



# Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin

December 2020

Branchburg Township School District

## Winter Prep: Be Ready

*Timely Tip:* The tendency may be to overspend this particular holiday season. Stick to a budget by trimming your gift list, setting dollar limits for each gift, tracking your spending, and using cash when possible.

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*Winter is here. Check off these reminders to be prepared.*

**Get your flu shot.**

The arrival of the winter months signals many things, including flu season. It's expected that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will continue to spread in the coming months.

The vaccine is your best chance of preventing the flu. There are important reasons to [get your flu shot](#) during this pandemic:

*Reduce the risk of contracting both flu and COVID-19 at the same time.*

Fighting simultaneous flu and COVID-19 infections could be much worse than battling either alone.

*Eliminate symptom confusion between the flu and COVID-19. You'll be less likely to get flu symptoms like fever, cough, and body aches, which can be confused for COVID-19.*

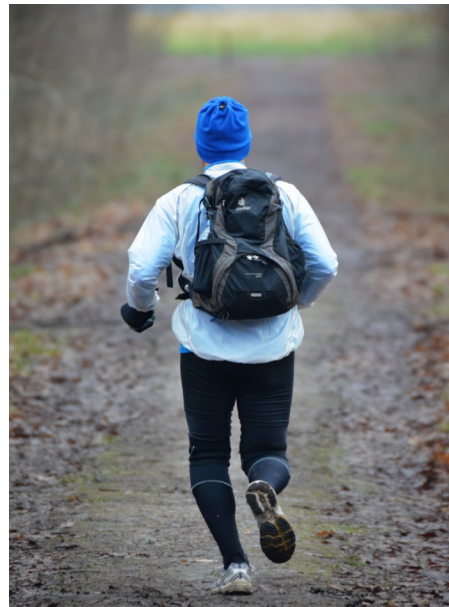
*Reduce strain on the medical system.*

Both flu and COVID-19 are respiratory illnesses, so they rely on the same crucial life-saving hospital equipment.

**Sign up for online care now.** Plan now so if you need care from home, you're ready to go; get started

with [Horizon CareOnline](#) or the [Horizon Blue app](#). New technologies can be confusing but preparation helps.

**Any plan changes / updates you made** during our recent NJEHP enrollment opportunity will take effect January 1, 2021. Prepare by logging into [Online Member Services](#) for info about benefits, wellness programs, claims history, and more.



## Celebrate Safely

This holiday season will be different than others. You may miss the parties and events, but be aware that in-person celebrations pose *risk factors* that contribute to the spread of COVID-19.

**Community levels:** higher numbers of COVID-19 cases in both the gathering locale and where attendees are coming from add the risk of infection.

**Gathering site:** poorly ventilated indoor settings pose a higher risk; venues with open doors and windows, and outdoor gatherings, lessen risk.

**Duration:** opt for short visits rather than a gathering that lasts over a prolonged period of time.

**Number of people:** larger gatherings present more risk for infection spread.

**Attendee behaviors:** those who do not follow prevention practices prior to and during a gathering pose a greater risk to others.

This year, avoid in-person gatherings with people who do not live in your household. Stick with small celebrations and follow [prevention practices](#), such as: physical distance, wear a mask, avoid singing or shouting, wash hands regularly, avoid self-serve foods and drinks. If feeling ill, stay home.

Try something new this year—online, virtual gatherings pose the least risk for spreading COVID-19. Consider this alternative to help keep yourself and loved ones safe and healthy this holiday season.



## Healthy Recipe

### Winter Veggie Casserole

#### Ingredients

- 1 medium eggplant
- 4 tomatoes
- 1 green pepper
- 1 onion
- 1 tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- 3 Tbsp. vegetable oil
- 1 clove garlic
- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan cheese

#### Directions

1. After removing skin from eggplant, cut into cubes.
2. Chop tomato into small pieces.
3. Cut green pepper in half; remove seeds and cut into small pieces.
4. Chop onion into small pieces.
5. Finely chop garlic clove.
6. Cook the first eight ingredients in a large skillet until tender.
7. Top with Parmesan cheese and serve.

*Makes: 8 servings*

#### Nutritional Information Per Serving

Total calories: 86

Total fat: 6 g; protein: 2 g; sodium: 313 mg; carbohydrates: 8 g

## National Health Observances

### December

**Safe Toys and Celebrations Month**  
*American Academy of Ophthalmology*  
[aao.org](http://aao.org)

### January

**Thyroid Awareness Month**  
*American Association of Clinical Endocrinology (AACE)*  
[thyroidawareness.com](http://thyroidawareness.com)

### **National Birth Defects Prevention Month**

*National Birth Defects Prevention Month*  
[nbdpn.org](http://nbdpn.org)

### **National Radon Month**

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