



### The Importance of Routine Health Screenings

According to the National Cancer Institute, 23% of women in the U.S. are overdue for cervical cancer screenings, and 24% aren't getting breast cancer screenings. For men, prostate cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in 112 countries. So why do so many skip essential screenings?

#### What Are Routine Health Screenings?

Routine screenings monitor aspects like blood chemistry, precancerous cells, growths, and essential minerals. They detect early-stage conditions and diseases, often before symptoms appear, making them easier to manage or treat.

#### Why They Matter

Though crucial, some people hesitate due to concerns over costs or not knowing when to start. Routine screenings, like HbA1c tests for prediabetes or mammograms for early breast cancer detection, can catch issues early, reducing the risk of severe health problems later.

#### Benefits of Routine Screenings:

- **Reduced Anxiety:** Gain peace of mind about your health.
- **Cost Savings:** Early detection can prevent costly treatments.
- **Time Efficiency:** Regular screenings reduce hospital visits.
- **Healthy Habits:** They encourage better lifestyle choices.
- **Personalized Health Plans:** Tailor your healthcare to your results.

#### Take Charge of Your Health

Preventive screenings are an affordable and effective way to stay healthy now and in the future. Prioritize these screenings to secure a healthier tomorrow.

## Health screenings by age:

<b>AGE 18-39</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Cervical cancer</b> - women every three years</li><li>• <b>Cholesterol</b> - once if normal</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Flu vaccine</b> - annual</li><li>• <b>Wellness visit</b> - annual</li></ul>
<b>AGE 40-65</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Blood Pressure</b> - every two years</li><li>• <b>Cervical cancer</b> - women every three years</li><li>• <b>Cholesterol</b> - once if normal</li><li>• <b>Colon cancer screening</b> - start at age 45</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Flu vaccine</b> - annual</li><li>• <b>Mammogram</b> - women starting yearly at age 40</li><li>• <b>Shingles vaccine</b> - start at 50</li><li>• <b>Wellness visit</b> - annual</li></ul>
<b>AGE 65+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Blood pressure</b> - every two years</li><li>• <b>Cervical cancer</b> - women every three years</li><li>• <b>Cholesterol</b> - once if normal</li><li>• <b>Colon cancer screening</b> - start at age 45</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Flu Vaccine</b> - annual</li><li>• <b>Mammogram</b> - women starting yearly at age 40</li><li>• <b>Pneumonia vaccine</b> - start at 65</li><li>• <b>Shingles vaccine</b> - start at 50</li><li>• <b>Wellness Visit</b> - annual</li></ul>

Source: CDC

## Live Better Louisiana

Earn your 2026 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](http://www.TimeConfirm.com/OGB) or call **1-877-841-3058**. Complete your clinic to get the credit. If you cannot go to a clinic, have your doctor fax a completed Primary Care Provider form, found at [info.groupbenefits.org](http://info.groupbenefits.org), to Catapult Health.

### Upcoming Clinics

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. Remember, you have until **September 30, 2025** to get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2026 wellness credit!

## Live Better Louisiana Clinics

Date (Week)	Location
03/03 – 07/2025	DOTD District 58 (Chase)
	DOTD District 02 Crescent City Connection Division (New Orleans)
	Dixon Correctional Institute (Jackson)
	Nicholls State University (Thibodaux)
03/10 – 14/2025	Bienville Building (Baton Rouge)
	Jefferson PSB - Emenes Building (Harahan)
	Washington PSB - Franklinton Primary School (Franklinton)
	DOTD District 45 (Baton Rouge)
	Vernon PSB - Pickering HS & ES (Leesville)
	Pinecrest Supports and Services Center (Pineville)
	University of New Orleans (New Orleans)
	Dept of Agriculture and Forestry (Haughton)
	Sabine PSB - Central Office (Many)
	Washington PSB - Central Office (Franklinton)
03/17 – 21/2025	Vernon PSB - Hicks HS (Leesville)
	Washington PSB - Franklinton Primary School (Franklinton)
	South LA Community College (Morgan City)
	St. Tammany Economics Stability/Child Welfare Office (Covington)
	University of Louisiana at Monroe (Monroe)
	Northwestern State University (Natchitoches)
	DOTD District 03 (Lafayette)
	Louisiana Housing Corporation (Baton Rouge)
	Supreme Court of LA (New Orleans)
	DCFS (Bogalusa)
	Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Headquarters (Baton Rouge)
	Vernon PSB - West Leesville & Optional School (Leesville)
03/24 – 28/2025	Court of Appeals-Fourth Circuit (New Orleans)
	Nicholls State University (Thibodaux)
	LA Retirement Systems Building TRSL (Baton Rouge)
	State Archives Building (Baton Rouge)
	Jefferson PSB - Central Office (Harvey)
	Washington PSB - Franklinton Primary School (Franklinton)
	Grambling State University (Grambling)
03/31/2025	Beauregard PSB - Beauregard Alternative School (DeRidder)
	Bienville Building (Baton Rouge)
	Claiborne Building (Baton Rouge)
	Regional Planning Commission (New Orleans)
	South LA Community College (Lafayette)
	Jefferson PSB - Central Office (Harvey)
Washington PSB - Mt. Hermon School (Mt. Hermon)	
Northwest LA Human Services District (Shreveport)	

## March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month | Have You Been Screened?

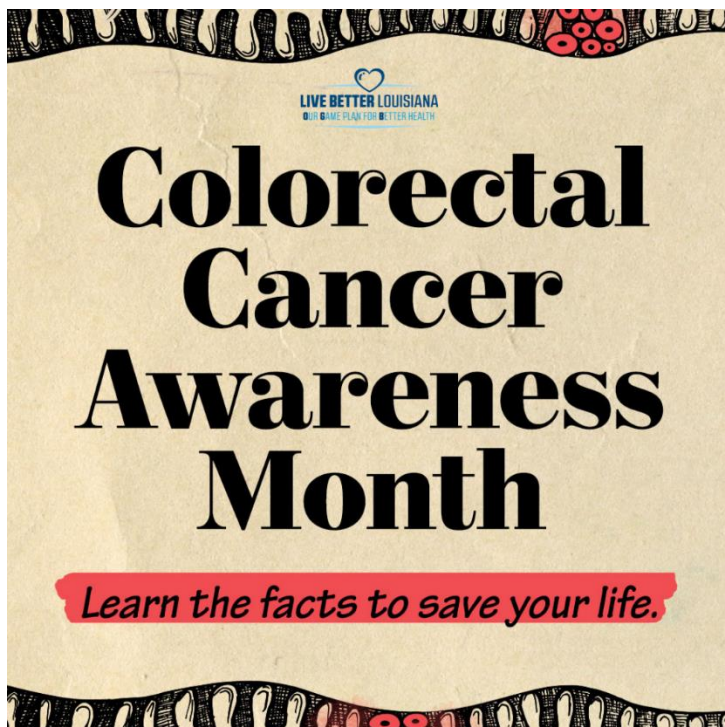
Did you know that colorectal cancer is the second-leading cause of cancer death in the U.S. for men and women? Nearly 135,000 adults are diagnosed with colorectal cancer every year. The good news is, there are very good screenings for colorectal cancer that can catch it in the earliest stages, when it's easiest to treat. Colorectal cancer usually starts from precancerous polyps in the colon or rectum. A polyp is a growth that should not be there.

Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer.

- Screening tests can find precancerous polyps, so they can be removed before they turn into cancer.
- Screening tests also find colorectal cancer early, when treatment works best.
- Screening can save lives, but only if people get tested.

If you are between 45 and 75 years old, you should have one of these tests. If you have not, call your doctor's office today. Your doctor can let you know if you are due for a colorectal cancer screening, tell you which test is right for you and help you set up an appointment to get it done.

Most Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana and HMO Louisiana, Inc. health plans cover wellness services, like colorectal cancer screening, at no out-of-pocket cost to you. You can call Customer Service at the number on your member ID card to find out how colorectal cancer screening is covered on your health plan, and what you would pay for the test.



## National Kidney Month

Chronic kidney disease (CKD) affects 1 in 7 U.S. adults, and many don't realize they have it until later stages. CKD develops when kidneys can't properly filter waste, and its severity depends on kidney function. Without symptoms, many don't know they have it until it progresses to kidney failure.

### Risk Factors for CKD:

High-risk groups include those with diabetes, high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, or a family history of kidney disease. Diabetes and high blood pressure are the leading causes of CKD. African Americans, Hispanics, Asian Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, and seniors are at greater risk.

### Who Should Be Screened?

Anyone 18+ with diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, or a family history of kidney disease should get screened. If free screenings are available, attend, or ask your doctor for one.

### What's Involved in a Kidney Screening?

Screenings test blood for creatinine, which increases if kidney function is abnormal. Your glomerular filtration rate (GFR) is calculated to assess kidney function and CKD stage.

### Treatment for CKD:

Early detection and managing conditions like diabetes and high blood pressure can delay kidney damage. For end-stage renal disease, treatments include dialysis or a kidney transplant.

Stay proactive about kidney health this month and beyond!

Are you at risk? Early detection can make a difference in preventing kidney disease. Take this [online kidney quiz](#) to see if you are at risk.





# Bridge the Gap Between Healthy and Tasty

**Discover delicious, healthy food choices with the support of a personal health coach.**

Your food choices influence your energy, sleep, and even mood but Omada® is here to help. With Omada, you can work one-on-one with your very own personal health coach to find meals that fit your lifestyle and health goals.



## Try out these 4 tasty tips:

- 1 Colorful Veggies**  
Fill up half of your plate with non-starchy veggies in a variety of colors.
- 2 Lean Protein**  
Pick good lean protein that can be enjoyed hot or cold, like cooked chicken, tuna, or tofu.
- 3 Healthy Fats**  
Healthy fats—like avocados, nuts and olive oil – help support our brain, heart, skin, reduce inflammation and can even help with weight loss.
- 4 A Bit of Fun**  
Add a bit of fun—like frozen yogurt covered blueberries or dark chocolate—to satisfy cravings and help you stay on track.

**Join Omada to receive personalized help in reaching your nutrition and health goals.**

“

My coach helps to make my experience personalized. She reaches out to check in and sends recipes of foods I actually like and eat and what my family likes and eats. Things that I will actually cook.”

— RUBY, OMADA MEMBER



**Apply today**

[omadahealth.com/ogb](https://omadahealth.com/ogb)

## Brain Injury Awareness

Every 9 seconds, someone in the United States sustains a brain injury. There are two types of brain injury, acquired and traumatic. An acquired brain injury (ABI) is any injury to the brain that is not hereditary, congenital, degenerative, or induced by birth trauma. Typical causes of ABI include:

- Electric Shock
- Infectious Disease
- Lightning Strike
- Near Drowning
- Oxygen Deprivation
- Stroke
- Seizure Disorder
- Substance Abuse/Overdose
- Toxic Exposure
- Tumor

A traumatic brain injury (TBI) is a type of ABI and is caused by trauma to the brain from an external source. Leading causes of TBI include:

- Falls
- Assaults
- Motor Vehicle Accidents
- Struck by Something or Against Something

Because traumatic brain injury cannot be cured, steps should be taken to prevent an injury from occurring. You can reduce your risk of a traumatic brain injury by following these tips:

- Wear your seatbelt
- Don't drive under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Don't text or use a cell phone while driving
- Wear a helmet when on a bike, motorcycle, scooter, etc.
- Wear a helmet when participating in contact sports
- Remove tripping hazards at home
- Provide adequate lighting
- Use safety gates at the top and bottom of stairs.



## Spring Forward

Daylight-saving time begins Sunday, March 9. While gaining an extra hour of daylight gives us those long summer nights we love in South Louisiana, adjusting to the time change can be tough, especially when Monday morning rolls around. These sleep tips can help you spring forward more easily and improve your sleep year-round:

- **Gradually Transition Into the Time Change** – Start by going to bed 15 minutes earlier each night, a few days before the time change. This will help your body adjust smoothly to the new schedule.
- **Keep Regular Sleep Hours** – Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends. Consistency helps regulate your body's internal clock and improves the quality of your sleep.
- **Get Some Exercise During the Day** – Moderate physical activity, such as walking, can help you sleep better. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise, three or more times a week, but avoid intense exercise too close to bedtime.
- **Avoid Stimulating Substances** – Caffeine and alcohol can interfere with sleep, so try to avoid them for 4 to 6 hours before bed. Smokers should also refrain from tobacco use near bedtime, as it can disrupt sleep.
- **Eat Lightly at Night** – Eating heavy or spicy foods can cause indigestion and disrupt your sleep. For a more restful night, enjoy light meals several hours before bedtime.
- **Relax Before Bed** – Stress and overstimulation can make it difficult to fall asleep. Instead of watching intense TV shows or movies, unwind with a warm bath or a good book to help you relax.

By following these tips, you can make the transition to daylight-saving time easier and enjoy better sleep throughout the year!



## Get Lucky with Better Health This March

What's luckier than great nutrition and \$0 care with Access2day Health?

March is all about luck—four-leaf clovers, pots of gold, and the hope of good fortune. But when it comes to your health, luck should never be part of the equation. Whether it's the food you eat or the healthcare you receive, making smart choices today can lead to a healthier, luckier future.

### So Much Green! \$0 Cost Care & Nutrition Support

While many people leave their healthcare to chance—dealing with high medical bills and long waits—you don't have to. With your Access2day membership, you and your dependents receive **\$0** preventive, primary, and urgent care at any of our clinic locations, no appointments needed.

Plus, March month is National Nutrition Month, a perfect reminder that what you eat directly impacts your long-term health. Did you know?

- **Healthy eating can reduce your risk of chronic diseases** like heart disease, diabetes, and obesity. (CDC)
- **Only 1 in 10 adults eat enough fruits and vegetables daily**, increasing their risk of preventable health issues. (CDC)

By making small, smart changes—like incorporating more whole foods, lean proteins, and healthy fats into your diet—you can improve your energy levels, immune function, and overall well-being.

### Don't Leave Your Health to Luck—Take Control Today!

Picture this: it's St. Patrick's Day, and you decide to celebrate with a big meal. The next day, you're feeling under the weather—was it the food, or just bad luck? Instead of waiting days for a doctor's appointment (or paying hefty urgent care fees), you can visit an Access2day clinic for \$0 cost care and get the answers you need—fast!

With Access2day Health, you don't have to rely on luck to stay healthy. Whether it's a routine check-up or an urgent care visit, we've got you covered—no co-pays, no hidden fees, just the care you need when you need it.

### At the End of the Rainbow...

This March, make your own luck by prioritizing your health. With better nutrition and easy, \$0 care, you'll feel better, live better, and save more—without relying on four-leaf clovers.

Find Access2day clinics near you with ease—download the **Access2day Health App** on the Apple App Store or Google Play today! Stay connected to \$0 care anytime, anywhere.

📍 Find your nearest clinic today at [www.access2dayhealth.com/locations](http://www.access2dayhealth.com/locations).



## March Small Shift: Smart Swaps

This month, the Small Shifts squad at Pennington Biomedical is focusing on **Smart Swaps**—small, simple changes to daily habits that can lead to big health benefits over time. In our busy lives, it's often the little adjustments that make the biggest difference!

By making **smart swaps**, you can take easy steps toward better nutrition, such as:

- Choosing fresh fruit instead of sugary snacks
- Swapping refined grains for whole grains
- Opting for lean proteins over processed meats

Throughout March, we'll share **practical tips, delicious recipes, and science-backed insights** to help you make sustainable, healthy choices. Whether you're looking for quick meal ideas, expert guidance, or motivation to stay on track, we've got you covered!

And we want to hear from you! **Join the conversation by sharing your own Smart Swaps, challenges, and success stories.** Use #SmallShifts and tag Pennington Biomedical on social media—we can inspire and support each other on the journey to better health.

Let's make small shifts that lead to lasting change—together! Visit [www.pbrc.edu/smallshifts](http://www.pbrc.edu/smallshifts) to sign up for the email campaign.



## 25<sup>th</sup> annual Wellness Day for Women

The Irene W. Pennington Wellness Day for Women celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2025 as it returns to Pennington Biomedical on Saturday, March 8, from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. The event features a wide array of health screenings, services and other activities to participants from across the Capital region.

Body wellness and mental health and wellbeing will again be a primary theme of the event. With four out of 10 women reporting feelings of stress, the event will address emotional and mental wellbeing with heart and blood pressure screenings, as well as an introductory class of Chair Yoga for all fitness levels, presented by Woman's Center for Wellness.

Additional education session topics include heart disease, hormones, and precision nutrition. Following the educational sessions, a hands-only CPR demonstration will be provided by the American Heart Association. The [Mobile Blood Donation Center](#) from Our Lady of the Lake will be on site to collect blood donations, and participants are encouraged to donate, as all blood types are needed.

Mammograms will be offered by Mary Bird Perkins Cancer Center by appointment only, and participants are encouraged to register online. For the blood glucose screenings provided, fasting is not required, but eating or drinking nine to 12 hours prior to the screening can affect the accuracy of results.

All participants of ages 18 and older will receive a Passport to Wellness Card upon arrival and will be able to collect stamps on their cards throughout the day as they participate in activities, with prizes distributed for completed cards.

Click here for more info:

*Irene W. Pennington*  
**WELLNESS DAY**  
*for* **WOMEN**



## National Nutrition Month

March is national nutrition month. In light of nutrition month – healthy meals prepared in the kitchen by LA Blue dietitians:



## Broccoli Pasta



*This wonderful broccoli pasta recipe is made with parmesan, fusilli, and a bunch of broccoli. The surprisingly delicious broccoli sauce pairs wonderfully with a chunky pasta for a flavor bomb of a meal. This recipe is ready in less than 30 minutes, making it a fabulous weeknight meal.*

### Ingredients:

- 12 ounces broccoli florets
- 2 TBSPs olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 TSPs kosher salt
- 1 TBSP butter
- 1 cup shredded parmesan
- 1 pound fusilli (or other chunky pasta)
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 TSP red pepper flakes
- 1 TSP ground black pepper
- 1.2 cup breadcrumbs

### Instructions:

1. Boil a large pot of salted water over high heat.
2. Heat the oil in a large pot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, add the onions and cook for 5 to 6 minutes or until lightly browned.
3. Meanwhile, when the water is boiling, add the broccoli to it and let it boil for 5 minutes.
4. Once the onion has cooked, add the garlic and let cook for 30 seconds before stirring. Then, add the red pepper flakes, salt, and pepper. Stir to combine.
5. Using a slotted spoon or metal sieve, scoop the broccoli out of the water and add it to the pot with the onions. Do not drain the water. Scoop out 1 cup of the pasta water and add it to the broccoli sauce. Bring sauce to a simmer and then reduce heat to medium-low.
6. Add the pasta to the boiling water and cook according to package directions.
7. Allow the broccoli sauce to simmer while the pasta cooks, stirring occasionally.
8. Heat the butter in a small frying pan, and once melted, add the breadcrumbs. Let them cook, stirring occasionally, for 3 to 5 minutes or until golden brown.
9. Once the pasta has cooked, drain it and add it to the broccoli sauce, add half the cheese and half the breadcrumbs, and stir to combine.
10. Serve the pasta topped with the remaining cheese and breadcrumbs.

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

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