Stay Healthy This Holiday Season: Small Steps Make a Big Difference

November marks the beginning of the holiday season, bringing family gatherings, delicious meals and busy schedules. While it's a time for celebration, it's also important to make your health and well-being a priority.

Between holiday preparations, travel and changing weather, healthy habits can easily fall by the wayside. The good news? A few simple choices can help you feel your best throughout the season.

Keep Moving: Cooler temperatures are perfect for a brisk walk. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity five days a week. Even short walks after meals can make a difference.

Make Balanced Choices: Enjoy your favorite holiday foods while filling your plate with colorful vegetables, lean proteins and whole grains. Remember, moderation is key!

Stay Hydrated: It's easy to forget to drink water when temperatures drop. Keep a water bottle nearby and drink regularly throughout the day.

Protect Yourself from Seasonal Illness: Wash your hands frequently, stay home when you're sick and make sure you're up to date on recommended vaccinations, including your annual flu shot.

Make Time to Recharge: Holiday stress can take a toll on your physical and mental health. Prioritize sleep, take breaks when needed and don't be afraid to say no to extra commitments.

Remember: Staying healthy during the holidays isn't about perfection. It's about making small, consistent choices that help you enjoy the season while taking care of yourself.



November is National Diabetes Month: Small Changes, Big Impact

November is National Diabetes Month, a time to raise awareness about diabetes and encourage healthy habits that can help prevent or manage this chronic condition.

Diabetes affects millions of Americans, and many people with prediabetes don't even know they have it. Left unmanaged, high blood sugar can lead to serious health problems, including heart disease, kidney disease and vision loss.

The good news? Small lifestyle changes can make a big difference in reducing your risk of developing type 2 diabetes and improving your overall health.

Know Your Risk: Family history, physical inactivity, excess weight and being age 35 or older can increase your risk. Talk to your healthcare provider about blood sugar screening.

Eat Smart: Choose more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins while limiting sugary drinks and highly processed foods.

Keep Moving: Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. Even a brisk walk after meals can help.

Maintain a Healthy Weight: If you're overweight, losing just 5% to 7% of your body weight can significantly reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes.

Know Your Numbers: Regular checkups can help you monitor blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Prioritize Sleep: Getting enough quality sleep supports healthy blood sugar management and overall wellness.

Remember: Type 2 diabetes can often be prevented or delayed through healthy lifestyle changes. This November, take a small step toward better health. Your future self will thank you!

Learn more at www.cdc.gov/diabetes.



Live Better Louisiana

Earn your 2028 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:

Wellness screening clinics are currently being scheduled for the 2028 plan year premium credit. Clinic dates and locations will be announced as they become available.

Once scheduling opens, visit Ochsner OGB Screenings to find an available screening site and schedule your appointment. When registering, enter your member name exactly as it appears on your 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 are unable to attend a wellness screening clinic, you may have your doctor complete the Primary Care Provider form, available at ogb.la.gov, and fax the completed form to Ochsner Health.

Important reminder:

To qualify for the 2028 wellness credit, you must complete your wellness screening by September 30, 2027.

Date (Day)	Location	Participants	Registration
11/17/2026	Office of Public Health - Calcasieu Parish Health Unit	Agency's Eligible OGB Employees and Retirees ONLY	Register Here

Achieving Financial Wellness is Possible



Have you visualized your retirement? Do you see yourself on a beach, traveling, or spending time with your loved ones? Join us for some timely information on your financial wellness strategy, including how to manage expenses, protect your savings, and create your dream outcomes from your income.

Join us for a financial wellness educational seminar hosted by industry innovator, Prudential Pathways. Prudential Pathways aims to make building a financial planning strategy less intimidating and more empowering through easy-to-understand educational programs.

Catching Up to Retirement Savings

This seminar will cover important topics like these:

- Set clear retirement goals
- Consider catch-up contributions
- Explore options in retirement
- And more

[Option 1] Wednesday, November 4th | 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. CT

[Option 2] Tuesday, November 10th | 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CT

Virtual – Zoom

Click Here to Register

Seven Steps to Be More Thankful

Choose gratitude every day. An attitude of gratitude can not only improve your mental health, but also your physical health. Be conscious of your thoughts and follow these steps to find benefits for yourself and others.

1. Say it out loud - Tell someone in your life what they do that you appreciate.
2. Set a regular time of the day - At the same time each day, name three things you are thankful for.
3. Write it down - Research shows people who keep gratitude journals report feeling more thankful and less stressed.
4. Sent a thank you note or text. - A note of appreciation goes a long way for the giver and receiver.
5. During challenging moments, name ten things you appreciate. - Name ten things, big or small, that you are thankful for.
6. Give to other - Small acts of kindness often make a big difference. When you focus outward, you are less likely to have inner turmoil.
7. Recognize that gratitude is a choice. - In moments of joy, take notice of how that feels and rest there. In moments of stress, pause and call up those things you are thankful for. Coach yourself with gratitude.



Pennington Biomedical: Ways to Avoid Post-Thanksgiving Drowsiness

Thanksgiving is a time for family, friends and delicious food. But after enjoying turkey, sides and desserts, many of us feel ready for a nap. Is turkey really to blame? Dr. Jacob Mey, assistant professor at Pennington Biomedical, explains what causes the Thanksgiving “food coma” and shares tips to help prevent it.

Is tryptophan to blame?

Tryptophan is an essential amino acid found in protein-rich foods, including turkey, chicken, tuna and steak. The body uses it to produce serotonin and melatonin, which help regulate sleep. However, turkey isn't the only food containing tryptophan, so it isn't solely responsible for that post-meal drowsiness.

What else causes sleepiness after eating?

Overeating, especially carbohydrate-rich foods like stuffing, sweet potatoes and desserts, can contribute to fatigue. These foods can cause blood sugar to rise, triggering insulin release and potentially leading to a drop in blood sugar that leaves you feeling sluggish. Alcohol consumed with your meal can also contribute to drowsiness.

Tips to avoid the Thanksgiving food coma

Eat mindfully. Slow down, put your fork down between bites and enjoy conversations with family and friends.

Take a short walk. A brisk 10-minute walk after eating can help reduce blood sugar spikes and improve energy levels.

Watch your portions. Enjoy your holiday favorites without overdoing it.

A few simple habits can help you enjoy your Thanksgiving feast without spending the rest of the day fighting off a nap!



VETERANS DAY

Find the following words in the puzzle. Words are hidden across, down, diagonally, and backwards.

- AIR FORCE
- ARMY
- BASE
- BRAVE
- COUNTRY
- DUTY
- FAMILY
- FLAG
- FREEDOM
- HOME
- HONOR
- MARINES
- MILITARY
- NAVY
- PEACE
- PROTECT
- SERVE
- SOLDIER
- UNITED STATES
- VETERAN

M W O R Q I F E Y G S X S R C O Z C I Y M V Y
W Y G A R K K S E T A T S D E T I N U T X D G
R E S D B M N C P H X I X X O Z I R J H E U E
G F U N E L W M A R I N E S H O N O R T M T V
M K Y A S O L D I E R B J D O Q K D A C O Y V
O B E R A Z J E P F X W G A L F G G C E H K D
D N V E B Q D L E C R O F R I A H Z Q T V X B
E H A T C C F E G O V C T I C H E E V O Y J R
E C R E P T E V Z S G Y C Y P F I R O R T W R
R Z B V Z G D R O M M V W S D T C A P P P E A
F L V L K C V E W U T H A Y L I M A F U E J N
E P W N N M H S R W R S R F B R N O I X A L N
M L V V Y R A T I L I M M B R U X J N A C L J
I Z C P S K V N L P Q V Y M R V B J I L E L Q
A I A T N H G O L V R B T D Z R Z T O K F C J
C Y V A N L I O Z W R Y L G W C O U N T R Y B

Prepare for Better Travel with Your Access2day Membership

Holiday travel to visit friends and family is a time of joy, not stress. While an unexpected illness isn't part of the plan, knowing where to find care can make a difference when you're away from home. That's why Access2day gives members many options to get medical care and enjoy better health for the holidays. Here are two big things to know to ensure that you and your family are prepared for your travels.

Download the Access2day Clinic Finder App for Nearby Care Options

Before you set off, download the Access2day Clinic Finder App. With location services enabled, the app automatically displays the clinics closest to you, along with contact information and directions. Whether you're visiting family or making a stop along the way, you can quickly find a nearby participating clinic if you need care.

Your Membership Works at Every Access2day Location

You might have a regular clinic at home that you usually visit, but your Access2day membership allows you to visit over 100 locations throughout Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, and Texas. You and your covered dependents can visit any participating Access2day clinic without an appointment and receive covered preventive and urgent care services with no copays or out-of-pocket expenses.

Not sure if you're a member?

Members of these health plans are automatically enrolled:

- Magnolia Local Plus
- Magnolia Local
- Magnolia Open Access
- Pelican HRA 1000

Make your holiday preparations easier with Access2day at your fingertips. Be sure to travel with your health insurance card and identify yourself as an Access2day member when checking into a clinic.

Find an Access2day Health Clinic:

https://access2dayhealth.com/locations/

Beyond Blood Sugar: Embrace Better Health with Omada

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month, a time to focus on managing diabetes and making healthy lifestyle choices. The Office of Group Benefits (OGB) is helping eligible members take control of their health through Omada, a personalized digital health program available at no cost to those who qualify.

Managing diabetes involves more than monitoring blood sugar. Omada provides tools, guidance and ongoing support to help members develop healthier habits and improve their overall well-being.

Personalized Care Plans: Build healthy routines that fit your lifestyle, preferences and individual health needs.

One-on-One Support: Connect with a health coach and specialist who can provide guidance on nutrition, exercise, sleep and stress management.

Smart Technology: Stay connected with easy-to-use devices that automatically sync with the Omada app, helping your care team monitor your progress and provide personalized support.

Tools Delivered to Your Door: Once enrolled, you'll receive a welcome kit with smart devices based on your individual needs. These tools are shipped directly to your home to help you get started.

Proven Results: Omada reports that participating members with an elevated A1C of 8% or higher experienced an average two-percentage-point reduction in A1C after 12 months. Members also experienced improvements in body mass index (BMI).

Take the Next Step Toward Better Health

Whether you're looking to improve your blood sugar management or develop healthier daily habits, Omada offers support to help you reach your goals.

Thanks to OGB, eligible members can participate in the Omada program at no cost.

Learn more and check your eligibility at omadahealth.com/ogb.

Program eligibility requirements apply. Certain features and smart devices are available only to qualifying members.

Cinnamon Apple Yogurt Parfait



A delicious, protein-packed snack or breakfast that combines the flavors of apple pie with nutritious ingredients.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 small apple, diced
- 2 tbsp rolled oats
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp honey (optional)
- 1 tbsp chopped walnuts (optional)

Instructions:

1. Stir cinnamon into the Greek yogurt.
2. Layer yogurt, diced apples and oats in a small bowl or glass.
3. Drizzle with honey and sprinkle with walnuts, if desired. Enjoy!

Healthy Tip: Greek yogurt provides protein, while apples and oats add fiber to help keep you satisfied. Choose unsweetened yogurt to limit added sugar.

Ready in about 5 minutes!

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

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