



September is National Pain Awareness Month

Each September, National Pain Awareness Month draws attention to the widespread impact of chronic pain and the millions of Americans who live with it every day.

Chronic pain is one of the most common health conditions in the United States, affecting people of all ages and backgrounds. Unlike short-term pain from an injury or illness, chronic pain can last for months or even years. It often disrupts daily routines, work responsibilities, relationships, and overall quality of life. For many, the effects go beyond the physical—chronic pain is closely tied to emotional challenges such as stress, anxiety, and depression.

The purpose of Pain Awareness Month is to improve understanding of chronic pain, reduce stigma, and highlight the importance of proper diagnosis and treatment. Effective management often requires a personalized approach, combining medical care, physical therapy, counseling, medications, or lifestyle changes like exercise, nutrition, or mindfulness practices. The observance also underscores the need for ongoing research, better access to resources, and policies that support those living with pain.

Just as importantly, it serves as a reminder to show compassion and empathy. By raising awareness in our communities and advocating for individuals with chronic pain, we can help break the silence, support those who may feel unseen, and encourage hope for better treatments and brighter futures.

★ Chronic Pain Fast Facts

- Nearly 50 million U.S. adults live with chronic pain.
- About 17 million experience pain so severe it limits daily activities.
- Chronic pain is the leading cause of long-term disability in the U.S.
- It is linked to higher rates of anxiety, depression, and reduced quality of life.



Staying Healthy and Safe This Football Season

Football season is here, and whether you're cheering at a high school game, a college rivalry, or a pro matchup, game day brings excitement—and a few health and safety concerns to keep in mind.

Hydration and Heat

Early-season games can be hot. Drink plenty of water, pace yourself with alcohol, and take breaks in the shade when possible.

Food Safety at Tailgates

Keep perishables chilled, cook meats to safe temperatures, and avoid leaving food out for too long. Prevent cross-contamination by separating raw and cooked items.

Crowd and Stadium Safety

Big crowds mean close contact and busy walkways. Practice good hand hygiene, watch your step, and stick with your group when moving through parking lots or leaving after dark.

Responsible Celebrations

If drinking, plan ahead with a designated driver or rideshare. For younger fans, model safe and responsible game-day habits.

Protect Your Voice and Hearing

Cheering is part of the fun, but pace yourself. Consider ear protection if you'll be near speakers or in especially loud sections.

Final Kickoff

By staying hydrated, handling food safely, and celebrating responsibly, you can enjoy the traditions of football season—safely from kickoff to the final whistle.



Live Better Louisiana: Earn Your 2026 Wellness Credit

It's easy to earn your 2026 premium credit—just complete your preventive health checkup! LA Blue partners with Catapult Health to bring checkups to locations near you.

How to Participate:

- **Schedule online:** www.TimeConfirm.com/OGB or call: 1-877-841-3058
- **Alternate option:** If you can't attend a clinic, have your doctor fax the completed Primary Care Provider form (available at info.groupbenefits.org) to Catapult Health.

Deadline: September 30, 2025

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date (Week)	Location
09/01 - 05/2025	LSU Shreveport (Shreveport)
09/08 – 12/2025	Ouachita PSB - West Ridge Middle School (West Monroe)
	Claiborne Building (Baton Rouge)
	Orleans Parish Civil District Court (New Orleans)
09/15 – 19/2025	LA Dept of Environmental Quality - Galvez Building (Baton Rouge)
	Northwestern State University (Natchitoches)
	Nicholls State University (Thibodaux)
	Court of Appeals-First Circuit (Baton Rouge)
09/22 – 26/2025	Bienville Building (Baton Rouge)
	Northshore TCC - Florida Parishes Campus (Greensburg)
	LaSalle Building - Dept of Natural Resources (Baton Rouge)
	SOWELA Tech Community College (Lake Charles)
	The Port of South Louisiana (Reserve)

Smart Health Savings | Health Costs Hints from Louisiana Blue's Clinical Pharmacists

Want to cut your healthcare costs without cutting corners? Louisiana Blue's clinical pharmacists are here to help! In this Smart Health Saving series episode, Clinical Pharmacists Lauren LeBlanc and Madeline Zachary share practical, real-life tips from smart prescription choices to maximizing your insurance benefits, these practical insights can make a real difference in your health care spending.

Our Care Management department is staffed by doctors, nurses, pharmacists, registered dietitians and a social health coach. We're here to help you make the best possible decisions about your healthcare. If you wish to ask about our programs, please call the Case and Disease Management Unit at 800-363-9159 or visit lablue.com/wellness/member-programs.



August Small Shift: Hydration

This month, we'll focus on something simple yet incredibly impactful: **hydrating more**.

Staying properly hydrated is essential for maintaining our energy levels, improving concentration, and supporting overall health. This month, let's make a conscious effort to increase our water intake throughout the day. Whether it's carrying a reusable water bottle, setting reminders to take a sip, or infusing your water with fresh fruit for added flavor, every small step counts.

Here are a few tips to help you stay hydrated:

- Start your day with a glass of water.
- Keep a water bottle at your desk.
- Substitute one sugary drink with water.
- Add a slice of lemon or cucumber for a refreshing twist.

Let's encourage each other to embrace this Small Shift and make hydration a healthy habit. Sign up for the Small Shift emails at www.pbrc.edu/smallshifts.



Prepare for Cold & Flu Season with Access2day

As the seasons change and children head back to school, it's time to prepare for cold and flu season. Access2day is here to support your health and well-being with \$0 care for employees and their covered dependents, ensuring you and your family stay protected all season long.

Cold and flu viruses spread quickly in workplaces, classrooms, and communities. While both illnesses share some symptoms, they affect the body differently. Colds tend to come on gradually with milder symptoms like congestion and sore throat. The flu strikes more suddenly and severely, often causing high fever, muscle aches, and significant fatigue.

Wellness Tips to Help Prevent the Flu:

- **Get your flu shot early.** Immunity takes about two weeks to build, so don't wait until flu season peaks.
- **Wash your hands often.** Regularly washing your hands with soap and water is one of the most effective methods to prevent the spread of germs.
- **Avoid touching your face.** Viruses commonly enter through the eyes, nose, and mouth.
- **Disinfect high-touch surfaces.** Clean your phone, doorknobs, keyboards, and other frequently touched surfaces regularly.
- **Stay home if you're sick.** Rest, recover, and reduce the risk of spreading illness to others.
- **Boost your immune system.** Eat nutrient-rich foods, stay hydrated, exercise regularly, and get plenty of sleep.

Your Access2day membership, fully prepaid by the Office of Group Benefits, gives you fast access to \$0 care when you need it most. Stay proactive, stay healthy, and take care this cold and flu season.

Stay Ahead of Seasonal Sickness with A2D:

<https://access2dayhealth.com/>



Feeling overwhelmed? You're not alone

Prioritize your mental well-being this October.

In today's fast-paced world, stress can take a toll on your mental health. Omada Health is here to support you with personalized programs and dedicated care.

Omada can help you:

- **Understand stress:** Learn how stress affects your body and mind, and identify your personal triggers.
- **Practice mindfulness:** Engage in guided meditation, deep-breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques to foster a calmer, more focused you.
- **Maintain a positive outlook:** Through personalized coaching with dedicated health coaches, develop coping strategies and build resilience around stress triggers and life events.

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



Louisiana Highway Safety Commission's 1 Million Steps 2 Safety 5K Run/Walk!

In honor of **Pedestrian Safety Month**, the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission invites you to our 5K on **October 25, 2025** at the Louisiana State Police Headquarters, Baton Rouge.

Event Details:

- **Registration:** 7:30 a.m. | **Pre-race Activities:** 8:30 a.m.
- **Fee:** \$25 | **Includes:** T-shirt & finish line medal
- **Theme:** Super Hero costumes encouraged!
- **Certified timer & awards** for finishers

Support pedestrian safety while enjoying a fun, active day with friends and family. All skill levels welcome!

Register today: [1 Million Steps 2 Safety 5K](#)

Let's take **1 million steps** toward safer streets for everyone!



Looking to **take the next step** towards your financial wellness?

Prudential
PATHWAYS



Want to make sense of your financial life, but not sure where to start? Let us show you how.

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.

Is Your Financial House in Order?

This seminar will cover important topics like these:

- Assessing your current financial situation
- Protecting yourself and your assets
- Setting financial priorities and managing debt
- And more

[Option 1] Tuesday, September 9 | 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. CT
[Option 2] Wednesday, September 17 | 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. CT
Virtual – Zoom

Click Here to Register

Make sure to add the event to your calendar!

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Stress-Less Wordsearch

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

Find these words. They can be vertical, horizontal, diagonal or backwards.

eating healthy	responsibility	prescriptions	intellectual	Satisfaction
occupational	activities	emotional	give back	Financial
spiritual	volunteer	exercise	physical	Reliable
swimming	wellness	balance	healthy	Hydrate
hygiene	therapy	savings	walking	Biking
coping	mental	social	stress	Goals
laugh	pray	yoga		

Air Fryer Fried Pickles



Crispy, golden, and made in the air fryer—these “fried” pickles taste just like the real deal. Perfect for a quick snack, game-day bite, or dunked in ranch!

Ingredients:

- 1 16-oz. jar dill pickle chips, drained
- 3 large egg whites
- 1/3 cup yellow cornmeal
- Cooking spray (use olive oil for the best flavor)
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup breadcrumbs
- ¼ tsp. kosher salt, plus more to taste
- Ranch dressing

Instructions:

1. For the pickles: Preheat a 3 1/2-quart air fryer to 390°F. Set a wire rack on a baking sheet. Line a second baking sheet with paper towels and spread out the pickles on the towels; pat dry with more paper towels, pressing gently to remove as much moisture as possible.
2. Put the flour in a medium bowl. In another bowl, beat the egg whites with 1/4 cup of water until frothy. In a third bowl, combine the breadcrumbs, cornmeal, and salt.
3. Bread the pickles, 4 to 6 at a time. First, toss the pickles in the flour and shake off any excess. Then, dunk them in the egg mixture to completely coat and shake to remove any excess. Finally, toss them in the cornmeal mixture, pressing gently to adhere. Arrange the breaded pickles on the rack on the baking sheet.
4. Spray half of the breaded pickles with cooking spray, then arrange sprayed-side down in the air fryer basket in a single layer. Spray the pickles again. Cook until very crunchy and browned on both sides, about 8 minutes. Lightly sprinkle the pickles with salt, remove to a serving plate, and repeat with the remaining pickles. Serve with ranch dressing for dipping.

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