



# Simple Lifestyle Changes to Lower Blood Pressure

## LOOKING AHEAD...

### Join the May Challenge which starts May 1!

This month you are challenged to average 3 miles a day for 29 days in a virtual team race around the world. As you reach a milestone in your journey, you'll learn about nutrition and healthy eating in 8 different countries.

### Open Enrollment for the RCAB Health and Dental Plans begins Monday, May 13.

Register for a webinar at [catholicbenefits.org/webinars](https://catholicbenefits.org/webinars) or check with your employer to see if an onsite presentation will be offered at your location.

### Wellness Webinars

Learn how to plan for retirement over the age of 40, manage your debt, teach your children resilience and grit, and make dietary changes to manage high blood pressure.

### Wellness Corner

Try this simple and delicious balsamic glazed roast chicken!

*This newsletter will continue to include timely information on health and wellness but will also feature news, tips, and updates on a variety of benefits topics. If you would like to see a particular topic covered, send us your ideas at [benefits@rcab.org](mailto:benefits@rcab.org).*

More than 119 million Americans — or [nearly half of U.S. adults](#) — have high blood pressure (also called hypertension), which is a [leading risk factor](#) for cardiovascular disease, chronic kidney disease, and death. It is also the leading risk factor worldwide for [death and disability](#). In 2017, the new guidelines from the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology lowered the definition for high blood pressure to 130/80 from 140/90 millimeters of mercury (mm Hg), meaning more people now meet the criteria for [stage 1 hypertension](#). Although many people are on medication to lower their blood pressure, approximately 37 million Americans have stage 1 hypertension—for which blood pressure-lowering medication is not always recommended. Instead, most providers recommend lifestyle modifications which is just as, and sometimes even more, effective than medications. If you meet the criteria for hypertension, simple lifestyle changes can make a large impact on your blood pressure. Consider trying these simple, lifestyle changes:

1. **Adopt the DASH eating plan.** [Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension](#) (DASH) is a flexible eating plan which emphasizes intake of fruits and vegetables, lean protein, and low sodium. Following DASH may lower your blood pressure by 8-14 points. Specifically, DASH recommends eating:
  - **Fruits and vegetables** – 4-5 servings of each per day
  - **Whole grains** – 6-8 servings each day — such as whole-wheat bread, pasta, oatmeal, and brown rice
  - **Proteins** – Up to 6 servings a day of lean meat, poultry, and fish
  - **Dairy products** – 2-3 servings a day of low-fat, low-sugar products like fat-free yogurt
  - **Nuts, seeds, and legumes** – 4-5 servings per week (make sure nuts are unsalted)
  - **Fats and Oils:** 2 to 3 servings per day— limiting saturated fat intake
  - **Added sugar:** 5 or fewer servings per week
  - **Sodium:** 1,500-2,300 milligrams (mg) daily. 2,300 mg is equivalent to 1 teaspoon of salt. [To learn more about the DASH diet, click here to join us for a webinar on May 23.](#)
2. **Get Moving and Stretch.** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise a week—a brisk walk counts! That's 30 minutes of exercise five days a week. If that seems overwhelming, try breaking it up into smaller intervals, such as two 15-minute sessions. Don't forget to stretch before and after. Stretching your body also stretches your blood vessels, which allows for better blood flow. [For those enrolled in the RCAB Health Plan, join the May Challenge to stay active.](#) If you missed the live class last month, you can view the recording of our [Guided Stretch](#) class.
3. **Maintain a healthier weight:** A little weight loss can bring a lot of health benefits. If you are overweight or obese, losing as little as 10 pounds can lower blood pressure.

Remember, managing blood pressure is a life-long commitment so it's best to adopt realistic, sustainable lifestyle changes, which looks different for each person.

### OPEN ENROLLMENT

This year's Open Enrollment period for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Health and Dental Plans is **Monday, May 13 to Monday, June 10**. During this period, you may review your Health and Dental Plan options and make changes to your elections based on your family's needs without a qualifying life event or the need to submit supporting documentation. During Open Enrollment, examples of election changes include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ✓ Enrolling or terminating enrollment in the Health and/or Dental Plans
- ✓ Switching to or from the Blue Cross Basic, Enhanced, or High Deductible Health Plan
- ✓ Changing between Individual, Family, and Individual +1 coverage
- ✓ Adding or removing a dependent

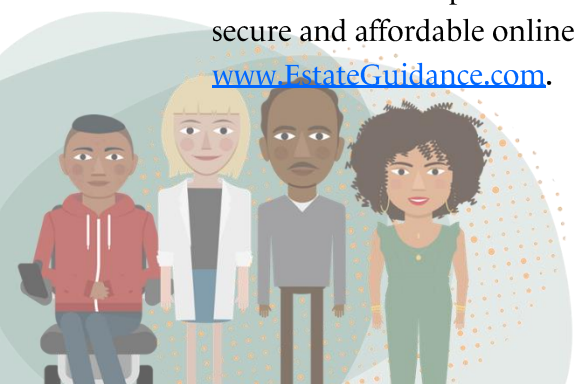
If you would like to keep your current elections, no action is required. If you want to make changes to your Health and/or Dental Plan elections, you must make them **by 5:00 p.m., Monday, June 10** through the MyEnroll system, which can be accessed at [myenroll.com](https://myenroll.com). Any changes or enrollments are effective as of July 1 and any terminations are effective as of June 30. Any changes requested outside this window MUST be made within 30 days after a qualifying life event and include supporting documentation. Instructions on how to submit a life event request in MyEnroll can be found on the main page of the Benefits website at [catholicbenefits.org](https://catholicbenefits.org) (select **Life Event User Guide**).

Please review the Open Enrollment booklet mailed to your home address for important details. You may also register for a webinar at [catholicbenefits.org/webinars](https://catholicbenefits.org/webinars) or check with your employer to see if an onsite presentation will be offered at your location.

### Exciting changes to your Symetra Group Life Insurance value-added services

The RCAB Benefit Trust offers participating Catholic organizations a life insurance and accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) plan for eligible employees. These benefits are administered by Symetra and offered at no cost to employees. Effective January 1, 2024, Symetra made the following changes to the value-added services offered with Symetra Group Life Insurance policies as part of the Symetra Support program:

- **On Call International** is taking over the administration of our Travel Assistance, Identity Theft Assistance and Beneficiary Assistance programs. More information, including contact information, a description of coverage, frequently asked questions, and more can be found [here](#).
- **EstateGuidance®** provided by ComPsych, has been added to the services portfolio to provide a simple, secure and affordable online estate planning tool. More information can be found at [www.EstateGuidance.com](https://www.EstateGuidance.com).





## Wellness Webinars

Employees and spouses enrolled in one of the RCAB Health Plans and registered in the Blue Cross AHEALTHYME program can earn a total of \$50 into their HealthEquity HRA or HSA if they attend three wellness webinars per Plan Year. For **Learn to Live** and **Voya** webinars, please self-report your viewing to [benefits@rcab.org](mailto:benefits@rcab.org).

### *Employees eligible to participate in the RCAB 401(k) Retirement Savings Plan can access Voya Financial Webinars*

#### Retirement Planning Over 40

This session will cover setting and assessing where you are with your retirement goals, and planning for your income in retirement.

[Tuesday, May 14: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.](#)

[Tuesday, May 28: noon and 3 p.m.](#)

#### Manage Your Debt

Learn how to understand and prioritize your debt, while also creating a plan to pay it off.

[Tuesday, May 28: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.](#)

#### Raising Future Ready Kids: Resilience & Grit

##### *Learn to Live*

[Wednesday, May 15: 1-1:30 pm](#)

[Tuesday, May 21: 12-12:30 pm](#)

Use access code **RCAB** to view the webinar.

Kids face challenges ranging from peer pressure to criticism and that's not going to change anytime soon. Future ready kids will need both resilience—the ability to bounce back from hard things—and grit—the ability to stick with difficult tasks. Learn to Live's clinical team shares proven strategies to help you support your kids in bouncing back from life's challenges for now and the future.

#### DASHing to Blood Pressure Reduction

[Thursday, May 23: 12-1 p.m.](#)

Conclusive scientific medical studies have shown that the DASH eating plan in conjunction with low sodium intake reduces blood pressure. A qualified registered dietitian will discuss the DASH eating plan and provide information on low sodium foods to help manage high blood pressure.

## In Case You Missed It...



**PLAY NOW!**

You can still view the recorded webinars from last month!

After viewing these webinars, please self-report your viewing to [benefits@rcab.org](mailto:benefits@rcab.org). You can access webinars for 60 days following their live recording date.

[Guided Stretch](#)

[Managing Stress and Worry](#)

*MoveSpring*

Join the May Challenge:  
Around the World in 8 Plates

This month you are challenged to average 3 miles a day for 29 days in a virtual team race around the world. As you reach a milestone in your journey, you'll learn about nutrition and healthy eating in 8 different countries. Keep track of your daily progress in the 'Stick to It' mode. Need a little motivation? Join a team in the team virtual race! Your goal is to be the team with the highest average total distance. Team participation is optional. **Join the 'RCAB Team for Solo Participants' to participate solo.**

Eligible employees will receive email to join the Challenge.

**Earn \$50 into your HealthEquity HRA or HSA when you complete this Challenge!**



## THE WELLNESS CORNER

### Balsamic Roast Chicken

Recipe by [Naked Cuisine](#)

Serves: 4

### Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken
- 1 lb fingerling potatoes
- 6-8 small fresh tomatoes, halved
- 10 fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 Tbsp balsamic reduction\*
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp dijon mustard
- ½ tsp sea salt
- fresh cracked pepper to taste

### Instructions

- Preheat oven to 400 F.
- In a roasting pan, arrange the chicken in the center and spread the potatoes around the chicken.
- In a small bowl, mix together the balsamic vinegar, balsamic reduction, olive oil, mustard, garlic, sea salt, pepper, and half the basil. Pour the mixture over the chicken and potatoes, coating well.
- Place a lid on your roasting pan and place in the oven for about an hour and a half or until internal temperature has reached 175-180F. Cooking time will vary based on the size of your chicken; 1½ hours would be for a 3 lb. chicken.
- Place the tomatoes on a separate roasting pan, sprinkle with sea salt and roast for about an hour.
- Once done, assemble the chicken, potatoes and roasted tomatoes on a serving plate. Serve with extra fresh basil and balsamic reduction drizzled on top.

**\*Note:** If you're unable to find balsamic reduction in store, make your own by bringing 4 cups of balsamic vinegar to a simmer. Stir it every now and then until it thickens up to coat the spoon and pan to your liking.