



Understanding Pain: September is Pain Awareness Month

September is Pain Awareness Month—a time to raise understanding, reduce stigma, and support the millions living with chronic pain.

Unlike temporary acute pain from an injury, chronic pain persists for months or years. Because it is often invisible, those experiencing it can easily feel isolated. Effective management is rarely about a single "quick fix." Instead, it relies on a personalized, multi-faceted approach aimed at improving daily function and quality of life.

Key elements of modern pain management include:

Integrated Care: Partnering with primary care providers, physical therapists, and specialists for comprehensive treatment.

Gentle Movement: Low-impact activities like walking, swimming, or stretching keep joints flexible, build strength, and release natural endorphins.

Mind-Body Practices: Techniques such as mindfulness, deep breathing, and cognitive behavioral therapy help reframe how the brain processes pain signals.

Anti-Inflammatory Eating: A diet rich in whole foods and omega-3s helps minimize systemic inflammation.

Pain Awareness Month is a reminder to practice empathy. If you navigate chronic pain, advocate for your needs with your healthcare team. If you know someone living with pain, offer flexible support and active listening. Together, we can foster supportive environments that empower individuals to live fuller, more comfortable lives.



Don't Miss Your Chance to Save \$120 in 2027

The deadline to complete your 2026 Ochsner Wellness Screening is approaching. OGB employees and retirees (not for spouses and dependents) can save **\$120 on their 2027 health insurance premiums** by completing the wellness screening requirements and submitting the required form on time.

If you still need to complete your screening, now is the time to check it off your list.

Complete Your Wellness Visit

Access2day Health members can complete their wellness visit at a participating clinic at \$0 cost.

Before your visit, download and print the **2026 Ochsner Wellness Screening – Primary Care Provider Form** and bring it with you. Your provider will complete the appropriate sections during your wellness visit.

Submit Your Form Before the Deadline

After your visit, make sure the completed form is submitted to Ochsner Health. It is the member's responsibility to ensure the form is received by the deadline.

Completed forms must be received by Ochsner Health by 5 p.m. on September 30, 2026.

Download the Ochsner Wellness Screening Form [Here](#).

Find an Access2day Health Clinic [Here](#).



Live Better Louisiana

Earn your 2027 premium credit in one easy step by completing an **Ochsner Wellness Screening**. Blue Cross partners with Ochsner Health to offer no-cost to you wellness screenings at convenient locations across the state. During your visit, you'll meet with a Registered Nurse, receive point-of-care tests, and get a personalized health report with results and recommendations.

How to participate:

Review the schedule below and choose a location that works for you. To schedule your appointment, visit [Ochsner OGB Screenings](#) and click on the link for the selected screening site. When registering, please enter your member name exactly as it appears on Louisiana Blue medical insurance card to ensure your screening is scheduled correctly. If you have questions or need assistance, call 1-866-495-6235. If you can't attend a wellness screening, have your doctor fax a completed Primary Care Provider form (available at <https://info.groupbenefits.org/live-better-louisiana-2/>) to Ochsner Health.

Important reminder:

To qualify for the 2027 wellness credit, you must complete your wellness screening by **September 30, 2026**.

Date (Day)	Location	Participants	Registration
9/1/2026	St. Helena Parish School Board	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/1/2026	McNeese State University	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/1/2026	Probation & Parole Office - Covington	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/2/2026	LSU Health Science Center, Monroe	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/2/2026	Northshore TCC- Hammond	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/2/2026	DEQ/ Galvez Building, (rescheduled from 7/29)	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/8/2026	DOTD Head Quarters	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/8/2026	Northshore TCC - Florida Parishes	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/9/2026	LSU Health Science Center, Kings Hwy	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/10/2026	LSU New Orleans (UNO)	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/11/2026	DCFS - Baton Rouge	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/11/2026	Catahoula Parish School Board	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/14/2026	Louisiana Community & Technical Colleges	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/14/2026	East Feliciana School Board	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/14/2026	UL Research Center	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/14/2026	Winn Parish School Board	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees ONLY	Register Here
9/15/2026	Vernon Parish SB Central Office	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees ONLY	Register Here
9/16/2026	Northwestern State University	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/16/2026	Court of Appeals, First District	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/18/2026	Eastern LA Mental Health System	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees ONLY	Register Here
9/21/2026	Tensas High School	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/21/2026	Tensas Elementary School	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here
9/24/2026	Port of South Louisiana	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here
9/28/2026	DCFS - Baton Rouge	ALL Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees	Register Here

Keep your heart strong this season

Simple steps to support heart health year-round. Colder weather can affect blood pressure and heart health, but small adjustments can make a big difference. With Omada, you'll get expert guidance and tools to help you manage your heart health—no matter the season.

Try these heart-healthy habits this fall

Reduce sodium intake by choosing fresh, whole foods

Get regular movement, even if it's just a short walk

Practice deep breathing or mindfulness to manage stress

Claim your benefit today at omadahealth.com/ogb—at no cost to you, if eligible.



September Focus: Childhood Cancer & Childhood Obesity Awareness

September brings two vital health observances into focus: Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month. Both highlight the critical importance of protecting, supporting, and advocating for the health of our youth.

Supporting Young Cancer Warriors

Cancer remains the leading cause of death by disease for children in the United States. Thousands of children and their families face the daunting reality of a cancer diagnosis every year.

The Goal: Raise awareness to drive funds for pediatric cancer research, advocate for safer treatments, and support families navigating care.

How to Help: Consider donating blood or marrow, participating in community fundraisers, or wearing gold during September to show support.

Fostering Healthy Habits

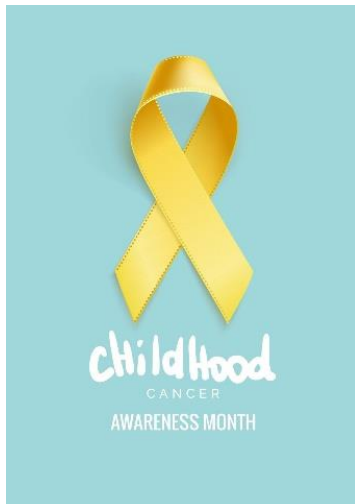
At the same time, childhood obesity affects millions of youth, increasing their risk for chronic health issues like type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, and joint problems later in life.

The Goal: Build supportive environments that make healthy choices accessible and enjoyable for every child.

How to Help: Encourage daily physical activity, limit screen time, and focus on balanced, whole-food meals as a family. Small, consistent daily routine shifts create sustainable habits.

A Shared Commitment to Our Youth

While these two health initiatives address very different medical challenges, both center on a common goal: ensuring every child has the opportunity to grow up healthy, strong, and supported by their community. This September, take time to learn more, lend a hand, and spread awareness for the health and well-being of our kids.



Stay Active as You Age: Senior Fitness Tips

To celebrate and encourage healthy living, Louisiana Blue medical director Dr. Emily Vincent is sharing senior exercise tips to help older adults get moving and get active. This video (2:03) suggests ways to get started and low-impact exercises you can try.

Drink plenty of water

Stretch!

Take a walk

Try a new activity

Try swimming or water aerobics

Please talk to your healthcare provider if you are interested in starting a new exercise routine.



Unlock Your Immunity Insights with Phenomune

Louisiana Blue is proud to support Louisiana-based wellness company Phenomune in a new pilot program with the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), bringing free personalized immunity education to residents of all ages.

Through this initiative, Louisiana residents can request a complimentary, easy-to-use Phenomune taste test kit delivered right to their door. The kit features four taste test strips designed to measure your bitter taste receptors. Simply place each strip on your tongue for a few seconds, record your response, and receive tailored guidance explaining what your results mean for your personal well-being and immune defense strength.

Take advantage of this zero-cost wellness resource today.

[Request your free Phenomune kit here.](#)





SEPTEMBER IS SUICIDE PREVENTION AWARENESS MONTH

Mental health wordsearch

Take a moment to care for your mental health with this calming word search. Find and circle all the words hidden in the grid. The words are hidden in any direction.

THOUGHTS
RECOVERY
STRESS
BEHAVIOR

SUPPORT
MENTAL
PREVENTION
WELLBEING

STIGMA
HEALTH
PATIENCE
MINDFUL

AWARENESS
MIND
ACTION
RESILIENCE

M	S	D	R	M	J	A	S	S	E	R	T	S	M	K
D	S	O	M	I	N	D	S	N	R	P	V	M	V	E
K	E	F	B	J	W	H	T	L	A	E	H	X	M	A
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Embrace the Change: A Fresh Season for Your Health

As summer slowly fades into fall, the changing seasons give us a natural opportunity to pause, reset, and embrace something new. The days may be getting shorter, temperatures are beginning to cool, and our routines often start to shift. Just as nature changes around us, September is a great time to make positive changes for our health and well-being.

A new season doesn't mean you need to completely overhaul your lifestyle. Sometimes, the smallest changes can make the biggest difference. Take advantage of cooler weather by spending more time outdoors. A walk around the neighborhood, a visit to a local park, or simply enjoying some fresh air can be a great way to stay active while reducing stress.

Fall can also be a wonderful time to reconnect with the people and activities that bring you joy. As summer vacations and busy schedules wind down, look for opportunities to spend quality time with family and friends. Try a new activity, revisit a favorite hobby, or simply make time to slow down and enjoy the season. Taking care of your well-being includes more than physical health—it also means making space for the things that help you feel connected, refreshed, and balanced.

Changing seasons can also be a reminder to check in with your daily routines. Are you getting enough sleep? Drinking enough water? Making nutritious choices? Finding time to move your body and take care of your mental well-being? If there's an area that could use a little attention, September is the perfect time for a fresh start.

Don't forget about preventive care. As schedules become busier, make sure your health stays on the calendar. Schedule routine appointments, complete recommended screenings, and take advantage of wellness resources available to you.

Most importantly, give yourself permission to change at your own pace. Healthy habits don't have to happen all at once. Choose one small goal, build on it, and celebrate your progress along the way.

The changing seasons remind us that change can be a beautiful thing. As we welcome fall, let's embrace the opportunity to refresh our routines, refocus on our health, and make choices that help us **Live Better Louisiana!**



Game Day Ready: Essential Tailgating Safety

Football season is back! Whether you're heading to the stadium or hosting a tailgate with family and friends, a little preparation can help keep your game day celebration safe, fun and enjoyable for everyone.

Keep Food Safe

Tailgating means great food, but food safety is important. Keep raw meats in a separate cooler at **40°F or below** and use separate utensils and surfaces for raw and ready-to-eat foods. Never leave perishable foods out for more than **two hours**—or one hour when temperatures reach 90°F or higher. When in doubt, throw it out!

Grill With Caution

Grills are a tailgating favorite, but they require care. Set up your grill in an open area at least **six feet away from tents, vehicles, walkways and other flammable materials**. Never leave a hot grill unattended, and keep children and pets at a safe distance. Keep a fire extinguisher nearby, and make sure charcoal and ashes are completely cool before disposing of them.

Stay Hydrated and Protected

Don't forget to take care of yourself while enjoying the festivities. Drink plenty of water throughout the day, especially if you're consuming alcoholic beverages. Alternating alcoholic drinks with water can help you stay hydrated. And remember your sunscreen! Cooler fall temperatures don't mean UV rays are gone. Sunglasses, hats and lightweight clothing can also provide added protection.

Plan a Safe Trip Home

Before kickoff, make a plan for getting home safely. If you plan to drink, designate a sober driver, use a rideshare service or arrange another safe transportation option. When leaving crowded parking lots, slow down, watch for pedestrians and follow posted traffic directions. Never drive under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

A little planning goes a long way. Enjoy the food, celebrate with friends and family, cheer on your team—and make sure everyone gets home safely!



25-Minute Sheet Pan Chicken Fajitas



When busy fall schedules return, quick and customizable weeknight dinners are essential. Sheet pan fajitas deliver bold flavor with minimal cleanup.

Ingredients:

1.5 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breasts, sliced into strips
1 medium yellow onion, sliced
1 packet low-sodium fajita or taco seasoning

3 bell peppers (mix of red, yellow, and green), sliced into strips
2 tbsp olive oil

To Serve: Small warm tortillas, shredded cheese, mild salsa, sour cream or Greek yogurt, and lime wedges.

Instructions:

Prep the Oven and Pan: Preheat to 400°F (200°C). Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper or foil for fast cleanup.

Season and Toss: Spread the sliced chicken, bell peppers, and onion across the baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle the fajita seasoning evenly over everything. Toss directly on the pan until coated, then spread into a single layer.

Bake to Perfection: Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until the chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165°F and the peppers are tender.

Serve Custom Style: Serve hot straight from the pan with warm tortillas and bowls of toppings so everyone can build their own meal.

For more information, visit us at www.lablue.com/ogb

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