

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

Why your annual wellness exam matters

As the saying goes, do not judge a book by its cover. It is not always possible to know what is going on inside your body by what appears on the outside or even how you feel. Serious conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and early-stage cancers often develop silently without noticeable warning signs. This is why annual wellness exams with a primary care doctor are so important.

Common misconceptions about preventive care

- “I do not need an annual wellness exam because there is nothing wrong with me. I feel fine.”
- “I’m too busy to take time off from work and family commitments for a routine checkup. I never get sick anyway.”

These statements reflect a widespread belief that wellness exams are unnecessary. However, building a relationship with a doctor who knows your medical and family history, along with your risk factors, gives you an ally who coordinates all aspects of care and screenings to detect problems early. The good news: many of the health crises people face are preventable or far less serious when caught during a routine checkup. Being proactive



about your health reduces your risk for disease, disability, and death.

Getting started

- To find an in-network primary care provider, log in to [FloridaBlue.com](https://www.floridablue.com) and click on Find a Doctor, or call the number on the back of your insurance card
- Schedule an appointment for an annual wellness exam with bloodwork

To prepare for your visit, make a list that includes:

- Any health changes you’ve noticed

- Questions or concerns about your health
- Your medications - including prescriptions, supplements, and over-the-counter drugs

Your health is your most valuable asset. An annual wellness exam isn't just a checkup — it's your chance to catch problems early, stay ahead of what matters, and take control of your well-being.

To learn more, [join us](#) for a Fall Health Update webinar on Tuesday, September 8th at 1:00 p.m. ET.

Resources: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov); [odphp.health.gov](https://www.odphp.health.gov); [FloridaBlue.com](https://www.floridablue.com)

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Stay healthy this flu season

Flu season is coming, and there are steps you can take to stay healthy! The flu can be tough on young children, older adults, and people with ongoing health conditions. The good news? You have real power to protect yourself and others.

Simple habits that work

Start with these everyday actions that stop germs from spreading:

- **Wash your hands regularly** with soap and water
- **Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze** to contain droplets
- **Stay home when you're sick** to protect those around you

Get vaccinated – it's your best defense

The flu vaccine is a smart choice for most people. It protects you from getting sick, makes symptoms milder if you do catch the flu, and helps protect the people around you.

Timing matters: The Florida Blue Centers are hosting vaccine clinics with Walgreens in September and October – the best time to get your flu shot. [Find a center](#) close to you and make an appointment, or just walk in.

Your doctor can help you pick the flu vaccine that's right for you based on your age, health, job, and lifestyle. And check with your doctor about



other important vaccines: COVID-19, RSV, pneumococcal, Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis), shingles, and Hepatitis A and B. These vaccines work together to keep you and your community healthy and strong.

Resources: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov); [FloridaBlue.com](https://www.floridablue.com)

Marry Me Lentils (Serves 4)

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons oil from sun-dried tomato jar
- ½ cup drained julienne-cut sun-dried tomatoes in oil with herbs, chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, finely chopped (1 cup)
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 medium cloves garlic, finely chopped (1 Tbsp.)
- 3 cups reduced-sodium vegetable broth
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1½ teaspoons Italian seasoning
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
- 1 cup dry red lentils, rinsed and picked over
- 3 cups chopped stemmed kale
- ½ cup heavy cream

- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil, plus more for garnish
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 4 (1-ounce) slices crusty whole-wheat baguette, toasted

Directions:

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil from sun-dried tomatoes in a large skillet over medium heat until shimmering. Add chopped onion, ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes and ½ teaspoon salt; cook, stirring often, until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Stir in chopped garlic, 1 tablespoon tomato paste, 1½ teaspoons Italian seasoning and ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper; cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant and deep red in color, 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in rinsed lentils and 3 cups broth; bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Cover and reduce heat to maintain a lively simmer; cook, stirring



occasionally, for 10 minutes. Stir in 3 cups kale; continue gently simmering, covered and stirring occasionally, until the lentils are tender, about 5 more minutes. Stir in ½ cup cream and 2 tablespoons basil; cook, uncovered and stirring occasionally, until the sauce is slightly thickened, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Gradually stir in ¼ cup Parmesan, stirring until melted, about 1 minute. Garnish with additional basil, if desired. Serve with toasted baguette.

Recipe courtesy of [Eatingwell.com](https://www.eatingwell.com); for nutritional information click [here](#).

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ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-352-2583 (TTY: 1-877-955-8773).

ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1- 800-352-2583 (TTY: 1-800-955-8770).

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