



Health Observance Calendar

January

Scale Back #Drop10

If you live in Alabama, consider participating in Scale Back Alabama. This is a free statewide weight-loss program designed to encourage Alabamians to get healthy and have fun doing it. If you are not based in Alabama, you can still make changes to maintain a healthy BMI or to lose 10 pounds in ten weeks. Use the hashtag #Drop10 on social media to share your progress.

February

Healthy Heart Awareness

The month of February is usually associated with the hearts used in decorations for Valentine's Day. February is National Heart Health Awareness month, so these decorations can also serve as a reminder of heart health. We all need to take care of ourselves so we can be there for the ones we love.

March

Focus on Nutrition

"Go Futher with Food" is the theme for National Nutrition Month 2018. Whether it's starting the day off right with a healthy breakfast or fueling before an athletic event, the foods you choose can make a difference. Preparing foods to go further at home and within the community can have a positive impact, as well.

myBlueWellness News

First Quarter 2018

Sync Up!

It just got much easier to track all your healthy habits in one place. Now, for the first time, you can connect your Fitbit, Jawbone and other devices or apps to myBlueWellness, powered by WebMD®.

Why connect?

- You'll receive a more complete picture of your health.
- MyBlueWellness will combine the information from your fitness tracker or app.
- It's easy! Whether you use a fitness device or an app on your phone, sync it once and forget about it.
- Track your exercise, diet, sleep and calories burned.
- Upload data automatically into your Personal Health Record.



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. BLUE CROSS®, BLUE SHIELD® and the Cross and Shield Symbols are registered service marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. myBlueWellness is a wellness website offered by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and powered by WebMD®, an independent company. Fitbit and Jawbone are independent companies that operate separately from BCBS of Alabama. Fitbit and Jawbone do not sell BCBS of Alabama products or services. The Fitbit word mark and logo are the trademarks of Fitbit, Inc. The Jawbone word mark and logo are the trademarks of Jawbone, Inc.

Notes from

Dr. Schmidt

Advice from Associate Medical Director, Dr. Anne Schmidt

The start of a new year is a great time to commit to making healthy lifestyle changes that pay dividends far into the future. While many people might choose this time of year to "go on a diet," it's important to remember that healthy weight loss is about ongoing lifestyle habits that include lasting changes in daily eating and exercise.

These changes don't have to be drastic – even moderate weight loss can lead to significant health benefits, including improvements in blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol. Exercise also helps relieve stress and improve mood and has been shown to help people maintain weight loss over time.

So enjoy healthy foods in reasonable portions, find an activity that you enjoy, and kick off the new year with a lasting investment in your healthy future!

Winter Crisp – A tart and tangy fruit dessert that’s just perfect on a cold winter night.

Serving size: makes 6 servings • 1.75" x 2" piece • Prep Time: 10 minutes • Cook Time: 50 minutes

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 °F.
2. To prepare the filling: In a medium bowl, combine the sugar, flour, and lemon peel. Mix well. Add the lemon juice, apples, and cranberries; stir to mix. Spoon into a 6-cup baking dish.
3. To prepare the topping: In a small bowl, combine the oats, brown sugar, whole-wheat flour, and cinnamon. Add the melted margarine; stir to mix.
4. Sprinkle the topping over the filling. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the filling is bubbly and the top is brown. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Source: National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. Retrieved from: [https://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov/\(X\(1\)S\(q4pknt451sjrro45injmddqg\)\)/recipedetail.aspx?cld=0&rld=285](https://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov/(X(1)S(q4pknt451sjrro45injmddqg))/recipedetail.aspx?cld=0&rld=285)

Ingredients:

For taco filling:

- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp grated lemon peel
- 3/4 tsp lemon juice
- 5 cup apples, unpeeled, sliced
- 1 cup cranberries

For topping:

- 2/3 cup rolled oats
- 1/3 cup brown sugar, packed
- 1/4 cup whole-wheat flour
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 Tbsp soft margarine, melted

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories.....	284
Total fat.....	6 g
Saturated fat.....	1 g
Cholesterol.....	0 mg
Sodium.....	56 mg

Avoid Fad Dieting!

The old saying, “There’s nothing new under the sun,” is especially true each January as thousands of Americans make New Year’s resolutions to diet, exercise and finally lose those unwanted pounds. Unfortunately, the temptation to reach these goals in unhealthy ways can be very strong. Doing the daily work of healthy habit changes such as eating healthier foods and exercising regularly is less appealing than the easy route promised by fad diets.

Fad diets are weight-reduction diets that enjoy temporary popularity by promising quick solutions for losing weight, often in ways that compromise nutrition. Most people who follow a fad diet gain the weight right back after they stop the diet.

Here are a few signs your new diet program may be a fad:

- It promises more than 2 pounds of weight loss per week.
- It forbids a basic food group or food nutrient (fats, carbohydrates, proteins, etc.).
- The claims sound too good to be true.
- It involves a quick fix or diet drug.
- There’s a product you need to buy in order to lose weight.

Make a New Year’s resolution to be patient with yourself and set realistic, healthful weight-loss goals. And be sure to check out www.choosemyplate.gov to customize a meal plan that’s right for you.

Did You Know?

Even animals stretch! Stretching gets blood flowing to the brain and relieves tension. Although most animals don’t stretch before hunting — er, exercising — humans should. Stretching before exercise helps to improve muscle control and increases flexibility and range of motion. It also helps to prevent activity-related injuries. Be sure to stretch before and after hitting the bicycle, ballet floor, hiking trail or soccer field.

The myBlueWellness newsletter is provided for general informational purposes to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama customers. Information contained in this newsletter is not intended to replace professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified healthcare provider regarding your healthcare needs. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking medical advice because of something you have read in this newsletter. Remember to check your benefits booklet for coverage information and limitations.