

# BSW Be Well

Fall 2024



As crunchy leaves and crisp air push out the heat of summer, make your fall and holidays delightful and Be Well.

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# De-stress this Fall

We are rapidly entering the holiday season, and stresses can pile up like a bunch of crunchy leaves. Holidays are supposed to be merry and bright, but with all the hustle, bustle, lists and events stress can become an unwanted guest. Luckily, there are some simple ways to manage and relieve holiday stress.

## Set realistic expectations.

Life isn't a Hallmark movie, and perfection is impossible. Focus on what's important—spending time with family and friends and making cherished memories. Striving for perfection can make you miss out on the happiness around you. Accepting that your holidays won't be perfect allows you to enjoy the moment and the people you love.

## Don't compare.

Comparison is the thief of joy, and your social media is the burglar. The images of other peoples' "perfect holidays" are often carefully constructed. Don't worry about measuring up to others. Shift your focus to the good things in your life.

## Determine your priorities early.

Brainstorming can help keep you from feeling overwhelmed by all the things you need to do, and the things you'd like to do. One way to do this is dividing a sheet of paper into four columns, like this:

Holiday Priority Brainstorming			
What I used to do	What I need to do	What I want to do	What I will do

Once you've listed all your options and desires, you'll be better equipped to plan your holidays with a mix of what you're most excited about and what you really need to do.

Here are [more tips](#) on getting stress off your holiday guest list and how to stop stressing and start loving the holidays.

[You can find the brainstorming template here.](#)



# Flu season is on its way. Is your family protected?

The flu virus changes or mutates each season, so it's important to get an annual flu shot. Getting a yearly flu shot can lower your risk of getting severely ill from the flu by about 50%.

## Why is it important to get the vaccine?

Most who get the flu have a mild illness, but, for some, it can be deadly. The virus is constantly changing, so the vaccine is frequently updated to give the best protection.

## What about side effects?

The vaccine does not cause the flu. Any side effects are generally mild and go away in a few days. You may experience pain, swelling and redness at the injection site, headache, muscle aches, fever and upset stomach.

## Who needs the flu vaccine?

Everyone from 6 months to 100 years old and over should get an annual flu shot. Why not get the whole family together and make it a part of a family outing? Swing by any network pharmacy on your way to the zoo, the movies or the farmer's market to keep your family safe this flu season.

The flu vaccine is available for Baylor Scott & White Health Plan members at no cost through network pharmacies and clinics.

## How well do you know the flu?

1. Everyone age 6 months of age and older should get the vaccine.

True

False

2. Only pregnant women are at increased risk for complications.

True

False

3. Getting a yearly vaccine is the best way to protect yourself from the flu.

True

False

4. Getting the seasonal flu vaccine cannot lower your risk of getting the flu.

True

False

The flu vaccine is available for Baylor Scott & White Health Plan members at no cost through network pharmacies and clinics.

Answers:

1. True

2. False

3. True

4. False





# Health for the holidays

Holidays are all about family, friends and food. Counters and tables covered in sweets, enormous turkeys and hams, and gravy by the boatful can be daunting if you're trying to eat clean and stay healthy through the holidays.

Here are some tips for a healthy, holly-jolly holiday:

- Bring a healthy option to the potluck. Any good holiday spread can benefit from roasted vegetables, lean protein and fruit. You can find delicious, healthy recipes that will wow the other guests.
- Sample and savor the experience. Instead of eating a lot of some things, eat smaller portions of everything and savor every bite. This is a great opportunity to try new treats and experience all the good things about the holidays.
- Make a sweets swap. There's no need to completely deny your sweet tooth. When baking up a storm, use honey or maple syrup instead of refined sugar, use unsweetened applesauce instead of oil or butter, and use steel cut oats, stone ground cornmeal or whole wheat flour instead of refined grains.
- Get out and get moving. When we think of holidays, we typically think of family gathered around the fire or the dining room table inside. But there are plenty of opportunities to get outside and move.
  - This is a great time to see how beautiful the state of Texas is. Get the family together and go out on a fall or winter hike. There are many [state parks](#) where you can take advantage of the falling temperatures to watch the leaves change, experience wildlife and reconnect with nature.
  - 'Tis the season of caroling. If you'd also like to stretch the vocal muscles, get a group together and walk around your neighborhood offering a warm, merry song to the neighbors.
  - Before long, houses will light up the night. Get your steps in while admiring your neighborhood's holiday decorations. Walking around town squares and city centers to look at holiday decorations is also a fun, free activity to get you out and moving.

Head to the [ScrubbingIn](#) blog for more [healthy holiday](#) tips.

# Living well with diabetes

More than 133 million Americans live with this chronic disease, which affects how your body turns food into energy. The good news is, it's possible to live well with diabetes. Here's how:

## Managing your blood sugar is key.

Eating well and maintaining an active lifestyle are key to managing blood sugar. Eating healthy foods in the right amounts at the right times helps your blood sugar stay in your target range as much as possible.

## Counting carbohydrates can help make managing blood sugar easier.

Eating balanced meals can help avoid high or low blood sugar levels. Try to eat about the same amount of carbohydrates at each meal to keep your blood sugar levels steady throughout the day. Keeping track of how many carbs you eat and setting a limit for each meal can help you keep your blood sugar levels in your target range.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) has a diabetes plate method that helps create healthy meals that can assist in managing blood sugar.

The key is to start with a plate that is not too big—about 9 inches across. Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables (asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cucumber, romaine lettuce, zucchini), fill one quarter of your plate with lean protein, and the other one quarter of your plate with carbohydrates or starchy vegetables. You can find more information at [DiabetesFoodHub.org](https://www.diabetesfoodhub.org).

Ask your doctor to refer you to diabetes self-management education and support services. They can help you create a healthy meal plan.





Making positive change for your health can be difficult for everyone, but you don't have to do it alone.

The [BSW Be Well Coaching](#) program offers a one-on-one coaching experience tailored to fit your needs and help you achieve your personal best.

You will be assigned a coach to guide you through the virtual, 7- to 16-week, curriculum-based program of your choice.

**Nutrition management** can help you better understand your health needs by:

- Creating healthier habits
- Improving your diet
- Getting motivated to move more

**Stress Management** can help you manage and reduce your stress by:

- Sharpening your communication skills
- Learning how to positively problem-solve
- Optimizing and prioritizing your time

**Tobacco Cessation** can help you gain a deeper understanding of tobacco use dependency by:

- Identifying your unique patterns and routines
- Learning about the negative outcomes of tobacco use
- Discovering the impact of tobacco use on your finances



[BSW Be Well Coaching](#) is offered to Baylor Scott & White Health Plan group members at no additional cost. Taking part in the program gives you access to helpful resources, educational videos and a system of accountability.

Your participation in this program is confidential and will not be disclosed to your employer.

# Stop STIs in their tracks

First, the bad news: sexually transmitted infections (STI) are very common and don't typically cause symptoms right away. You or someone you know could be one of the millions who contract new infections each year and not know it.

But the good news is several STIs—syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia and trichomoniasis— can be treated and cured with antibiotics. HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, herpes simplex virus (HSV) and human papillomavirus (HPV) are incurable, but they are preventable.

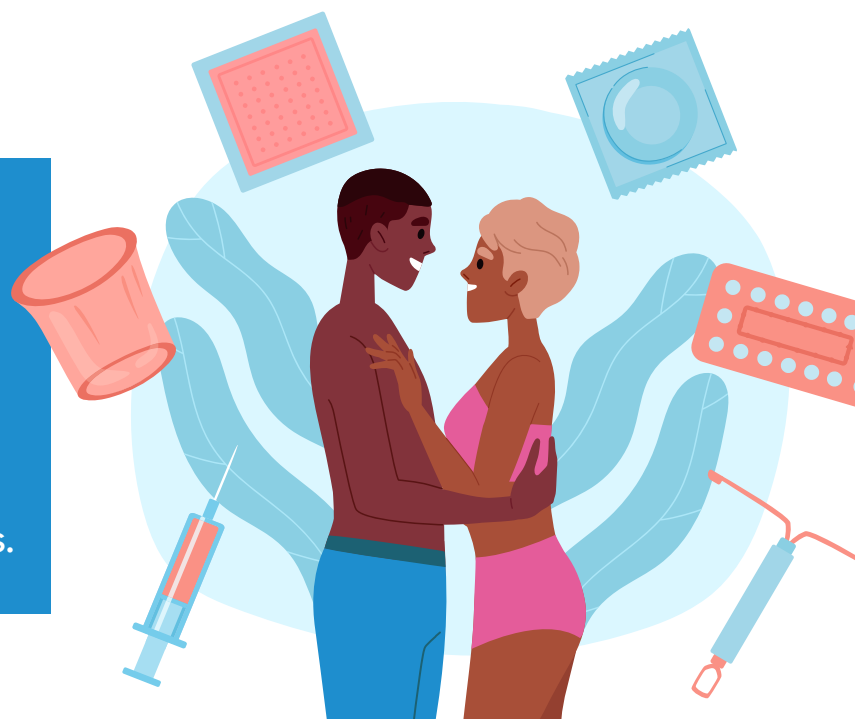
Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is the most advanced stage of human immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV). HIV/AIDS are particularly concerning as they gradually destroy the immune system, making it more difficult for the body to fight against infections, illnesses and cancers. They can only be

treated with antiviral medications to remain in a manageable state and control the symptoms of the disease. HIV is one of the many STIs that can also be transmitted during pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding (known as perinatal transmission).

Using condoms consistently is one of the most effective defenses against STIs, including HIV, and there are vaccines for Hepatitis B and HPV. Individuals who do not have HIV or AIDS—but believe they are at a higher risk for getting HIV—can be proactive and talk with their physician about a pre-exposure prophylaxis (also known as PrEP) which is a series of HIV medications taken to decrease risk of exposure.

Learn more from the [CDC](#) and the [WHO](#).

The very best first step in STI prevention is knowing your status by getting tested. It's important to get tested frequently and talk to your doctor about other steps you can take to stop STIs in their tracks.





# #WebinarWednesdays

Every month, join us online at lunch time for a free wellness webinar.

October 2 at 11 AM:

## TALK DENTAL TO ME

Did you know that your oral health can impact your heart health? Join us to hear more on the importance of dental hygiene and its many effects on other body systems. [RSVP](#)

NOVEMBER 6 AT 11 AM:

## THE UNSEEN RISK: DIABETES AND EYE HEALTH

According to the American Diabetes Association, those diagnosed with diabetes are at a higher risk of developing eye problems, including blindness. Come learn how you can proactively protect your eye health. [RSVP](#)

DECEMBER 4 AT 11 AM:

## SEXUAL HEALTH: LET'S TALK ABOUT HIV/AIDS AND STIs

According to the CDC (2022), nearly half (49%) of the 31,800 new cases of HIV infections reported in the U.S. were here in the South. Meet with us to discuss prevention and some common myths and misconceptions about HIV/AIDS and STIs. [RSVP](#)



# WALK with a DOC

*Get to know your physicians while getting your steps in during our monthly Walk with a Doc series. The event begins with a brief talk by a featured physician, followed by a walk around an area park. All ages are welcome, and you can walk at your own pace. When you arrive, look for Walk with a Doc signs. [Find more walks with more docs.](#)*

**Miller Park: 1919 N 1st St. Temple, TX 76501**  
(3rd Saturday of the month)

- October 19 at 9 AM
- November 16 at 9 AM
- December 21 at 9 AM

**Carl Levin Park: 400 Millers Crossing, Harker Heights, TX 76548**  
(3rd Saturday of the month)

- October 19 at 9 AM
- November 16 at 9 AM
- December 21 at 9AM

**Juanita J. Craft Recreation Center, 4500 Spring Ave. Dallas, TX 75210**  
(3rd Wednesday of the month)

- October 16 at 10 AM
- November 20 at 10 AM
- December 18 at 10 AM

**The Kruse Center - Blinn College, 208 Blinn Blvd. Brenham, TX 77833**  
(1st Tuesday of the month)

- October 1 at 12 PM
- November 5 at 12 PM
- December 3 at 12 PM

# Mellow

Rest, relax and restore your well-being during BSW Be Well Program's **Stressless** challenge.

Register by **October 23** at [my.bswhealth.com/login](https://my.bswhealth.com/login).



## How it works

During Stressless, you'll track your downtime for 21 of 28 days between **October 16** and **November 12**. Record your progress on [my.bswhealth.com/login](https://my.bswhealth.com/login).

## Enjoy downtime every day

Taking a few moments to clear your mind can help you feel refreshed and ready to take on the day. Even better, "me time" can help you become more mindful, which can help you sleep better, stay on top of stress and improve your heart health.

## Know the signs of stress

Stress can affect your well-being in ways you might not expect. To protect your health, learn to recognize stress before it harms you.

- **Difficulty sleeping** Too much stress can make it hard to turn your brain off and fall asleep.
- **Regular headaches** Stress can make you irritable and more prone to headaches.
- **Upset stomach** High stress can interfere with how you digest food, helping to cause discomfort.

## Meditate for your well-being

Meditation can be as simple as focusing on the moment while walking, cooking or drawing. Want to try traditional meditation? Follow the steps below.

- **Get cozy** Sit or lie with your eyes closed.
- **Breathe** Breathe naturally and focus on how air moves in and out of the body.
- **Find your focus** If your mind wanders, acknowledge your thoughts, let them go and return your focus to your breath.

## Participate in upcoming BSW Health Plan Seminars

### Managing Menopause

Oct 14, 2024  
12:00 PM EST

This webinar highlights menopause and perimenopause. Learn about the many symptoms that can be experienced during menopause, as well as ways to manage symptoms and improve quality of life as we age.

### Family Well-Being

Nov 18, 2024  
12:00 PM EST

This webinar will help you identify opportunities to build better family meals by discussing nutrients for health, using the MyPlate method, and how to stay on track. Learn simple methods to get fit as a family by exploring barriers to exercise and defining goals for accountability.

## SOURCES

Harvard Health Publishing: "Mindfulness: Not just for stress reduction", Jstor: "Psychosocial stress and impaired sleep", Mayo Clinic: "Headaches: Reduce stress to prevent the pain", Harvard Health Publishing: "Why Stress May Cause Abdominal Pain", Better Health Channel: "Anger – how it affects people", Cornell University: "Meditation", National Center for Biotechnology Information: "Stress and Eating Behaviors"







**findhelp**

The **findhelp** local resource hub can help you identify resources available in the community. Whether you're seeking services for yourself or looking to offer help to someone else, findhelp makes it easy. Find and make referrals for food, healthcare, job training and more with dignity and ease.

**How it works:**

- Visit [BSWHealthPlan.findhelp.com](https://BSWHealthPlan.findhelp.com)
- Type in your ZIP code.
- Hit the "search" button and discover hundreds of social service organizations at your fingertips.

*You can also create an account for access to other free tools and features.*



# Healthy Focus



## National Dental Hygiene Month

Dental hygiene keeps your mouth clean and disease-free. Practicing good dental hygiene prevents plaque, bacteria that causes cavities and gum disease. Brush your teeth at least twice a day with fluoride toothpaste and visit your dentist regularly. Poor dental hygiene can lead to serious medical conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, periodontal disease, cancers, obstructive sleep-apnea and more.

[Learn more about dental hygiene.](#)



## Diabetes and Eye Disease Awareness

Diabetic eye disease can impact any individual with Type 1, Type 2 or gestational diabetes. These conditions include diabetic retinopathy, diabetic macular edema, cataracts and glaucoma. Early treatment and diagnosis are crucial to prevent irreversible damage to the eyes or blindness. To decrease the risk of these and other eye issues, have your eyes examined regularly and inform your eye doctor of your diabetes diagnosis.

[Learn more about eye health and diabetes.](#)



## AIDS/STI Awareness

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) spread through unprotected sexual contact. The infections are passed through blood, semen, vaginal or other bodily fluids. These infections can be spread through oral, anal or genital sex.

Take every precaution—using condoms and getting tested regularly—before engaging in sexual activity with a partner.

[Learn more about STIs, HIV and AIDS.](#)

# Everything Fall

## word search

C N R N O K Y L D P Y N X G U S R K F K  
D H I W C H G H K U S A M K C P O O N U  
I S E K Y U F K W S I T H A X J L M S J  
H C X S P G N A O P E H R Q P I E W O W  
E A J P T M J B O L O E M V A M C Q Y K  
K R Y E U N U C P I C B A G O W A K I D  
R F V R U Z U P C R N E E W O L L A H N  
E T U Z I N A T O P E X W O N U V H V E  
T H F V R D O W S T J F U I F P A A T K  
A A K O J U E V E X R Z T P E V R R E M  
E N C C U R C I Y G Z S J Z A H B V C Q  
W K V P T C T J U J D N Y G M F T E E S  
S S O P G G N U U H L X U T T A L S Y W  
P G C O Z F U U M Q R V P F T P Z T X O  
O I X B B R K K H Q M G Q F A W F T G R  
I V A M L F E V F W N X E R I F N O B C  
U I C C E R A D N A N B G Q Y I Y J C X  
R N L D I J Z N I L L O Q I C G W W X X  
W G M Q D J T P H C Q L D C C H C T H E  
D B X U B L R E M T L E A V E S N H T F

Apple

Bonfire

Chestnuts

Cider

Cornucopia

Crows

Fall

Foliage

Halloween

Harvest

Hayride

Leaves

Pie

Pumpkin

Scarecrow

Scarf

Sweater

Thanksgiving



# Our mission

as part of the Baylor Scott & White Family

Founded as a Christian ministry of healing, Baylor Scott & White Health promotes the well-being of all individuals, families and communities.

