will ease the cramping. However, water alone doesn't always help. Salt tablets or sports drinks, which also replenish lost minerals, can be helpful. And don't forget about orange juice and bananas, both excellent sources of potassium.
3. **Stretch carefully.** Stretching makes muscles and tendons more flexible and less likely to contract involuntarily, but don't automatically stretch the cramping muscle. For calves and hamstrings, sit on the ground and stretch your legs out in front of you. Keep them straight, grab your toes and pull back, which will force the leg to straighten out.
4. **Breathe!** Cramping is tension, so you need to relax. Try focusing on deep breathing—in through the nose and out through the nose.
5. **Pain relievers.** If the muscle is still sore, ice can help. But a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory medication (like Advil or Motrin) can reduce your pain.



*continued on next page*

### Prevent It From Happening

You can't always avoid them, but there are a few things you can do to reduce your risk:

- Don't exercise immediately after eating.
- Don't smoke.
- Don't drink caffeine (it's dehydrating).
- Gently stretch your muscles before exercising or going to bed.
- During workouts, hydrate with seven to 10 ounces of fluid every 15 minutes.
- If cramps become chronic, you may consider wearing compression garments during exercise, which enclose the muscle and limit the opportunity for it to react and spasm quickly.

### Prevent a Calf-Muscle Charley Horse

*Try the "runner's stretch" to avoid a painful cramp in the calf. Stand with one leg forward and bend at the knee and the other leg behind you with the knee straight—a lunge position. Keep both heels on the floor. Bend your front knee further until you feel a stretch along the back of your other leg. The greater the distance between your two feet and the more your front knee is bent, the greater the stretch. Hold for 30 seconds and repeat five times. Then switch legs and do the set again.*

## HAVE YOU "TAKEN THE CALL?"

### What You Need to Know About the NASI Personal Health Management Program

#### What is the NASI Personal Health Management Program?

The Trustees of the Welfare Fund agreed to implement the NASI Personal Health Management Program as a way to help contain costs while improving the health and quality of life for our members. Now in its third year, the Program is proving to be worthwhile—more than 2,200 participants enrolled in the 2016 calendar year.

#### How Does the Program Work?

The NASI Personal Health Management Program is a free, confidential benefit that provides telephonic counseling and support to individuals with chronic conditions. If you enroll in the Program, you will work with a registered nurse from Carewise Health through a series of regular phone calls designed to help you better manage your condition.

*continued on next page*



### How Does Carewise Health Get My Information?

Carewise Health has access to the Fund's health and prescription drug claims data. Based on this data, they can evaluate whether or not certain participants may be in need of additional support. If you are contacted, it's probably because you've been identified as someone with a chronic condition who may not be following the recommended treatment guidelines for your condition.

### Is There an Incentive if I Enroll? Or a Penalty if I Don't?

We believe so strongly that this type of program can help our members that we are offering a reward (benefit improvements in the following calendar year) for those who actively engage in the program. Similarly, those who are selected to participate but decline the invitation will be subject to higher deductibles and out-of-pocket costs in the next calendar year. The incentive/penalty applies to your first round of contact with Carewise Health. Subsequent enrollments do not include another incentive.

### What's My Commitment if I Enroll?

We've tried to make this program as convenient for our participants as possible. Calls can happen on your schedule. Typically, a call lasts about ten minutes and happens only once a month. Generally speaking, most people "graduate" from the program within about four to six months.

### What if I've Already Participated and Received my Incentive, but Carewise Is Contacting me Again?

If your latest claims data reveals that you may have another chronic condition, or you are not keeping up with your recommended treatment guidelines, it's possible that Carewise Health will contact you about participating again. We strongly encourage you to do so. Consider this—you usually only get about five minutes with your primary care doctor to discuss your symptoms. With Carewise Health, you'll be able to talk to a healthcare professional for as long as you need and get the most current recommendations and advice.

### Will I Get the Incentive (or be Assessed the Penalty) if I Participate Again?

No. The incentive/penalty only applies to your initial contact with Carewise Health. You will not be subject to another penalty if you decline, or another incentive if you enroll. But again, we hope you will participate to receive the benefit of improved health!



**NASI PERSONAL HEALTH MANAGEMENT**  
Counseling and Support for Chronic Conditions

*It's not a huge commitment, but it could have a huge payoff! Take the call—the NASI Personal Health Management Program is a free, confidential resource for members with chronic conditions to help them improve their health.*



## KEEP US INFORMED!

Life events, like moving, getting married or having a baby, may affect your benefits coverage. Please let the Fund Office know if you have new contact information to share, need to add or drop someone from your coverage, or wish to name a new beneficiary.

- Send us an email at [mail@nasifund.org](mailto:mail@nasifund.org);
- Send a fax at 301-429-4709;
- Give us a call at 800-638-2603 (toll free) or 301-577-1700 (local); Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.; or
- Drop us a line at:  
National Automatic Sprinkler Industry  
8000 Corporate Drive  
Landover, MD 20785



**NASI WELFARE FUND**  
We're Here to Help

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
HUNTINGTON, NY  
PERMIT NO. 14

**National Automatic Sprinkler Industry**

**Welfare Fund**

8000 Corporate Drive

Landover, MD 20785

## **CLICK AND CONNECT!**

A new online community is available to you through your Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois medical plan. Visit <https://connect.bcbsil.com> to register and meet your Connect Community. You and your fellow enrollees can chat and share advice, weigh in on articles, ask questions, and keep up with the latest healthcare topics that are relevant to you.



The information provided in *Sprinkler Fitter You* is of a general nature only and does not replace or alter the official rules and policies contained in the official plan documents that legally govern the terms and operation of the NASI Welfare Fund. If this newsletter differs in any way from the official plan documents, the official plan documents always govern. Receipt of this newsletter does not guarantee eligibility for benefits. The Trustees have the right to modify benefits at any time.