



# Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin December 2019

Newton Public Schools

## Take Stock for 2020

*Timely Tip:* Be sure your holiday lights are safe! Discard any with damaged cords or plugs. If buying new, confirm if safe for indoor or outdoor use. Use a ladder made of nonconductive materials, like wood or fiberglass, to reduce risk of electrocution.

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Your health is critical and worth thinking about since the new year and new decade are around the corner. So, take stock and plan for a healthier, better you in 2020. Consider this:

- **Start 2020 off with a trip to your doctor.** Annual wellness visits can help you keep track of routine measurements like height, weight, and blood pressure, but can also help detect changes and identify any risks you may have for chronic diseases.
- **Exercise regularly.** Join the gym! Most offer access to plenty of equipment. The Horizon BCBSNJ [HorizonbFit](#) program could help you save on membership fees. Or commit to a daily 30-minute walk for a good cardio workout.
- **Add more healthy foods to your diet.** Slowly adding fruits, veggies, and meats like fish or chicken to your diet help you maintain a healthy weight.



- **Meditate and relax.** Mental health is just as important as physical health. Try activities that help you de-stress, like an art class, organized sport, or reading. Check out [My Health Manager](#) to learn more.

- **Make a monthly plan:** Take action!  
**Week 1:** Create a wellness plan; what do you want to improve?  
**Week 2:** Get started and stick to it!  
**Week 3:** Look for improvement; do you need to adjust something?  
**Week 4:** Finish the month strong!  
**Week 5:** Reflect...did you reach your goal? Make a plan for next month!

## Open Enrollment Reminder

2020 Open Enrollment ends on **December 6**. If you are changing or updating your plans, paperwork is due to the [Business Office](#) by **December 6!**

## Holiday Dieting Tips

With so many social gatherings during this time, it can be difficult to avoid good food and drinks. Whether you're dieting or just trying to maintain your healthy lifestyle, fear not—you can survive the holidays and wake up on January 1 without feeling remorse or guilt. Try these following tips and watch this short [video](#) for motivation:

- **Don't go to a party hungry**—Eat before attending a party so you don't arrive on an empty stomach and devour everything in sight.
- **Eat slowly**—Be mindful of every chew. It takes your body 20 minutes to realize when it's full.
- **Pace yourself when drinking**—Alcohol can be dangerous at holiday parties, as overindulgence cannot only cause embarrassment, but also pack on the pounds.
- **Make socializing your top priority**—If you're distracted with conversation, you'll be occupied and less likely to indulge in food or drinks.
- **Don't feel pressured to eat leftovers**—If you have an abundance of leftovers after hosting a party, don't feel like you have to eat them just because you don't want them to go to waste.
- **Practice self-control**—For example, allow yourself one plate of food at a party, and promise yourself that you won't go back for seconds.



## Healthy Recipe

### Curried Squash Stew

#### Ingredients

- 1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 yellow onion (chopped)
- 2 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 celery stalk (chopped)
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- 1 large zucchini (chopped)
- 2 Tbsp. curry powder
- 3 cups butternut squash (chopped)
- 1 14.5-ounce can low-sodium tomatoes (diced)
- 1 14.5-ounce can low-sodium chickpeas (drained, rinsed)

#### Directions

1. Heat cooking oil in large pot on the stove over medium heat; add onion, garlic, and celery, and cook about 10 minutes, until the onion is tender.
2. Add zucchini and curry powder; cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.
3. Add butternut squash, tomatoes, and chickpeas, and cover; continue cooking for about 10 minutes.
4. Serve with cooked brown rice.

Makes: 4 servings

## National Health Observances

### December

#### World AIDS Day

World AIDS Campaign  
[worldaidsday.org](http://worldaidsday.org)

### January

#### Cervical Health Awareness Month

National Cervical Cancer Coalition  
[nccc-online.org](http://nccc-online.org)

#### National Radon Action Month

Environmental Protection Agency  
[epa.gov](http://epa.gov)

#### National Glaucoma Awareness Month

National Eye Institute  
[nei.gov](http://nei.gov)