



Holiday Safety Tips

The holiday season is here! No matter how you celebrate the season, we're excited to share the holiday spirit. To ensure you have a healthy, safe and happy holiday season, here are 12 tips to keep in mind:

1. Never use lighted candles near trees
2. Keep poisonous plants out of reach of children and pets
3. Keep trees away from fireplaces, radiators, and other heat sources
4. Make sure your tree has a stable platform
5. Choose an artificial tree that is labeled fire resistant
6. If using a natural tree, make sure it is well watered
7. Check holiday lights for fraying, bare spots, gaps in the insulation or excessive kinking in the wire.
8. Turn off all tree lights and decorations when not in use
9. When putting up decorations, use a step stool or ladder to reach the high places
10. Designate a sober driver
11. When preparing a meal, wash hands, utensils, sink and anything else that touches raw meat
12. Reheat leftovers to at least 165 degrees

Live Better Louisiana Health Capsule – It's Not Too Late for a Flu Shot

Most cases of the flu happen from late December to early March. If you have not already done so, getting a flu shot soon will protect you for the remainder of the flu season. Getting a flu shot is the best way to keep from getting the flu or, if you do get the flu, keep it from being as severe a case.

"The flu shot is your best way to prevent getting the virus in any year, but it's especially important this year, since our healthcare system is still fighting COVID-19," said Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana Medical Director Dr. Larry Simon. "I'd encourage everyone to get in touch with your healthcare provider or pharmacist to ask about getting the flu shot if you have not done so already."

Click the link below for information about why it's important to get the flu shot.



Live Better Louisiana

Earn your 2022 premium credit in just one step: by completing your preventive health checkup. Blue Cross works with an industry leader, Catapult Health, to bring preventive checkups to **a site near you**. You can schedule a free checkup with a licensed nurse practitioner and health technician through the online scheduler. You'll get **lab-accurate diagnostic tests** and receive a full **Personal Health Report** with checkup results and recommendations.

What do you do? Schedule your appointment online at www.TimeConfirm.com/OGB or call **1-877-841-3058**. Complete your clinic to get the credit. If you are not able to go to a clinic, have your doctor fax a completed Primary Care Provider form, found at info.groupbenefits.org, to Catapult Health.

Upcoming Clinics

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. Remember, you have until **August 31, 2021** to get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2022 wellness credit!

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date	Location
12/11/2020	Student Service Center - Morehouse PSB (Bastrop)

Feeling Blue this Holiday Season? Make Positive Changes!

Use the tips below to make positive changes and to have a more enjoyable holiday season:

- Identify what it is about the holidays that get you down. Once identified, deal with it directly.
- If doing the "same old thing" gets you down, don't do the same old thing.
- Don't expect miracles; keep your expectations of others and self realistic.
- Don't "overdo": plan ahead of time, prioritize what needs to be done and try to involve others with the preparation.
- Don't worry about how things should be or what you should do, but do what you can do and more importantly what you want to do.
- If the holidays make you feel out of control, "take control" over the holidays by taking timeouts for yourself. Have more self-compassion and accept your limitations.
- Use humor; try to see the lighter side of life and not take yourself so seriously.
- Stick to a budget for gift giving and food shopping, or even consider alternatives to gift giving.
- Do not over-eat or drink too much alcohol as a way to cope with stress.
- Make time for your physical and mental wellness: i.e., brisk 20-30 minutes walks, yoga, massage, or other activities to calm you down and give you a better perspective on what is important in life.

If you feel like you need professional help dealing with the holiday blues, BlueCare - Blue Cross' telehealth service for care – is an option for behavioral health providers. If you do not have a behavioral health provider, or have trouble getting in to see one, you can now use BlueCare to have online visits.

Log into BlueCare to schedule appointments with available psychology or psychiatry providers who are trained and certified in telehealth care. Behavioral health providers available through BlueCare can help with anxiety, depression, stress, grief, substance abuse, coping with life transitions, couples counseling and more.

You can create a BlueCare account at BlueCareLA.com or with the BlueCare (one word) mobile app for mobile devices. Then, simply log in to have a medical visit anytime or schedule a behavioral health appointment.

Winter Fruit Salad



Guests are likely to bring cookies to share, so finish your holiday dinner with this jewel-toned winter fruit salad in lieu of a traditional dessert.

Ingredients:

½ cup sugar	2 mangoes, peeled and diced
1 1-inch piece ginger, peeled and thinly sliced	2 firm bananas, peeled and diced
1 tsp vanilla	5 kiwis, peeled and diced
1 lemon	12 kumquats, very thinly sliced crosswise, seeds removed
5 navel or blood oranges	1 cup pomegranate seeds (from 1 pomegranate)

Instructions:

1. Combine the sugar, 2 cups water, ginger and vanilla in a saucepan. Use a vegetable peeler to remove wide strips of zest from the lemon and one orange, add to saucepan and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Refrigerate until cold.
2. Meanwhile, peel the remaining oranges with a paring knife, cutting along the natural curve of the fruit. Hold an orange over a large bowl and cut along both sides of each membrane to free the segments, letting them fall into the bowl. Squeeze each empty membrane to release the juices. Repeat with the remaining oranges. Add the mangoes, bananas, kiwis, kumquats and pomegranate seeds and gently toss. Pour the syrup over the fruit and chill overnight.
3. Before serving, remove the citrus zest and ginger. Spoon fruit and syrup into bowls
4. To remove pomegranate seeds, cut the fruit into quarters, then break apart in a bowl of water. Skim off the pith that floats to the top and drain the seeds.

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