



# Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin

October 2022

Pompton Lakes School District

## Prepare to Take Care

### Timely Tip:

While cool temperatures are ideal for planting flowers and trees, create a garden with plants that produce little pollen, such as fir, pine, dogwood, azaleas, tulips, irises, and pansies, to deter irritating allergies.

*Autumn means fresh starts and time to plan for the colder days. Take care in prepping for the months ahead and enjoy a healthier winter season.*

### This Year's Flu Season

Influenza (flu) season lasts from October through May in the United States, with peak flu activity happening between December and March. The country's flu activity has been unusual since the COVID-19 pandemic began, which could pose consequences for the upcoming season.

Furthermore, flu season in the Southern Hemisphere may indicate what's to come in the United States. In particular, Australia has been experiencing an unusual surge in flu activity early in the season. Health experts now warn that the same could happen in the United States later this year.

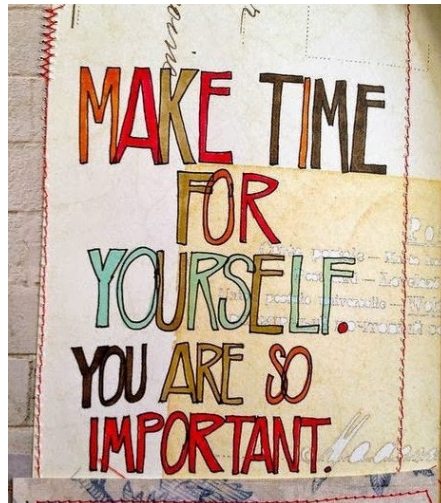
Being vaccinated against the flu is your best chance of preventing the illness. The CDC recommends that anyone age 6 months and older get a flu shot every

year. September and October are the best months to get vaccinated against the flu, so don't delay. Visit [Horizon](#) / [Aetna](#) (GSP members) to find a nearby provider; go to

[Staff Portal / Benefits Online](#) for more wellness info.

### Stock Your Medicine Cabinet Now

According to a Walgreens survey, nearly 3 in 4 people admit that they often forget to replace expired medications. As the seasons change,



now is a great time to check the expiration dates of medicine cabinet items and refresh as needed. It's also important to make sure you have the necessary cold- and flu-related items on hand. Check expiration dates every three months so you're always prepared.

### Concerned About Monkeypox?

The spread of monkeypox has been declared a Public Health Emergency and federal officials have expanded vaccination efforts. Learn more at [nj.gov](#).

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## Women's Health and Cancer Rights Notice

The federal government mandates certain health coverage for breast reconstructive surgery in any health insurance plan that provides medical and surgical benefits for mastectomies. If your plan provides medical and surgical benefits for mastectomies, and you are receiving benefits in connection with a mastectomy and elect to have breast reconstruction along with that mastectomy, your plan must provide, in a manner determined in consultation between you and the attending doctor, coverage for the following:

- All stages of reconstruction of the breast on which the mastectomy was performed.
- Surgery and reconstruction of the other breast to produce a symmetrical appearance.
- Treatment of physical complications of the mastectomy, including lymphedemas.
- Breast prostheses, which is an artificial form of a breast to help reconstruct its original form.

These benefits are provided to the same extent as any other illness under your coverage, subject to deductible and coinsurance. All other features and benefits of your health insurance plan remain the same and are not impacted by this notification. Refer to benefit materials for details on applicable deductibles and coinsurance.



## Healthy Recipe

### Spaghetti Squash & Tomato

#### Ingredients

- 1 spaghetti squash (about 24 ounces, halved, seeded)
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 3 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 tsp. dried or 1/2 c. chopped fresh basil
- 1 c. cherry tomatoes (thinly sliced)
- Salt and pepper to taste (optional)

#### Preparation

1. Place the two spaghetti squash halves, cut-side down, in a glass baking dish. Add about 1/4 c. of water to dish and cover with plastic wrap.
2. Microwave the dish on high for 12 minutes, or until the squash is soft when pressed. Let it stand (still covered) for three minutes.
3. In large bowl, whisk oil, basil, oregano, and 2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese. Stir in tomatoes and season the mixture lightly with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Scrape squash out with a fork and add strands to tomato mixture; toss to combine. Add cheese and serve.

## National Health Observances

### October

#### Domestic Violence Awareness Month

*National Coalition Against Domestic Violence*

[ncadv.org](http://ncadv.org)

#### Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Awareness Month

*National Institutes of Health*

[safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov](http://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov)

#### National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

*American Cancer Society*

[cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

### November

#### National Family Caregivers Month

*Caregiver Action Network*

[caregiveraction.org](http://caregiveraction.org)