



Be Involved in Your Health Care

It's a new year and a great time to start "Living Better." Your health care is a team effort and you are the most important part of the team. Here are a few tips that will help you take charge of your care:

- **Speak up** – Write down any questions you have about your health and take the list with you to your doctor. Be sure to talk with your doctor about any changes since your last visit, such as: recent illnesses or surgeries, new medicines you are taking (including over-the-counter medicines, herbs or home remedies and vitamins), and any health concerns or issues.
- **Keep track of important health information** – Keep all of your health information in one place to make it easier to manage your health care. Take this information with you to every medical appointment.
- **Know your family health history** – The health history of your family is also an important part of your personal health record.
- **See a doctor regularly for checkups** – Regular checkups can help find problems early, when they may be easier to treat. Visit one of the Live Better Louisiana on-site clinics for even more convenient care.
- **Follow up after your appointment** – It can take time and hard work to make the healthy changes you talked about with your doctor. Remember to call if you have any questions and to schedule follow-up appointments for tests or lab work, if needed.

When you play an active role in your health care, you can improve the quality of care you and your family receive.

Live Better Louisiana

Earn your 2024 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.

Celebrate Fitness

No matter what your resolution is this year, physical activity can help you focus and achieve your goals. This month, start the habit of waking up early to move that body. Try these three tips for success:

- **Prepare the night before** – Get your workout clothes, shoes, and favorite playlist ready.
- **Place your alarm far away** – By the time you turn it off, you'll be up on your feet.
- **Get some sunrays** – Soak up those rays to feel energized by standing near an open window or placing your bed to face east.

Being active helps you be healthier and stronger — and feel your best — at every age. Getting 30 minutes of moderate exercise at least five days a week helps lower your risk of serious illness and improves your mood.

Louisiana Marathon – 2023

When: January 14-15, 2023

Where: The State Capitol
Downtown Baton Rouge, LA

Times: Saturday: 8 am – 5k and Quarter Marathon
10 am – Kids Marathon
Sunday: 7 am – Full and Half Marathon

Louisiana is well known for its festivals, where we celebrate with food, music and dancing. The Louisiana Marathon adds running to that mix for a truly unforgettable weekend. Come run a fast, flat, and fun race course with runners from 50 states and over 36 countries. Then enjoy a true Louisiana Festival featuring local musicians and some of the best southern cuisine around. Participants can choose from a full, half, a quarter marathon, a 5K, and kid's marathon, click [here](#) to register.

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Louisiana members can receive a 20% discount by entering BCBSLA15OFF23 when registering.

Upcoming Clinics

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. Remember, you have until **September 29, 2023** to get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2024 wellness credit!

Live Better Louisiana Clinics

Date (Week)	Location
01/02 – 06/2023	Vernon Parish School Board - Rosepine ES (Rosepine)
01/09 – 14/2023	DOTD District 07 (Lake Charles) West Ridge Middle School - Ouachita Parish School Board (West Monroe) Fletcher Technical Community College (Schriever) Washington Parish - Enon Elementary School Student Service Center - Morehouse PSB (Bastrop)
01/16 – 21/2023	Washington Parish - Varnado High School (Angie) Pinecrest Supports and Services Center (Pineville) DOTD Headquarters (Baton Rouge) Dept of Agriculture and Forestry (Haughton) Southeast Louisiana Veterans Home (Reserve) Sabine Parish School Board - Florien High School (Florien)
01/23 – 27/2023	DOTD District 58 (Chase) Franklinton Primary School Washington Parish (Franklinton) Central LA Supports and Services Center (Alexandria) Louisiana Dept of Environmental Quality - Galvez Building (Baton Rouge) Claiborne Building (Baton Rouge) University of New Orleans (New Orleans) Central LA Supports and Services Center (Alexandria) Denham Springs Junior High - Livingston PSB (Denham Springs)

How to Fix a Delicious & Nutritious Meal | Pork Tenderloin & Broccoli with Corn

Did you resolve to eat out less in 2023? In this video (3:06), the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana dietitians take you into the kitchen to show you how to prepare an easy and yummy meals for you and your family!



The Blue Cross dietitians also are happy to meet with Blue Cross members one-on-one to help you plan healthy meals if you are dealing with a chronic health condition. We are here for you to help you be Stronger Than Ever... Stronger Than Any Diagnosis... Together. You can talk to a member of our care team about our programs for members available at no extra cost. Visit Blue Cross online at <https://www.bcbsla.com/stronger> or call us at 1-800-821-2749.

Portion Control

It's no secret that portion sizes have gotten bigger over the past 20 years and those larger portions add up! Just 100 extra calories per day can lead to a weight gain of 10 pounds per year. Here are a few tips to assist with portion control:

- **Start with a glass of H₂O** – Drink a big glass (16 ounces) before you eat. Filling your belly with water will naturally make you less likely to overeat.
- **Use smaller dishes** – If you downsize your portion size and feel it looks too small, serve it on a smaller plate so it looks larger.
- **Don't skip meals** – If you are starving, you are more likely to eat an extra-large portion
- **Eat slowly** – Taking your time while eating increases enjoyment and decreases portions.
- **Know your "rules of thumb"** – Did you know that three ounces of lean meat is equivalent to a deck of cards? And one cup of breakfast cereal is about the size of a fist? For a handy cheat sheet, print and carry this [serving size card](#).

For more tips on portion size and healthy eating in general, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.

Virus Season Is Here. Are You Prepared?

You may have heard that this year's flu season is hitting early and hard. In fact, [it's the worst we've seen in 13 years](#). Making matters worse, additional respiratory viruses such as COVID-19 and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) are making the rounds as well, sharing some common symptoms with each other.

To help you get through this virus season safely, we encourage you to stop by your local Access2day Health clinic today for your FREE seasonal flu shot or if you need your illness diagnosed. Find your clinic today at access2dayhealth.com/locations.

And remember, your membership is 100% prepaid by the Office of Group Benefits, so there's always zero co-pay and out-of-pocket expense for care!

Please find the following chart useful in helping you distinguish the differences between Flu, COVID, and RSV symptoms:

Symptoms	COVID-19	RSV	Flu
Onset	Gradual, then sudden escalation	Mild with sudden escalation	Abrupt
Severity	Mild to severe	Mild to severe	Mild to severe
Duration	7-25 days	3-7 days	7-14 days
Loss of taste/smell	Common	Rare	Rare
Trouble breathing	Sometimes (can be severe)	Common	Not common
Cough	Common (usually dry)	Common	Common (usually dry)
Sneezing	Not common	Common	Rare
Runny/stuffy nose	Not common	Common	Sometimes
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common	Common
Fever	Common	Common	Common
Fatigue	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common
Headache	Sometimes	Rare	Common
Body aches	Sometimes	Rare	Common
Diarrhea/nausea/vomiting	Sometimes	Rare	Sometimes

IS IT...

FLU?

RSV?

COVID?



**Virus season is here.
Know the symptoms.**



ACCESS²day
HEALTH



Skinny Alfredo



A lightened up version of Fettuccine Alfredo lets you feel a little bit better about pasta nights. Skipping the heavy cream and using just a little bit of Greek yogurt still gives you a creamy sauce you'll think is full of heavy cream!

Ingredients:

- 12 oz. whole-wheat linguine
- 1 tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk

Topping:

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup freshly grated parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsp. plain Greek yogurt (optional)
- Freshly Ground pepper
- Pinch crushed red pepper flakes
- Freshly chopped parsley, for serving

Instructions:

1. In a large pot of salted boiling water, cook linguine according to package directions until al dente. Set aside $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pasta water, then drain pasta and set aside.
2. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat oil. Add garlic and cook until fragrant, 1 minute. Sprinkle flour over evenly, then stir and cook until mixture is lightly golden.
3. Very gradually add broth in while whisking, 2 tablespoons at a time, waiting for mixture to become completely smooth before adding more broth. Bring mixture to a boil, then gradually stream in milk while whisking. Bring to a simmer and cook until sauce is thickened, 2 to 3 minutes.
4. Remove from heat and add Parmesan and yogurt, if using. Season with salt, pepper, and a pinch of red pepper flakes.
5. Add pasta and a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup reserved pasta water to sauce and toss to combine. If sauce is too thick add more pasta water, a tablespoon at a time, until desired consistency.
6. Garnish with parsley before serving.

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