



Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin

February 2018

Health News to Use

This winter has been rough. Cold weather, illness, inactivity, and winter doldrums all bring added challenges to our safety and well-being. Meet these challenges head-on armed with health news you can use.

February is American Heart Month

We all know the heart is important to our overall health. What some don't know is how factors like poor diet and limited exercise can lead to serious heart complications, putting your whole body at risk.

Now is the time to reduce your risk for complications like cardiac arrest, heart attacks, high cholesterol, hypertension, diabetes, and stroke.



The most serious heart conditions are cardiac arrest, heart attacks, and stroke; their symptoms should be monitored very closely. Call 911 if you or someone you know experiences:

- Chest discomfort lasting more than a few minutes
- Arm weakness or numbness
- Slurred speech
- Unresponsiveness when tapping on shoulders

Horizon BCBSNJ offers [preventive health guidance](#) for a healthier heart plus programs to help you reach your heart goals. Get started at [Online Member Services](#).

Hospital Network Update

Horizon BCBSNJ recently added CarePoint Health Hospitals (Christ Hospital, Bayonne Medical Center, and Hoboken University Medical Center) to the hospital network. See the Horizon BCBSNJ announcement [here](#). Search for other hospitals in your area at horizonblue.com/doctorfinder.

It's Still Flu Season According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), as of early November 2017 only 2 out of 5 people had received this season's flu vaccine. Flu season typically lasts until May, so if you or anyone in your family older than 6 months of age has not yet gotten the vaccine, do so now to reduce the risk of illness. Visit your doctor or a [contracted pharmacy](#) in New Jersey to get your shot; learn more with these [Q&A](#).

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3 Steps to Safer Workouts

Exercise is a great way to combat stress, lose weight, and boost heart health. To get the most from your workouts, add warming up, cooling down, and stretching to your routine. These simple steps are proven to help prevent painful and costly injuries.

1. **Warming Up** Warming up allows your body time to adjust from rest to activity. Remember to gradually increase intensity to reduce stress on your bones, muscles, and heart.
2. **Cooling Down** As with warming up, cooling down should include movements similar to those in your workout, but at a gradually decreasing level of intensity.
3. **Stretching** After cooling down, stretching helps to build flexibility and range of motion. Be sure to use gentle and fluid movements, never force a joint beyond its normal range of motion, and you should not feel any pain.

6 Full-body Stretches

Hold each stretch for 40 seconds.



Healthy Recipe

10-Minute Corn Chowder

This healthier alternative to cream-based chowders is comforting and filling.

Ingredients

- 1 tsp. vegetable oil
- 1/2 onion (chopped)
- 1 tsp. garlic (minced)
- 4 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 3 cups nonfat milk
- 2 tsp. mustard
- 1/4 tsp. thyme (dried)
- Black pepper (to taste)
- 2 cups corn kernels (frozen)
- 4 Tbsp. shredded reduced-fat cheddar cheese

Instructions

1. Heat a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add oil; saute onion and garlic about 2 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, place flour, milk, mustard, and seasonings in a small bowl; mix well.
3. Add milk mixture to skillet; add corn kernels. Mix well until mixture comes to a boil and thickens, about 3 minutes; stir often to avoid burning.
4. Divide into four bowls and top each with 1 Tbsp. of shredded cheese.

National Health Observances

February

February 2

Go Red for Women

American Heart Association

goredforwomen.org

American Heart Month

American Heart Association

heart.org

Children's Dental Health Month

American Dental Association

ada.org

March

National Nutrition Month

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

eatright.org

National Kidney Month

National Kidney Foundation

kidney.org