



P1 / WELCOME

Stay up to date with the latest announcements from the Benefit Fund Office.



P2 / NEWS & BENEFITS

This section has health and wellness tips from Aetna, Dominion Dental and Express Scripts. Check it out!



P3 / WELLNESS

A great reminder for health observances and wellness activities happening with the Benefit Fund this month.



P4 / CONTACT INFO

You'll find contact information for the Benefit Fund and all the medical vendors participating in the Benefit Fund.

BENEFIT FUND

At a glance

December 2018



Don't share your cold this holiday season!

December is a busy time for most people. Between the rush of the holidays, the end-of-the-year excitement, it's easy to become run down and exhausted—perfect conditions for illness to take hold. When your system is run down, it's extra important to stay healthy by avoiding germs, and the best way to do that is by washing your hands.

When should you wash your hands?

Most people are good about washing their hands when they use the restroom or are about to prepare food, but there are many other moments throughout your day in which a good washing will go a long way. For example, if you're caring for someone who is sick, about to or just finished treating a wound, cleaning up after a child or changing a diaper, in contact with animals or their waste, or just took out the trash, you should absolutely wash your hands. All of these everyday activities could spread germs and disease, so make sure to wash up!

What is the best way to wash your hands?

Think you know everything about handwashing? Think again! The Center for Disease Control outlines the five steps to proper handwashing. They are as follows:

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



Benefit & Pension Funds
for Hospital & Health Care Employees
Philadelphia and Vicinity

Tips and tricks

Plan ahead to enjoy the season

The time from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day can be overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be. There are little and big things you can do to enjoy the holidays with fewer distractions, less stress and no extra pounds.

To start, gratitude. When you show gratitude, you make someone feel appreciated. But did you know that the act of feeling grateful can help you, too? Gratitude may be able to improve your well-being, decrease your anger and increase your resilience.

It's also important to be in the moment. The holidays can pass by so quickly — try to be present for the joy. Be patient with yourself and take a few deep breaths when challenges creep in.

Plan and prep

Planning helps a lot. Here are some tips and reminders to pull it off:

- Set a realistic budget and stick to it. You'll thank yourself come January. Get creative and do something special, like baking your famous apple pie or putting together the world's greatest playlist.
- No one wants to be sick, especially around the holidays. The simplest self-care tip is to wash your hands often. You're in contact with more people during the holidays and exposed to more germs.
- You don't have to go to every party — really. It's okay to say "no, thanks." Go and enjoy the ones that are meaningful or important to you.
- Keep up with your exercise. It'll lower your stress. And it'll give you some freedom to indulge in some of your favorite bites, in moderation of course!
- Beat the blues with a little help from your friends. And plan something you can look forward to in January.

Make better choices

Sticking with your normal meal routine will be a challenge. Just remember that one day — or a few days — of unhealthy choices is okay. Just get yourself back on track and keep trying. Planning ahead helps here, too:

- Try not to skip meals. It's better to eat normally during the day rather than "saving up" calories to splurge on one meal.
- Eat a healthy snack before the party. Taking the edge off your hunger will make it easier to control your eating choices.
- Be purposeful, chew slowly and be mindful of what you're eating. Take the time to enjoy every bite.
- Scan the buffet table before filling your plate. Then choose only your favorites and balance healthy vs. less healthy options.
- Drink alcohol in moderation or not at all. It's high in calories and stimulates the appetite while decreasing willpower. Alternate with water or other non-alcoholic drinks and never drink and drive.

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DENTAL HEALTH FACTS

Is it a dental emergency?

Dental pain can seem unbearable at times, but your best bet is almost always to contact your dentist through their emergency phone line. If you go to the ER, they will not be able to treat the cause and you will still need to make a trip to your dentist for treatment. Call your dentist and they can help in a dental emergency.





MEDICATION FACTS



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

PARMESAN-BALSAMIC ROASTED BRUSSELS

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground pepper
- ½ cup sliced shallots
- ¼ cup finely grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Toss Brussels sprouts, oil, salt and pepper in a large bowl. Spread in an even layer on a large rimmed baking sheet.
3. Roast for 8 minutes. Remove from the oven, add shallots to the pan and stir to combine. Roast for 8 more minutes. Remove from the oven and sprinkle the vegetables with Parmesan and vinegar; toss to combine. Turn off the oven and return the pan to the warm oven until the cheese is melted, about 2 minutes.



Source: Eatingwell.com

Don't let the holidays take a tragic turn

Engage patients in discussions about safe storage of medications, including those brought into the home by guests. Important strategies to discuss with patients, parents, and caregivers include the following:

- Keep all medications in a secure cabinet, locked if possible, up and away from the reach or view of children. Avoid keeping medications in purses, backpacks, suitcases, or other places where children may explore, or in pockets where the medication can fall out.
- Use child-resistant caps on containers and be sure they are closed properly after use.
- Discuss medication access and safety with hosts or guests. Educate children about medications and their dangers. Contact the Poison Control (1-800-222- 1222) immediately if you think an accidental poisoning has occurred.

MONTHLY HEALTH OBSERVANCE

WHY NOT RING IN THE NEW YEAR TOBACCO FREE? YOU WILL NOT ONLY FIND BETTER HEALTH, BUT YOU'LL ALSO SAVE MONEY NOT SPENDING IT ON TOBACCO PRODUCTS.

Plan & Use Effective Resources

You can take steps that can improve your chances of quitting for good by planning ahead - which is a major part of successfully quitting smoking. Smoke-free.gov offers details on how to create an effective quit plan.

There are many free resources for people trying to quit smoking:

- 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or 1-855-DÉJALO-YA (1-855-335-3569) (for Spanish speakers). This free service offers a lot of resources, including coaching, help with making a quit plan, educational materials, and referrals to other resources where you live.
- [Smokefree TXT](http://Smokefree.TXT). This free 24/7 texting program sends encouragement, advice, and tips to help smokers quit smoking for good. To get started, just text QUIT to 47848, answer a few questions, and you'll start receiving messages.
- [Online help\(https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/quitting-resources.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/campaign/tips/quit-smoking/quitting-resources.html). This *Tips From Former Smokers*® web page provides helpful online quit resources.
- Smokefree App. The QuitGuide is a free app that tracks cravings, moods, slips, and smokefree progress to help you understand your smoking patterns and build the skills needed to become and stay smokefree.

Find a Medication That's Right for You

Talk to your health care provider about medicines that may help you quit smoking. Many options are available if you are considering using medications to help you quit smoking. The most common smoking medications are nicotine replacement therapies (NRTs), which give your body the nicotine that it craves without the harmful chemicals found in burning cigarettes. Even if you don't smoke yourself, you can use these resources to help a friend or family member become smokefree in 2019!

Your Benefit Fund Contacts



THE BENEFIT FUND

In Philadelphia215-735-5720
Toll-free.....1-800-531-1199

AETNA MEDICAL PLANS

Aetna Member Services1-800-533-2195
Aetna Behavioral Health 1-800-424-5679
Pre-certification (for self-referred care).....1-800-245-1206

EXPRESS SCRIPTS, INC. (prescription drug coverage)

Member Helpline..... 1-800-711-0917

DOMINION NATIONAL SERVICES, INC. (dental network management)

In Pennsylvania and New Jersey 1-888-518-5338 (toll-free)
.....1-703-518-5338

STAY INFORMED:

Check out our website

Health information, benefits, online access and more. Remember to check the website for updates and new information.

Subscribe to Benefit Fund E-blasts

E-blasts are the best way to stay informed of events and news coming out of the Benefit Fund. Click this link to sign up today if you haven't already.



<http://1199cfunds.org/>



Questions? Contact the Benefit Fund Office

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