



LifeTimes™

Your guide to **lifelong health**

Fall 2022

Health and wellness or prevention information



Eating Well on a Budget

A healthy food plan is important for your health and well-being. It can change your mood, strength, weight and how well you think and feel. But at a time when so many of us are out of work, facing an unsure future or living on a tight budget, finding food that is healthy and low cost can be tough.

Along with a lack of time, having a fixed budget is a factor in having a healthy food plan. When you're hungry and pushed for time and money, fast food can seem like the best choice. While fast food is often tasty and filling, it can also have a lot of calories, sugar and lack nutrients. And despite what you may have been led to believe, eating fast food is rarely cheaper than eating healthy, home-cooked meals.

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COVID-19: At Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX), the health, safety and well-being of our members is our top priority. We want to help you stay informed about COVID-19 and get the care you need. For more information, visit www.bcbstx.com/medicaid/coronavirus-information.

Have you been on your BCBSTX Medicaid Plan longer than 12 months during the COVID-19 pandemic? If so, it's time to renew at www.needcoveragenowtx.com.

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Whether you're at school, living on your own, or raising a family on a budget, with useful tips you can enjoy healthy food without breaking the bank. The more you focus on buying local food, making meals at home and cutting waste, the healthier and tastier your food plan will be, the better you will feel and the more money you will save.

Tip 1: Plan ahead

Saving money on food involves changing your shopping habits, removing waste and focusing on healthier choices—and that can call for a little planning ahead. There are a few websites and smartphone apps that can help you make and track a budget for food and groceries. Or you can simply start with a well-thought-out shopping list. Sticking to a shopping list can help you avoid unplanned spending that can quickly break your budget.

Tip 2: Make smart food choices

Choosing healthy food over processed meals doesn't have to raise your weekly budget. In fact, it's worth remembering that junk food often costs you much more than the price on the sticker. A poor food plan can take a toll on your health, leading to higher health care costs, as well as low strength and productivity. Making smart food choices, though, can save you money and protect your health.

Tip 3: Shop wisely

The neighborhood grocery store is not the only place to shop. Sometimes other stores can offer much cheaper ways to buy healthy food. Warehouse or club stores like Costco offer great deals for seasonal produce, and foods such as chicken and cheese. To reduce waste, freeze large portions in smaller, more workable sizes.

Tip 4: Find cheaper protein choices

Your body relies on protein for many of its jobs. It's an important energy source and supports your mood and brain function. Affording some meat and fish sources of protein, though, can put a real strain on your food budget. By making a few adjustments, you can save money and still enjoy plenty of protein in your food plan. Add rice, pasta, fresh or frozen veggies, beans, or whole grains to meat to make tasty, filling meals. Mix ground meat with black beans in tacos, add whole grains to meatloaf or add lots of veggies to a chicken stir fry.

Tip 5: Stretch your money when you cook

Making large portions of food to use over many meals can save you time and energy as well as money. Most leftovers make very tasty burritos. Simply put each thing into a tortilla shell (try to get whole grain) with a little cheese or salsa and enjoy.

Tip 6: Make sweet treats healthy and low cost

Eating well on a budget doesn't mean denying yourself a treat or cutting out all desserts. Most of us crave sweets from time to time. But instead of costly desserts packed with sugar, such as cakes, cookies, and muffins, there are healthier ways to please a sweet tooth. Freeze your own 100% fruit juice popsicles. If you don't have a popsicle tray, use an ice-cube tray with plastic spoons as handles.

Source: www.helpguide.org/articles/healthy-eating/eat-healthy-for-less.htm



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Regular Well Child Visits Lead to Less Sick Visits

Studies show that completing Well Child checkups, getting kids routine care and the vaccines they need to stay healthy, lowers illnesses. One of the common illnesses reduced was ear infections, due to getting the pneumococcal vaccine.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas (BCBSTX) wants to help you keep your children healthy. From birth until the age of three, there are 10 scheduled well visits to check growth and development and to get the needed vaccines required for your child. At the age of three, well visits decrease to one time a year.

At BCBSTX, well visits are called Texas Health Steps visits and are at no cost to you. These visits are very important in keeping your child healthy and happy. Please make sure to schedule and go to all recommended Texas Health Steps visits.

Value Added Services Help You Live Healthier

BCBSTX has many Value Added Services (VAS) to help members stay healthy. These services are offered at no cost to you. VAS may have restrictions or limitations. STAR members can get these VAS:



| Value Added Service | Description |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line | Talk in private with a nurse about your health. Call toll-free 24 hours a day/seven days a week. |
| Extra Help Getting A Ride | Get free rides to approved services not covered by Medicaid such as non-emergency doctor visits, therapy, pharmacy, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) visits, BCBSTX member events and meetings, approved health classes or for covered services where the parent needs to bring more than one child. VAS transportation for STAR is offered for member meetings, WIC appointments, approved health education classes and other transportation not covered by the MTP program. |
| Well Child Checkup Incentive | Get a \$75 gift card for taking children from birth through 15 months to Texas Health Steps checkups. |
| Adolescent Checkup Incentive | Members ages 11 to 21 can earn a \$25 gift card when they get a yearly checkup. |
| Enhanced Eyewear | Children ages 18 and under are eligible to receive one upgrade to eyewear such as one pair of stylish frames (upgraded from basic), an upgrade to lenses, contact lenses or an additional pair of glasses every year after the completion of an eye exam. The maximum value of the benefit will not exceed \$150. |
| Sports and Camp Physicals | Members ages 18 and under can get a free sports and camp physical each year. |
| In-Home Meal Delivery Service | Members who qualify can get up to 14 meals delivered to their home after a hospital discharge for one incident per year. |

| Value Added Service | Description |
|---|---|
| Dental Services for Adult Members | Adult members ages 21 and older can get up to \$250 per year in dental services. |
| Behavioral Health (BH) Online Resource | Members have access to online behavioral health tools where they can log in and get access to information for their specific behavioral health concerns. These online tools are available to members 24/7, and are extra services beyond information available in the member handbook or on our website. This information may help members understand their BH conditions and when to reach out for help. |
| Behavioral Health – Inpatient Follow-up Incentive | Members are eligible for a \$25 gift card if they complete a follow-up visit with a behavioral health provider within seven days after a behavioral health hospitalization. |
| Findhelp® | Members can use Findhelp, an online resource platform, to search for community resources and to send self-referrals to community-based programs for direct assistance. |
| Blue365® | Provides members the opportunity to access health and wellness items and offerings at a lower cost, as well as take advantage of free/no cost services. |
| Health and Wellness Reimbursement | Members can receive up to \$50 in reimbursement for sports activities, sports classes, gym memberships or race entry fees. |

VAS for Pregnant Women and New Mothers



STAR members who are pregnant or are new mothers can get these VAS:

| Value Added Service | Description |
|--|--|
| Prenatal Care Incentives | Members who complete one prenatal visit within the first trimester or within 42 days of joining the plan and who register for our Special Beginnings® program will be eligible to choose from an infant car seat or a pack-and-play playard. Members must be active on the plan when completing their prenatal visit in order to get points toward the infant car seat or pack-and-play playard. The infant car seat or a pack-and-play playard will be sent to the address provided on the form. We will not replace items that were sent to the wrong address due to incorrect information provided on the form. |
| Prenatal Class with Incentive Diaper Bag | Pregnant members can take an online prenatal class at no cost and earn a free diaper bag with baby care items. |
| Prenatal Visit Gift Card Incentive | <p>Pregnant women must complete a prenatal visit within the first trimester or within 42 days of enrollment with BCBSTX.</p> <p>Members must be active on the plan and registered on BCBSTX Wellness Rewards website to qualify for the gift card. The visit must be completed prior to the end of the calendar year (December 31) to receive the gift card reward.</p> |
| Breastfeeding Education through our Special Beginnings Program | Members who register for the Special Beginnings maternity program will have access to breastfeeding education provided by Special Beginnings nurses. |
| Postpartum Visit Gift Card Incentive | <p>New mothers must complete the postpartum visit 7 to 84 days after delivery.</p> <p>Members must be active on the plan and registered on BCBSTX Wellness Rewards to qualify for and receive the gift cards.</p> |
| Fresh and Healthy Produce for Pregnant Members | Pregnant members can get up to \$50 for fresh fruits and vegetables delivered to their home. |

Seasonal Flu Shot

What is a flu shot?

Flu shots help protect against the four flu viruses that research shows will be most common during the coming season. Most flu shots are given with a needle, most often in the arm, but there is also a nose spray. Check with your doctor to find out which is best for you.

Who should and who should not get a flu shot?

Everyone six months of age and older should get a flu shot each season unless rare special cases apply. The shot helps to prevent the flu and it is vital for people who are at higher risk of getting the flu.

Some shots are not recommended for certain groups of people. Check with your doctor to find out your fitness for the flu shot.

Source: www.cdc.gov/flu/prevent/flushot.htm



A photograph of a classroom scene. A female teacher with dark hair, wearing a green cardigan over a white shirt, is smiling and looking upwards. Several young students are seated at a wooden desk, also smiling and raising their hands in the air. The background shows a classroom setting with a window and some decorations. The text "Fall Fun!" is overlaid in the top left corner.

Fall Fun!

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kali9

Fun Exercises and Games for Kids at Home

1. Jumping Jacks

Jumping Jacks are simple, but great for coordination and getting your heart going.

2. Dance Party

Turn on the music and dance for fun and exercise.

3. Hallway bowling

Fill up water bottles for bowling pins and use any ball you have to bowl.

4. Sock Skating

If you have hardwood floors, put on socks to skate around. Try spins or hockey stops or see who can slide the farthest. Make sure to move furniture, and watch for splinters.

5. Bubble Bashing

Blow bubbles and let your child try to pop them.

6. Parachute

This kiddie-gym standby can be recreated at home with sheets. Each person takes an end of the parachute or sheet and fans it upward while the kids take turns running underneath.

7. Cleanup Race

Set a timer or put on a song to see who can put away items in the room the fastest.

8. Hopscotch

Use tape to make an old-fashioned game of hopscotch on your floor.

9. Carnival

Set up carnival games such as Knock Down the Milk Cans using items like plastic food storage containers.

10. Follow the Leader

Everyone follows the leader. Add energetic movements such as jumping, stomping and squatting.

Source: <https://mommypoppins.com/newyorkcitykids/25-exercise-games-indoor-activities-for-kids>



Fall Food Favorites



Spicy Pumpkin and Corn Soup

Ingredients:

- 1 can (15 ounces) pumpkin
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained
- 1-½ cups frozen corn
- 1 can (10 ounces) diced tomatoes and green chiles
- 2 cans (14-½ ounces each) reduced-sodium chicken broth
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

Directions:

In a large saucepan, mix all ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 10-15 minutes or until slightly thickened, stirring often.

Can you freeze the soup?

Freeze cooled soup in freezer containers. To use, partly thaw in refrigerator overnight. Heat in a saucepan, stirring often; add a little broth if needed.

Source: www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/spicy-pumpkin-corn-soup

Get STAR Updates Sent Straight to Your Phone!

STAR members can get text messages with plan benefit updates, notices about STAR meetings, events in your area and health care tips.

You can opt in to get text messages sent to your phone by texting **STAR** to **33633**. Once you join the program, you may get up to four text messages per month.*

To cancel STAR text messages, text **STOP** to **33633**.

To learn more about our texting program, call Member Outreach at **1-877-375-9097** (TTY: **711**).



Tell Us What You Think!

Community Advisory Committee (CAC) – now online or by phone

Every three months, we invite STAR members to attend a CAC meeting to give us feedback on our member education materials and Value Added Services, and get health plan program updates. CAC meetings are now offered by phone and online meetings.

You can visit www.bcbstx.com/star to see a schedule of CAC meetings or call a BCBSTX Member Advocate at **1-877-375-9097** for details and to register for a meeting.



LifeTimes™

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LifeTimes is published for BCBSTX STAR members. Each issue brings you news about your health plan and staying healthy, along with important phone numbers for you to keep. If you have questions or need help, call the Customer Advocate Department.

Articles in *LifeTimes* are meant to educate. They are not meant as medical advice. Please check with your doctor for any advice about your health.

| Helpful Phone Numbers | Toll-Free Number | TTY Line (hearing/speech loss) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| BCBSTX STAR Customer Advocate | 1-888-657-6061 | 711 |
| Behavioral Health Services Hotline | 1-800-327-7390 | 1-800-735-2988 |
| BCBSTX Member Advocate | 1-877-375-9097 | 711 |
| 24-Hour Nurse Advice Line | 1-844-971-8906 | 711 |
| Maximus Enrollment Broker | 1-800-964-2777 | 711 |
| Medicaid Managed Care Helpline | 1-866-566-8989 | 711 |
| Service Management/Disease Management | 1-877-214-5630 | 711 |

*Message and data rates may apply. Terms and conditions and privacy policy at www.bcbstx.com/mobile/text-messaging.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

Findhelp, formerly Aunt Bertha, is an independent company that provides community resource listings and discount programs for BCBSTX members.

Blue365 is a discount program only for BCBSTX members. This is NOT insurance. Some of the services offered through this program may be covered under your health plan. Members should check their benefit booklet or call the Customer Service number on the back of their ID card for specific benefit facts. Use of Blue365 does not change monthly payments, nor do costs of the services or products count toward any maximums and/or plan deductibles. Discounts are only given through vendors that take part in this program. BCBSTX does not guarantee or make any claims or recommendations about the program's services or products. Members should consult their doctor before using these services and products. BCBSTX reserves the right to stop or change this program at any time without notice. The relationship between the Blue365 vendors and BCBSTX is that of independent contractors.

Special Beginnings® is a registered trademark of Health Care Service Corporation Blue Cross®, Blue Shield® and the Cross and Shield Symbols are registered service marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans.

To get auxiliary aids and services, or to get written or oral interpretation to understand the information given to you, including materials in alternative formats such as large print, braille or other languages, please call the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas STAR Customer Advocate Department at **1-888-657-6061** (TTY: **711**).

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas complies with applicable federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas does not exclude people or treat them differently because of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas provides:

- Free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - Qualified sign language interpreters
 - Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats and more)
- Free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - Qualified interpreters
 - Information written in other languages

If you need these services, contact the Civil Rights Coordinator.

If you believe that Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex, you can file a grievance with: Civil Rights Coordinator, Office of Civil Rights Coordinator, 300 E. Randolph St., 35th floor, Chicago, Illinois 60601, **1-855-664-7270**, TTY/TDD: **1-855-661-6965**, Fax: **1-855-661-6960**. You can file a grievance by mail or fax. If you need help filing a grievance, Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights, electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at **<https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>**, or by mail or phone at:

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201

1-800-368-1019, 1-800-537-7697 (TDD)

Complaint forms are available at **<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>**.

ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you.
Call 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística.
Llame al 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn.
Gọi số 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711)。

주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다.
1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث اذكر اللغة، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل برقم 1-855-710-6984 (رقم هاتف الصم والبكم: 711).

خبردار: اگر آپ اردو بولتے ہیں، تو آپ کو زبان کی مدد کی خدمات مفت میں دستیاب ہیں۔ کال کریں 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng Tagalog, maaari kang gumamit ng mga serbisyo ng tulong sa wika nang walang bayad. Tumawag sa 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

ATTENTION : Si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement.
Appelez le 1-855-710-6984 (ATS: 711).

ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए मुफ्त में भाषा सहायता सेवाएं उपलब्ध हैं।
1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) पर कॉल करें।

اب. دشاب یم مهارف امش یارب ناگیار تروص هب ینابز تلایهست، دینک یم وگتفگ یسراف نابز هب رگا: هجوت
1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) دیریگب سامت.

ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie Deutsch sprechen, stehen Ihnen kostenlos sprachliche Hilfsdienstleistungen zur Verfügung. Rufnummer: 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

સુચના: જો તમે ગુજરાતી બોલતા છો, તો નિઃશુલ્ક ભાષા સહાય સેવાઓ તમારા માટે ઉપલબ્ધ છે. ફોન કરો
1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).

ВНИМАНИЕ: Если вы говорите на русском языке, то вам доступны бесплатные услуги перевода.
Звоните 1-855-710-6984 (телетайп: 711).

注意事項：日本語を話される場合、無料の言語支援をご利用いただけます。1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711) まで、お電話にてご連絡ください。

ໂປດຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາລາວ, ການບໍລິການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ໂດຍບໍ່ເສັຍຄ່າ, ຄຸ້ມມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທ 1-855-710-6984 (TTY: 711).