



Sleeping Your Way to Better Health

LOOKING AHEAD...

A new **AHEALTHYME** platform is now available!

The new Blue Cross Blue Shield **AHEALTHYME** platform offers a more modernized digital platform and new ways to earn incentive points. Register starting 7/1!

New Challenge Platform

We've partnered with MoveSpring to offer incentivized Challenges and educational content to keep you motivated.

Wellness Webinars

Don't forget this easy way to earn HRA or HSA points! This month we learn about improving sleep hygiene, reframing negative thought patterns, and improving cholesterol with sustainable dietary changes.

Wellness Corner

A tasty twist on lean, high protein meatballs—perfect for a quick dinner.

The latest health and wellness news, tips, and updates from the Lay Benefits Department of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston.

We all know that sleep is important for our health, but did you know that it's just as essential to our health as a healthy diet and regular exercise? Most of us have several responsibilities that demand our time—work, family, errands—and to fit everything in (even finding time to relax), we often sacrifice sleep. While today's world can be stressful, sacrificing sleep may be increasing the stress on your body. According to the [National Sleep Foundation](#), 1 in 3 of us don't get enough sleep. It's recommended that adults get an average of 7-9 hours of sleep every night. Poor sleep hygiene affects our mood, energy levels, overall productivity, and can have major effects on our well-being. Inadequate sleep (6 hours or less) or even too much sleep (10 hours or more) may increase the risk of obesity, metabolic syndrome, depression, and heart disease. Insufficient sleep can also increase the risk of Type 2 Diabetes and makes it difficult to manage diabetes. Poor sleep increases our appetite by almost 50% and increases insulin resistance. This causes us to eat more the next day and reduces how full we feel after eating. If you struggle with getting adequate sleep, these sustainable habits can help.

How to Improve Sleep Hygiene:

1. Establish a consistent sleep schedule: go to bed at the same time most nights.
2. Turn off all electronic devices at least 30-60 minutes before bed. More than 52% of us watch TV to wind down before bed, which decreases melatonin production (a hormone that helps us fall asleep). Try reading a book, listening to calming music or journaling instead.
3. Engage in regular exercise. It helps to alleviate daytime sleepiness and improves sleep quality at night. The [Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends that adults engage in 150-300 minutes of moderate intensity cardiovascular exercise each week—*walking counts!*
4. Sleep in a dark, cool room.
5. Avoid caffeine past noon time. If you need an afternoon pick-me-up, consider short bursts of movement.
6. Avoid heavy evening meals and eating late at night.
7. Limit alcohol intake. Daily alcohol intake can reduce sleep quality by 39%.
8. Consider relaxation techniques, such as prayer, meditation, use of essential oils, or [deep breathing exercises](#).
9. If unmanaged stress is impacting sleep, prioritize daily self-care.
10. If you suffer from insomnia or a sleep disorder (like obstructive sleep apnea), speak to your health care provider about safe and effective treatment.



A new *AHEALTHYME* platform is now available!

The new Blue Cross Blue Shield *AHEALTHYME* platform offers an extensive resource library, a more modernized digital platform, and new ways to earn incentive points. As you know, in order to earn incentive points for participating in the RCAB Health Benefit Trust Wellness Program, you must be registered in *AHEALTHYME*. **Even if you were previously registered in *ahealthyme*, you must register starting 7/1 in the new *AHEALTHYME* platform, or you won't be able to earn points. Employees/spouses who register by 9/1 will earn \$25 into their HealthEquity HRA or HSA!** Below are a few updates to the Wellness Program.

- One point equals 10 HRA/HSA dollars.
- Instead of earning points for one annual well visit per Plan Year, you can earn points for attending an annual well visit, a dental visit, and a cancer screening.
- If you complete a health assessment, you can earn 200 HRA/HSA dollars (major increase from \$50). You can access *AHEALTHYME* through your MyBlue account, the [AHEALTHYME website](#) or through a mobile app called Alaveda. Enter the code "Wellness".

Please note that while you may participate in Challenges appearing on the new *AHEALTHYME* website, they will not be incentivized like the MoveSpring Challenges.

The Archdiocese of Boston Benefits Department is recruiting *Wellness Champions!*

We are looking for those who:

- Are passionate about health, wellness, and wellbeing
- Advocate for a healthy, supportive work culture
- Encourage co-workers to engage in wellness activities to earn HRA/HSA dollars
- Can serve as an informational resource regarding the RCAB Benefit Trust Wellness Program

Earn \$150 HRA or HSA for satisfactory engagement throughout the Plan Year.

The kickoff meeting will be held on October 4th. **If you are interested in signing up, please contact Lisha Bethel, Wellness Program Manager, at LBethel@rcab.org.**

MoveSpring Challenge Platform

The RCAB Health Benefit Trust is excited to partner with MoveSpring to offer 11 new Challenges for the 2023-2024 Plan Year. MoveSpring combines activity challenges, social features, and educational content to motivate employees to engage in a healthy lifestyle. Register to participate and you can earn 50 HRA/HSA dollars for the completion of each Challenge (subject to HRA/HSA maximums).

The first Challenge will be held in August! Watch for an email from the Benefits Department!

Who is eligible to participate?

Employees and spouses enrolled in one of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Health Plans and registered in *AHEALTHYME* are eligible to participate.

How do I sign up?

The Benefits Department will send eligible employees a registration link and code via their work email address. Employees should share this link and code with their spouses if they are eligible and interested in participating. Throughout the Plan Year, employees and spouses can participate in whichever challenges they choose.



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 webinars, please self-report your viewing to benefits@rcab.org.**

Too Many Sheep to Sleep

Learn to Live

[Available Anytime](#)

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

Dr. Russ and the Clinical team explain poor sleep quality, highlight the negative impact of sleep problems, share some tools to help you sleep better, and give you practical strategies you can try out tonight.

Don't Let ANTS Ruin Your Lunch

Wednesday, July 19th at 1:00 pm

[Click Here to Register](#)

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

In this 15 min session, we'll share about ANTs (Automatic Negative Thinking Traps). They are so common, yet often go unnoticed as they trick us into worrying and create unnecessary stress in our days. You'll learn a research-based strategy that can help you stop ANTs from ruining your days.

Cholesterol Counts: Reducing Cholesterol through Good Nutrition

Wednesday, July 26th at 12 pm

[Click Here to Register](#)

Prevent heart disease through diet and exercise. The program includes information on heart-healthy cooking techniques, facts about fats, and exercise tips for busy lifestyles. Cholesterol numbers and triglycerides are explained and discussed. This program provides an excellent follow-up to cholesterol screenings.

In Case You Missed It...



You can still view the recorded webinars from last month below. **After viewing these webinars, please self-report your viewing to benefits@rcab.org. You can access webinars for 60 days following their live recording date.**

Staying Refreshed and Preventing Burnout

[Click Here to Access Recording](#)

Resources for Caregivers: Are you everyone's go to person? How does that impact you?

[Click Here to Access Recording](#)

James Parker-Ashley Fitness Class

[Click Here to Access Recording](#)

Finding Hope and Healing in the Face of Trauma

[Click Here to Access Recording](#)

REMINDER

Please note that **there is no Challenge this month**. We will resume incentivized Challenges in August on the MoveSpring platform. Be on the lookout for an email from the Benefits Department.





Greek Turkey Meatballs

Recipe from [Star Infinite Food](#)



Ingredients:

- 1 lb lean ground turkey
- 1 cup frozen cauliflower rice
- ¾ cup red onion, minced
- ¼ cup dill, chopped
- ½ cup feta cheese
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp oregano
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- olive oil, for brushing



Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Combine all ingredients (except olive oil) in a medium bowl and, with clean hands, mix well together.
3. Roll 1.5 inch balls and place 1 inch apart on a baking sheet (*note: use non-stick spray or parchment paper for easy clean up*).
4. Brush tops of each meatball with olive oil.
5. Bake for 20 minutes. Serve hot and enjoy!

In good health,

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Benefits Department



AHEALTHYME®