



July Is Healthy Vision Month

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

LOOKING AHEAD...

Protect Your Vision

Learn how to protect your vision through healthy habits, nutrition, and annual exams.

Wellness Webinars

This month's offerings are ready to teach you about the Mediterranean Diet, improve your sleep, and get you moving!

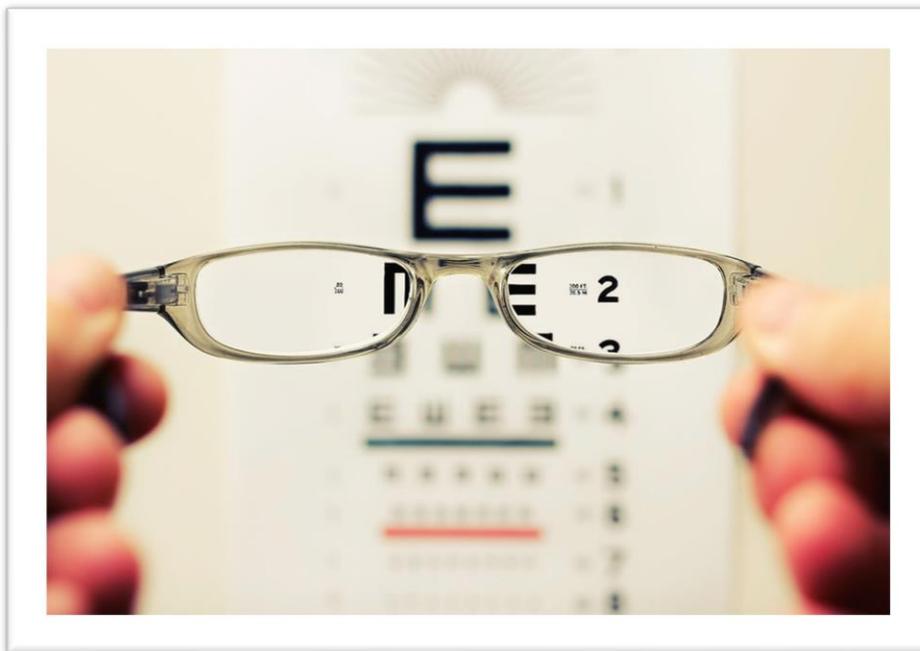
Calling All Wellness Champions

Are you ready to help promote wellness and earn HRA or HSA dollars?

RCAB Health Benefit Trust WellRight Challenges

Preview a new Wellness Challenge starting in September.

Happy 4th of July!



Don't Forget Your Annual Vision Exam

July is Healthy Vision Month! Whether you wear glasses, contacts, or have 20/20 vision, it is important to stay vigilant and take care of your eyes as you age. Regular eye exams with an optometrist or ophthalmologist can help you maintain eye health and prevent disease.

The CDC [found](#) that adults over the age of 40 are at the greatest risk of developing eye diseases and disorders, such as cataracts, dry eye, glaucoma, age-related macular degeneration (AMD), and presbyopia, or the loss of the ability to read small print or see objects up close. Early intervention and treatment of eye conditions and diseases can not only save you money, but also save you from irreversible vision loss. The CDC also [found](#) that approximately 93 million adults in the U.S. are at high risk for serious vision loss, but only half visited an eye doctor in the last year. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Blue Cross Enhanced, Basic, and High Deductible Health Plans cover annual vision exams with an in-network provider at no additional cost to you. During these exams, a provider will evaluate, correct, or adapt any vision changes, detect serious eye problems at an early stage, and make sure your eye health is maintained. Don't forget! You can earn 200 HRA or HSA dollars for completing your annual vision exam! You may also use HRA or HSA dollars earned through the Wellness Program to pay for [eligible vision expenses](#), such as contact lenses, eyeglasses, and eye exams. For information on how to find a provider near you, check out this Blue Cross Blue Shield of MA flyer at <http://www.catholicbenefits.org/newplans/findaprovider.pdf>.

Find out how you can be proactive in protecting your vision on the next page!

Promoting Eye Health

What can you do to help protect your eyes? Develop healthy habits. Eat the right foods. Manage your health!



Manage Your Physical Health, Especially Conditions Like Diabetes and High Blood Pressure

Diabetes and high blood pressure can increase your risk for developing eye conditions or diseases like diabetic retinopathy (damage to your retina) and glaucoma. Talk with your doctor to find out how best to manage your health and prevent eye damage.

Stop Smoking

Not only is smoking linked to lung cancer and heart disease, but it is also tied to vision loss as well. Smoking increases the risk of developing age-related macular degeneration, cataracts, glaucoma, and dry eye.

Take a Screen Break

Staring at computer, phone, and television screens can cause eye fatigue and strain. It's important to keep a light on while watching T.V. at night, keep the eyes moist with eye drops, reduce the glare on screens, wear blue-light-filtering glasses, and give your eyes a break. **The American Ophthalmological Society recommends the 20-20-20 rule: take a break every 20 minutes by looking at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds.**

Wear Sunglasses Outside, Even When It's Cloudy.

UVA and UVB rays are damaging not only to our skin, but also to our eyes. Wearing sunglasses helps with eye strain and protects your eyes from cataracts, age-related macular degeneration, photokeratitis ("snow blindness"), and corneal burns. Find polarized sunglasses that wrap around the eyes to protect UV rays from coming through the sides, and that provide 100% UV protection. Polarization helps minimize light bouncing off objects like water and cars.

Eat Foods Rich in Vitamin A, E, C, Riboflavin, and Omega-3 Fatty Acids

- Vitamin A: Helps maintain a clear cornea
 - Foods: Leafy green vegetables, sweet potatoes, carrots, bell peppers
- Vitamin E: Protects cells from damage and prevents age-related cataracts
 - Foods: Salmon, avocado, leafy green vegetables, nuts and seeds
- Vitamin C: Protects eyes from free radical damage and reduces risk of cataracts
 - Foods: Citrus fruits, broccoli, kale
- Riboflavin: Reduces oxidative stress
 - Foods: Milk, yogurt, beef, some fortified cereals
- Omega-3 Fatty Acids: Contain anti-inflammatory properties and prevent diabetic retinopathy
 - Foods: Fish, chia seeds, and nuts

RCAB Health Plans Cover Annual Vision Exams!

To find an optometrist or ophthalmologist in network, visit your MyBlue portal at <https://www.bluecrossma.org/> and search under My Care > "Find Doctor and Estimate Costs." **Remember to select PPO or EPO under "Enter A Network."**

RCAB employees and spouses enrolled in the Enhanced, Basic, or High Deductible Health Plans can use HRA or HSA dollars for eligible vision expenses. For a full list of eligible HRA/HSA expenses, please click [here](#).

Blue365 from Blue Cross Blue Shield offers deals on vision, health, and wellness options. Find out more at <https://www.blue365deals.com/>.

Wellness Webinars

Employees and spouses enrolled in one of the RCAB Health Plans and registered in the Blue Cross *ahealthyme* program can earn \$20 into their HealthEquity HRA or HSA account for attending a wellness webinar. Points are awarded for a maximum of five wellness webinars/family activities per Plan Year.

All About Antioxidants & Cancer Prevention **Thursday, July 8th @ 5:30pm**

Come learn about the important role of antioxidants from food and supplements! This webinar will provide information on where to find the best sources of antioxidants, facts about eating organic foods, the nutritional benefit to consuming local produce, and overall wellness tips.

[Click Here to Register](#)

The Mediterranean Diet **Tuesday, July 13th @ 12pm**

Participants will learn about the health benefits of the Mediterranean diet, which focuses on consuming fruits, veggies, and whole grains. The webinar will include the science behind the meal plan, super foods, and how to build your pantry with healthy foods for quick cooking.

[Click Here to Register](#)

James Parker-Ashley Fitness Class **Tuesday, July 19th @ 5pm**

Come join James for an exciting class with customizable chair exercises and cardio to get your blood moving and heart pumping!

[Click Here to Register](#)

Please email Kayla Fuller at kfuller@rcab.org to report your attendance.

The Tools & Techniques That Foster Sleep **Wednesday, July 28th @ 12:15pm**

This webinar will discuss how to harness sleep with helpful tips and sleep practices to turn a great night's sleep into a routine.

[Click Here to Register](#)



In Case You Missed It...

You can still view the recorded webinars from June listed below. After viewing these webinars, please self-report your viewing to Kayla Fuller, Benefits Assistant, at kfuller@rcab.org and you can earn 20 HRA/HSA dollars (subject to a maximum of five webinars/family activities per Plan Year).

Eating on the Go

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

Hidden Causes of Health Issues

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

Postural Improvement Class

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

Nutrition for Kids & Family Meal Planning

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

ARE YOU READY TO BECOME A WELLNESS CHAMPION?

The RCAB Benefits Department is recruiting Wellness Champions for the new Plan Year!

We are looking for those who:

- ✓ Are passionate about health, wellness, and wellbeing
- ✓ Advocate for a healthy, supportive work culture
- ✓ Encourage co-workers and other employees to engage in worksite wellness activities to help them earn HRA or HSA dollars
- ✓ Are able to participate in monthly calls to learn about wellness incentives, new wellness offerings, tools, and related resources
- ✓ Serve as an informational resource at their worksites regarding the RCAB Health Plans

Earn \$150 HRA or HSA for satisfactory completion and engagement.

Our current Wellness Champions program will return in September. If you are interested in signing up, please contact Kara Lavertu at klavertu@rcab.org.



Exercising in the Heat



The summer is the perfect time to get outdoors and increase your physical activity! But exercising outdoors can put additional stress on your body and increase your risk for injury or illness, like heat stroke, exhaustion, and syncope (lightheadedness or fainting). You may even experience exercise-related collapse. To stay safe when exercising outside, stay alert and recognize the concerning signs of heat-related health issues:

- Muscle cramps
- Nausea/vomiting
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Fatigue
- Increased heart rate
- Low blood pressure
- Vision issues
- Confusion
- Irritability

To exercise responsibly this summer, make sure you know your exercise level, drink plenty of water, dress appropriately for the heat, stay inside on extremely hot days, and avoid prolonged physical activity in the middle of the day when it is the hottest. Don't forget to wear sunscreen, find shade, and take plenty of breaks. Heat-related illnesses are preventable - Be cautious and exercise safely!

RCAB Health Benefit Trust WellRight Challenge Program

This September, the new RCAB Health Benefit Trust WellRight Challenge Program will kick off with "Move It," a Challenge designed to push you to achieve 7,000 steps a day. Your fitness watches or apps will auto-sync your information with this new platform, but don't worry, you can still manually log your information if needed! More information about the WellRight Challenge Program will be sent out via mail in August. Are you ready for the next Challenge?



In good health,
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Benefits Department

