



### Healthy Year-end Reminders

As this year comes to a close, it's the perfect time to review and make sure you are up-to-date on important screenings that will keep you healthy. Some of those screenings include:

- **Mammogram** – Women over 40 should get a mammogram screening each year.
- **Colonoscopy** – Recommended for both men and women every 10 years, starting at age 50. If you have a family history of colon cancer, your doctor may recommend early screening.
- **Skin check** – Ask your doctor to perform a screening for skin cancer at your next appointment, and each year after that. Do an at home scan monthly to be sure that there haven't been any changes to the shape or color of moles.
- **Blood work** – It's important to "know your numbers" and how they affect your health. Routine blood work is recommended annually.

If you haven't seen your doctor recently or had your regular screenings, make it an end-of-year goal for good health.

### Upcoming Clinics

You can check some screenings off your list by attending one of the Live Better Louisiana wellness clinics. Below is a schedule of clinics scheduled for the next two weeks. To sign up for one of these clinics, or to search for a date that works better for you, click here [www.timeconfirm.com/ogb](http://www.timeconfirm.com/ogb).

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date	Location
12/09/2014	DOC - Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) Livingston PSB - Springfield Middle School (Springfield) Livingston Parish School Board (Livingston) Orleans Parish Civil District Court (New Orleans)
12/10/2014	DOC - Louisiana State Penitentiary (Angola) Northeast LA Veterans War Home (Monroe) Livingston PSB - Central Office (Livingston) Livingston Parish School Board (Livingston)
12/11/2014	West Jefferson Levee District (Marrero) Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (Hammond)
12/12/2014	Louisiana Community and Technical College System (Baton Rouge) Florida Parishes Human Services Authority (Hammond)
12/13/2014	Assumption Parish Schools - Assumption High (Napoleonville)
12/15/2014	Lacoste Elementary School (Chalmette)
12/16/2014	Pinecrest Supports and Services Center (Pineville) Chalmette Elementary School (Chalmette)

### Fighting the Winter Blues

As days get shorter and the temperature drops, it's not uncommon for the "winter blues" to set in. The "winter blues" are characterized by the mild depression, lack of motivation, and low energy that many people experience during the cold months. Luckily, there are things you can do to both prevent the blues from coming on and get yourself back to normal if they're already here:

- **Watch what you eat** – You might crave junk food and greasy comforting things like pizza and mac 'n' cheese during the sluggish, cold winter months, but stuffing yourself with sugar and refined flours lead to a crash in energy. Instead, stick to energy foods like nuts, fruits, vegetables and lean meats. While you are at it, add more vitamin D rich foods — like salmon, shrimp, orange juice and milk — to your diet.
- **Exercise** – Moving your body stimulates feel-good endorphins in the brain and can lift your mood – while burning away those calories for the extra carbohydrates! The effects of a good workout can last for several hours meaning you'll have more energy throughout the day, and your metabolism will stay elevated too.
- **Get some sun** – Even on cloudy days, UV rays will stimulate your body to make vitamin D. Similar to exercise, sunlight exposure releases neurotransmitters in the brain that affect mood. Try keeping your shades up during the day to let more light in.
- **Get enough sleep** – Lack of sleep causes all sorts of problems — including craving carbohydrates. Exercising and a regular bedtime routine will help you fall asleep. Try not to oversleep — those 12-hour snoozes on the weekend can actually make you MORE tired.
- **Go out with friends** – Though it's tempting to hibernate and avoid going out completely in the winter, force yourself to go to parties and maintain your favorite social activities. Social interaction is a huge deterrent to depression and being around your friends and /or family will brighten your mood.
- **Learn something new** – Try a new hobby or craft. Shaking up your routine is a great way to bring your energy levels up.

### Great Gifts for Healthy Living

This holiday season, why not give gifts that improve health and well-being? With lots of fun options, you're sure to find something for everyone on your list:

- **Activity Tracking Device** - Getting fit is more fun with a mobile device that tracks steps, distance, time, calories burned, heart rate and more.
- **Spa Gift Certificate** - A little pampering and relaxation will be a welcome gift for the busiest people you know.
- **Smartphone sport armband** - For keeping connected and hands-free while working out, these armbands fit the bill.
- **Personal Training Gift Certificate** - Even novice exercisers will be more confident and motivated after a session or two with a certified personal trainer

- **Fitness Video Games** - Kids of all ages will appreciate a fun and interactive game that also challenges their fitness.
- **Resistance Bands** - With dozens of ways to use these ingenious little bands, they're great for improving strength and flexibility or aiding in stretching routines.
- **Water Bottle** - Encourage hydration with a bottle that infuses water with a subtle hint of fruit flavor.
- **Dark Chocolate** - For an indulgent gift that's still healthy, give them some high quality dark chocolate to enjoy.

For more information, visit us at [www.bcbsla.com/ogb](http://www.bcbsla.com/ogb)

Follow us on Twitter [@LiveBetterLA](https://twitter.com/LiveBetterLA)