



Ovarian Cancer Awareness Month

Ovarian cancer is estimated to affect just under 20,000 American women this year alone. Since the signs and symptoms of ovarian cancer can be easy to miss, and no diagnostic test exists for ovarian cancer, awareness around the disease is extremely important for early detection and intervention.

Signs and Symptoms

Only about 20% of cases are diagnosed in the early stages, since symptoms often don't appear until the disease is in more advanced stages. Some common symptoms of ovarian cancer include:

- Bloating
- Trouble eating or feeling full quickly
- Pelvic/abdominal pain
- Urinary frequency
- Fatigue
- Menstrual changes
- Back pain
- Upset stomach, heartburn, or constipation

It's important to visit your doctor if any of these symptoms persist for two weeks or more.

Risk Factors

Certain factors can increase your risk of developing ovarian cancer. These risk factors include:

- Overweight or obese
- Childbirth later in life or never having a full-term pregnancy
- Hormone replacement therapy
- A family history of ovarian cancer, breast cancer or colorectal cancer
- A personal history of breast cancer
- An inherited genetic mutation (BRCA1, BRCA2)
- Fertility treatment
- Smoking

If you have a personal or family history of cancer, it's especially important to make sure you have blood tests and screenings periodically to catch it early.



September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

One in five children have obesity in the U.S., and even more are considered overweight. Dr. Amanda Staiano, associate professor at Pennington Biomedical Research Center, believes childhood obesity is at the top of the list for public health issues of this century because children with obesity are much more likely to develop heart disease, diabetes, asthma, sleep problems and other issues.

One of the focuses of her research is on gaming. She says parents can't ignore screens, but instead should figure out how to use technology to help them. "Exergames" that are immersive, exciting and get families off the couch are a clever way to work up a sweat without realizing you're exercising. "Through our research, we found these games can produce the intensity of exercise that can make some really important changes to kids' health," Dr. Staiano said.

Another big challenge is the prevalence of fast-food restaurants versus grocery stores. Pennington Biomedical is working with different industries and sectors on how to get grocery stores into various communities and make it easier for parents to purchase healthier food. The staff also works with schools to have nutrition education and support physical education teachers.

Dr. Staiano encourages concerned parents to talk to their child's pediatrician or school nurse, evaluate the types of foods and drinks available in the home, practice smaller portion sizes and try not to use food as a reward for good behavior.

"At Pennington Biomedical, we take a whole child approach, and we are trying to get our science and our evidence into the hands of families and caregivers to give kids the best chance at a healthy life," Dr. Staiano said.



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.

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
9/01/2023	Dept. of Natural Resources - LaSalle Building (Baton Rouge)
8/05-08/2023	Nicholls State University (Thibodaux) Northshore TCC Florida Parishes Campus (Greensburg) Richland Parish - Central Office (Rayville)
9/11-15/2023	The Port of South Louisiana (Reserve)
9/18-22/2023	Southeastern Louisiana University (Hammond, LA) Supreme Court of LA (New Orleans) Louisiana Dept. of Environmental Quality - Galvez Building (Baton Rouge)
9/25-29/2023	Northshore TCC Lacombe Campus (Lacombe)

Blue Cross Wellness Programs for OGB Members

Did you know Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana offers our members health coaching as part of their benefits? OGB members with certain conditions or other complex health needs can have visits with one of our health coaches. And if you don't qualify for health coaching, there are other wellness activities you can take part in. Click the picture below to watch a video to learn more wellness programs at Blue Cross.



Medicare Made Easy Livestream



Louisiana



Sept. 20, 2023 – 10:00 AM

<https://www.facebook.com/events/1027100461794231>

Tailgating Safety

Football season and tailgating go hand in hand, and spending a Saturday or Sunday with friends and family before a game is always exciting. However, it can also expose you to some risk. Make your tailgating experience more enjoyable by following a few simple tailgating safety tips before and after the big game.

- Respect Food Temperatures
- Use Gas Grills Safely
- Bring Fire Extinguisher, First Aid Kit
- Protect Yourself From the Sun
- Check If Coals Have Cooled
- Dispose Of Trash Properly
- Hide Valuables
- Designate a Driver
- Remove Debris Before Driving Home
- Take Extra Precautions in Parking Lots



Cold and Flu Season Are Almost Here—Are You Prepared?

For many families, September means the end of summer break and a break from the summer heat. However, September is also the beginning of cold & flu season — when we start bringing germs and viruses home from school or work. But, while we often lump the cold and the flu together as just “sick”, what’s the difference between them? And how can you best treat each illness? Either way, whether you’re stuck with the flu or a cold, Access2day has you covered.

Cold vs. Flu—Symptoms & Similarities

The common cold and influenza (or flu) have plenty in common. They’re both highly contagious viruses that can spread through sneezing, coughing, or unsanitary surfaces. Lack of quality sleep, an unhealthy diet, and missing out on regular exercise can all make you more susceptible to catching either of these viruses by weakening your immune system. Let’s take a closer look at their symptoms:

Cold vs. Flu Symptoms

COLD	COLD & FLU	FLU
Mild Symptoms	Caused by Viruses	Severe Symptoms
Mild Fatigue	Respiratory Infection	Muscle or Body Aches
Gradual Onset	Stuffy Nose, Coughing, Sore Throat	Rapid Onset
Felt Mostly in Head and Nose		Fever, Exhaustion, Loss of Appetite

Since both the common cold and flu present upper respiratory infection symptoms (such as congestion in your nose, chest, and throat), it can be tricky telling them apart. However, some giveaways that you’re dealing with a cold and *not* the flu include congestion that’s mostly limited to your head, nose, or sinuses. Additionally, you’ll typically feel these symptoms start to develop over the course of a day or two—also known as “coming down with a cold”.

On the other hand, you can expect the flu to hit much faster and harder, with severe muscle aches and a high fever included. And while even a bad cold can clear up in less than a week, the flu is more likely to require medication or a trip to the doctor. Some other flu symptoms to look out for are intense exhaustion (you might be stuck in bed for a few days) and a loss of appetite or nausea.

Get Covered with Access2day

It’s great to know the difference between a cold and the flu—but it’s even better to have neither. Fortunately, there’s plenty you can do this fall and winter to keep yourself healthy. In addition to washing your hands and sanitizing surfaces, getting a flu shot should be at the top of the list. And with Access2day, all it takes is a quick stop by any of your local clinics. Simply identify yourself as an Access2day Health member to activate your \$0 copay benefit. That means flu shots – and flu season - are taken care of for you and your covered dependents!

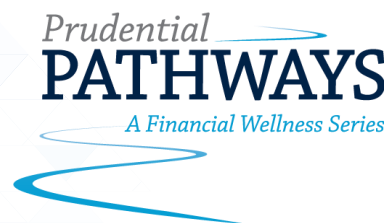
Remember, your membership is 100% prepaid by the Office of Group Benefits, providing you with \$0 cost care to help make for a healthier today – *and tomorrow*.

Ready to find your nearest Access2day clinic?

<https://access2dayhealth.com/locations.php>



PATHWAYS EVENT YOU'RE INVITED



Introducing a Financial Wellness Series

for State of Louisiana Employees

We hear every day that many Americans are not financially prepared for their future. People find the financial planning process overwhelming, and they don't know where to begin. Many are asking their employers for help.

We are pleased to offer you the following financial wellness 360, through Prudential Pathways®. Prudential Pathways® offers practical, down-to-earth information that may help you and your family today, tomorrow, and beyond. It is designed to give you an understanding of the fundamentals of financial wellness.

Financial Wellness 360

Employees can schedule a 30-minute financial wellness checkup with their dedicated Prudential Pathways speaker.

Tuesday – September 12 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (CT)

Wednesday – September 20 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (CT)

Thursday – September 28 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. (CT)

via phone

[Click Here to Register](#)

If you have a question or concern, please contact us at Pathways@prudential.com or 844-592-8993.

Are you or your partner pregnant, or have recently had a baby?

The purpose of the Couples in Pregnancy research study is to perform focus groups to inform the design of a couple-based intervention to optimize health during pregnancy.

To qualify for this research study, participants should:
Currently be pregnant or have had a baby within the past year; Be 18-45 years old; Be willing to be audio recorded; Be able to attend visit together as a couple. Compensation of up to \$50 is offered for the completion of this study.

To sign up for this or other Pennington Biomedical research studies, please visit www.pbrc.edu/HealthierLA. If you need further assistance, you can contact our recruiting team at 225-763-3000 or clinicaltrials@pbrc.edu.



Disasters Don't Plan Ahead. You Can.

We are in the heart of Hurricane season and it is of the upmost importance to prepare for a disaster ahead of time. Here are some useful tips on making sure you and your loved ones are prepared when disaster strikes:

- Know your hurricane risk
- Make an emergency plan
 - Know the local evacuation routes
 - Have a plan for where you can stay
 - Make a Family Communication Plan
 - Put together a "go-bag" – disaster supply kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash, first aid supplies, medications, and copies of your critical information
- If you decide to stay in your home, plan for adequate supplies in case you lose power and water for several days and you are not able to leave due to flooding or blocked roads
- Consider buying flood insurance

Visit www.ready.gov/hurricanes for more information on preparing for a hurricane or other natural disaster.

Buffalo Chicken Meatballs



Add these Healthy Buffalo Chicken Meatballs to your weeknight dinner menu, weekend meal prep rotation, or enjoy them as a tasty and fun appetizer! A recipe the entire family will love!

Ingredients:

- 2 tsp. olive or avocado oil
- ¼ c minced carrots
- ¼ c minced celery
- ¼ c minced yellow onion
- Ranch dressing for drizzling
- 3 cloves minced garlic
- 1 lb. ground chicken or turkey
- ¼ c flour
- ¾ c + 2tbsp. Buffalo Sauce, divided

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. In a non-stick skillet on medium-high heat, add the oil, celery, carrots, onion and garlic. Sauté until onions are translucent and vegetables are cooked through. Remove from the skillet and let cool slightly.
3. In a bowl, combine and mix together the chicken, flour, 2 tbsp. buffalo sauce and sautéed vegetables.
4. Form into 16-20 golf ball sized meatballs. Place them on a large baking sheet.
5. Bake in preheated oven for 14-18 minutes or until meatballs are cooked through and insides are no longer pink. Flip meatballs after about 10 minutes of baking.
6. Return the meatballs to the skillet over medium-high heat. Add ¾ cup of buffalo sauce (or more if you wish). Toss gently. Allow sauce to simmer for about 2-3 minutes.
7. Serve on noodles of your choice and drizzle with ranch.

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

Follow us on X (formerly Twitter)



Follow us on YouTube



[Follow us on Facebook](#)

