



Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin December 2021

Shamong Township Schools

Year-End Reminders

Timely Tip: Remember to schedule downtime for yourself during the busy holiday season. Exercise and sleep are good antidotes for stress and fatigue. Don't abandon your healthy habits! Find moments to relax your mind and body throughout each day.

The end of 2021 is quickly approaching—these reminders can help you stay on track into 2022! Plus, find plan news at our health benefits website; go to ims.k12.nj.us / District / Staff Resources / Benefits / Employee Benefits Online.

Reduce Your Costs

If you've already met any deductibles/ out-of-pocket maximums that apply to your plans, keep in mind these will renew on January 1, 2022. Take time before the end of the year to squeeze in any medical visits/services you have been putting off.

Prescription drug prices in the United States rank among the highest across the globe. If you are prescribed a long-term or maintenance drug, look into ordering through your mail-order drug provider to potentially cut costs.



There Is Still Time for Your Vaccines

The [CDC](https://www.cdc.gov) advises that flu season begins in October and can last into May. So it's not too late for a flu shot—learn more at aetna.com / horizonblue.com and log into

your [Aetna](https://aetna.com) / [Horizon OMNIA](https://horizonblue.com) online account to search for a provider. Plus, most [children and teens](#) are now eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine; [boosters](#) are available for most adults. Get vaccinated and enter the new year ready to go.

The Telemedicine Option

If seeking services over the winter break, remember that Aetna Teladoc / Horizon CareOnline are available by phone or video 24/7. Visit aetna.com / horizonblue.com to get started.

Winter Workouts

If you're in full hibernation mode or stressed out from the holidays, try these tips to stay active this winter:

- *No motivation?* Mix up your routine with new workouts or partner up.
- *Too busy?* Try a quick, unscheduled workout: jump rope for a few

minutes, walk for 10 minutes three times daily, or replace a trip to the gym with a home workout.

- *Too cold?* Outdoor workouts improve mental and physical health!

Your Prescriptions

Understanding your drug plan and prescriptions can help you save money, stay healthier, and receive greater satisfaction from your health plan.

Generic vs. Brand-Name Drugs

Choosing generic drugs over the brand-name is generally less expensive. However, many people question whether generic drugs are as good, effective, or safe as their brand-name counterparts. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulates the chemical equivalency of generic drugs to ensure they are just as safe and effective as the brand-name drugs they mimic.

Follow Directions Completely

Nearly half of all dispensed prescriptions are taken inappropriately. These “non-compliant” patients are doing one or more of the following:

- Medicating at the wrong time of day
- Under-dosing or stopping too soon
- Sharing prescriptions with others
- Mixing medicines with alcohol, tobacco, certain foods, or other drugs
- Failing to fill/refill prescriptions

Talk with Your Doctor

Ask the below about your prescriptions:

- Is there a generic substitute available?
- Are there any drug interactions?
- Does this drug cause any side effects?
- If I forget a dose, what should I do?

Be sure your doctor is aware of previous reactions you’ve had to medications; call your doctor immediately if you have adverse effects from a new prescription.



Healthy Recipe

Applesauce Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup butter
- 1 large egg
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 2-½ cups flour
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1-½ cups unsweetened applesauce
- 1 cup raisins

Preparation

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Cream together sugar, butter, egg.
3. In a separate bowl, combine baking soda, flour, salt, and cinnamon. Mix well.
4. Stir dry mixture into wet mixture just until moist.
5. Add applesauce and raisins.
6. Drop dough by heaping teaspoon several inches apart on prepared baking sheet. Bake 10 to 12 minutes. *Enjoy!*

National Health Observances

December

Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Prevent Blindness America

preventblindness.org

National Influenza Vaccination Week (December 6-12)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cdc.org

January

Thyroid Awareness Month

American Association of Clinical Endocrinology
thyroidawareness.com

Cervical Health Awareness Month

National Cervical Cancer Coalition
nccc-online.org