Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin December 2020

Mansfield 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, covered by AmeriHealth, is your best chance of preventing the flu. There are important reasons to get a flu shot now:

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 MDLive. New technologies can be confusing but preparation helps.

☐ **Any plan changes / updates you made** during our recent NJEHP Special Open Enrollment will take effect January 1, 2021. Find info on plan benefits, wellness, claims, and more at your AmeriHealth online account or our *Benefits Online* website found at the *Staff Portal*.

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 to 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.

National Health Observances

December

Safe Toys and Celebrations Month
American Academy of Ophthalmology
aao.org

January

Thyroid Awareness Month
American Association of Clinical Endocrinology (AACE)
thyroidawareness.com

National Birth Defects Prevention Month
National Birth Defects Prevention Month
nbdpn.org

National Radon Month
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
epa.gov

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