



Simple Steps for Lasting Wellness As You Begin A New Year

LOOKING AHEAD...

Benefit Programs to Support Your Health and Wellbeing

Review benefit programs that support a healthy lifestyle and cardiometabolic health.

MoveSpring January Challenge: Culinary Savings

This month you are challenged to cook more homemade meals. Enjoy the benefits of nutritious, cost-effective meals while building healthy habits for the year ahead!

Wellness Webinars

Explore proven strategies to help you stay on track with your goals, connect with a Registered Dietitian to learn practical ways to manage diabetes/prediabetes, and discover tips to strengthen your financial well-being.

The Recipe Corner

An easy and nutritious Mediterranean dense bean salad

The beginning of a new year is a great reminder to set goals that support long-term health and well-being. A critical component of your well-being is your cardiometabolic health - a term that refers to the combined health of your heart and metabolic system. Understanding and maintaining cardiometabolic health plays a critical role in preventing conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and stroke. [Research](#) shows that your risk of cardiovascular disease is 2 to 4 times higher if you have diabetes and women with diabetes have a higher risk of heart disease than men with diabetes do. While many [factors](#) (including family history) influence the risk of cardiometabolic disease, small, consistent changes in nutrition, movement, and lifestyle can make a big difference.

Embrace a Heart-Healthy Diet. Food is Medicine: Research shows that plant-based eating patterns are linked to a lower risk of cardiovascular disease and a longer lifespan. Focus on meals rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and healthy fats. A [2024 meta-analysis](#) of 28 studies revealed that individuals who closely followed a Mediterranean diet had a 23% lower risk of death from any cause and a 27% lower risk of death related to cardiovascular disease. Limit red/processed meats, sugary drinks, refined grains, and excess salt as they can raise blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes risk.

Move More, Sit Less: Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise weekly, plus two days of strength training. Even short sessions count. If you can't meet those guidelines, don't give up. Breaking up sedentary time with 5-minute movement intervals can benefit blood pressure and insulin resistance. Activities such as gardening, housekeeping, taking the stairs, and walking the dog all count toward your total. You don't have to exercise hard to benefit.

Consider Lifestyle Support: The RCAB Health Benefit Trust offers programs that support a healthy lifestyle at no additional cost for employees and eligible family members enrolled in the RCAB Health Plan. See page 2 for more information on our benefit programs which support cardiometabolic health. Personalized guidance, goal setting, and accountability enhance adherence to healthy lifestyle changes.

Get Quality Sleep: Quality sleep is fundamental to your metabolism. During sleep, your body regulates hunger hormones, maintains healthy blood sugar levels, reduces inflammation, and enhances recovery and repair. You'll find that good sleep makes it easier to make healthy food choices, and healthy food choices make good sleep easier.

Manage Stress: Ongoing stress can play a role in higher blood pressure and other risk factors for heart disease. If stress becomes overwhelming, seek professional support.

Get Regular Screenings: High blood pressure and high cholesterol can damage the heart and blood vessels. If you don't get checked for these conditions, you likely won't know whether you have them. Regular screening tests can tell you what your numbers are and whether you need to take action.

Improving cardiometabolic health doesn't always require dramatic lifestyle changes. This year, commit to habits that strengthen your heart and improve your metabolic health for a healthier future. Start with one small change at a time. What change can you make today?



Benefit Programs That Support Your Health and Wellbeing

The RCAB Health Benefit Trust offers programs designed to address weight management, prediabetes, and diabetes to support a healthy lifestyle and cardiometabolic health.



Omada is a virtual care program that provides tools and support that participants with chronic conditions need to reach their health goals. Employees, spouses, and dependents (age 18+) enrolled in the RCAB Health Plans found to be at risk for Type 2 diabetes or heart disease are eligible to join. Visit omadahealth.com/rcab to take a short screening assessment to determine your eligibility to participate. Omada provides interactive lessons, personalized health coaching, peer group support, an integrated mobile app, and a cellular-enabled scale to help participants lose weight, reduce the risk for developing type 2 diabetes, and improve overall health. To date, enrolled RCAB employees and their families have lost a total of 2,228 pounds – that's 22 church pews!



Livongo is a diabetes management program (for Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes) that combines smart blood glucose meter technology with coaching from a Certified Diabetes Educator (CDE) to help eligible participants manage diabetes more easily. The Livongo program is offered to employees, spouses, and their dependents (age 18+) enrolled in the RCAB Health Plans. The program also offers free supplies, like lancets and strips, to those enrolled in the program, 24/7 CDE assistance, fast biometric feedback, and the ability to connect directly with a doctor. Employees and spouses enrolled in the RCAB Health Plans who are eligible for the program will receive an invitation from Livongo. To sign up or learn more, visit Go.Livongo.com/RCAB/New.



BCBS offers health coaching and care management for employees and spouses enrolled in the RCAB Health Plans. Certified BCBS wellness coaches help participants build healthier lifestyle habits to manage stress, eat healthier, quit smoking, live a more active lifestyle, and achieve a healthier weight. Care management offers support to enrolled employees and spouses with chronic or complex conditions from registered nurses, social workers, and registered dietitians. As an added benefit, employees and spouses who enroll in the program by March 1 and complete their goal by May 31 are eligible to earn \$100 into their HealthEquity HRA/HSA as part of the [RCAB Wellness Program](#). Click [here](#) to learn more about health coaching and care management.

For questions about these programs, please contact the Benefits Department at benefits@rcab.org or call 617-746-5640.



Wellness Webinars



Diabetes and Your Diet

[Monday, January 12: 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.](#)

Diabetes, particularly type 2 diabetes and prediabetes, affects millions of Americans and can be managed or potentially prevented through lifestyle changes. A Registered Dietitian will provide participants with easy-to-understand nutrition information and menu planning techniques to learn how to better manage blood glucose levels and diabetes.



Can't make the live webinar? Register below to receive the recording.

This Time I'm Really Going to Do It: Making Our Resolutions Stick

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

[Friday, January 16: 12 p.m. -12:30 p.m.](#)

[Wednesday, January 21: 1 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.](#)

When it comes to setting goals, do you find yourself in a cycle of starting off strong and then slowly veering off course? Or maybe one day you find yourself completely derailed from your goal without realizing how you got so far off track. The Learn to Live clinical team will discuss what nudges you to successfully make change, how avoiding or dismissing emotions can actually make progress harder, and ways to enhance your motivation. These concepts and proven strategies can help you stay on track and maintain momentum toward your goals.



Foundations of Financial Wellness

[Tuesday, January 13: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.](#)

[Tuesday, January 27: 12 p.m. and 3 p.m.](#)

Understand the pillars of financial wellness, learn how to identify your priorities, and discover your next step to achieving holistic financial wellness.

5 Things to Do Now

[Tuesday, January 27: 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.](#)

Focus on five things you can do to keep your finances on track and start creating good habits to help improve your financial outcome in the new year.

Webinar Recordings

View the recorded webinars from last month!



PLAY NOW!

Use access code **RCAB** to access recordings.

[The Most Wonderful Time of the Year?](#)

[Retrain Your Brain: The Case for Gratitude](#)

MoveSpring January Challenge



Culinary Savings

Cooking your meals at home allows you to save money and eat healthier than when you eat out. This month you are challenged to cook at least two meals a day at home for 14 days. Enjoy the benefits of nutritious, cost-effective meals while building healthy habits for the year ahead!

Employees and spouses enrolled in the RCAB Health Plans may click [here](#) or scan the QR code to join by January 7.



Earn \$50 into your HealthEquity HRA or HSA (subject to Plan Year maximums) when you complete this Challenge!

THE RECIPE CORNER

Mediterranean Dense Bean Salad

Recipe from [Eating by Elaine](#)

Serves: 4 | Nutrition Facts (per serving): Calories: 441, Protein: 11.9 grams, Fiber: 10.6 grams

Ingredients

The Salad:

- 1 can garbanzo beans
- 1 can navy beans
- 1 small red onion, diced (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup when diced)
- 2 small bell peppers, diced (red, orange or yellow)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ English cucumber, diced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Kalamata olives, pitted and sliced
- 6 ounces vegan feta cheese, crumpled
- Fresh parsley, stems removed, finely diced

The Dressing:

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra virgin olive oil
- Juice of one lemon (about 3 tablespoons)
- 1 tablespoon maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon dijon mustard
- 3 large cloves garlic, pressed through a **garlic press**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon fine salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried oregano



Directions:

1. **Prepare the veggies:** Chop the red onion, bell peppers, and cucumber into bite-sized pieces. You may use a vegetable chopper to ensure that everything is evenly sized. Slice the pitted Kalamata olives.
2. **Rinse the beans:** Drain, rinse and dry the chickpeas and navy beans.
3. **Add all salad ingredients to a large mixing bowl.**
4. **Add the salad dressing.** Whisk or shake the dressing ingredients together and pour over the salad. Toss well to combine.
5. **Serve!** Enjoy immediately or divide into mason jars or tupperware to save for later.

*Wishing you a healthy and prosperous new year,
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Benefits Department*