



Work Hard, Play Harder

Did You Know?

Taking care of yourself, especially during busy times, is very important. After all, you can't give from an empty cup. Practicing self-care will make it easier to enjoy the holidays and time spent with family and friends.

As people prepare to travel, cook, and spend time with relatives, they often neglect their personal wellness. This can lead to increased stress or even illness. Self-care involves paying attention to more than just how much you eat or exercise. It also requires paying attention to your thoughts, feelings, expectations, and interactions. Remember, optimal health means functioning at your best in ALL areas of your life, not just your body.

December is National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

Positive Ways to Resolve Conflict

Disagreements are bound to come up at home, at work, online, or in your social circles. Conflict is normal and expected, and it's how you handle conflict that really matters. When conflict is mismanaged, it can harm your relationships. Here are some healthy ways to address conflict:

- **Be calm.** Pause to take some deep breaths and calm yourself before jumping into an argument.
- **Don't blame or accuse.** Discuss the problem rationally and use "I" rather than "you" statements.
- **Listen carefully.** Pay attention while others express their feelings and concerns.
- **Show empathy.** Acknowledge and validate what the other person is saying.
- **Explore underlying issues.** Sometimes a conflict may be fueled by issues beneath the surface.
- **Find common ground.** Focus on points of agreement rather than disagreement.
- **Focus on solutions.** The goal is to reach a reasonable solution or compromise that works for everyone.
- **Agree to disagree.** Accept that perspectives are different, and respond in a way that shows you understand the other person's perspective.
- **Leave the past behind.** Holding a grudge can cause additional tension and prolong the conflict.

Source: www.MyCigna.com

December is National Safe Toys and Gifts Month. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission has created a robust toy safety system by requiring testing by independent, third-party testing labs around the world. They enforce stringent toy standards in the world and stop violative and dangerous toys at the ports and in the marketplace before they reach children's hands. These combined efforts continue to foster the confidence of American families as they prepare to shop for toys this holiday season.

Below are some safety tips to keep in mind this holiday season:

- **Balloons** – Children can choke or suffocate on deflated or broken balloons. Keep them away from children younger than eight, and discard broken balloons immediately.
- **Small balls and other toys with small parts** – For children younger than three, avoid toys with small parts, which can cause choking.

- **Scooters and other riding toys** – Riding toys, skateboards, and in-line skates go fast, and falls could be deadly. Helmets and safety gear should be worn properly at all times and they should be sized to fit.
- **Magnets** – High-powered magnet sets are dangerous and should be kept away from children. Whether marketed for children or adults, building and play sets with small magnets should also be kept away from small children.

Once gifts are open, immediately discard plastic wrapping or other toy packaging before they become dangerous play things. Keep toys appropriate for older children away from younger siblings. Battery charging should be supervised by adults as chargers and adapters can pose thermal burn hazards to young children.

For more information and safety tips, visit www.cpsc.gov.



Questions?

Visit Cigna's website at www.mycigna.com for more personalized information. For other questions, contact a Cigna representative at

1-800-244-6224.

Rock Your Wellness Trivia Challenge

The Rock Your Wellness Trivia Challenge concluded on November 30, 2021, and as always, all active participants will earn a prize. Stay tuned!

Nutrition Awareness Challenge

The Nutrition Awareness Challenge will begin on January 4, 2022, and will conclude on February 4, 2022. During the month-long challenge, employees will track their intake of vegetables, fruits, proteins, and water. Score points for each serving of vegetables, fruits, and proteins, and for each cup of water that you drink. Participants will work towards a predetermined goal to complete the challenge. Stay tuned for registration information later this month!

Cigna EAP Webcast: The Power of Gratitude

Even in the hardest times, there's something to be grateful for. An "attitude of gratitude" brings with it a world of benefits, from improving our relationships to feeling happier at work. In this seminar, they will look at what science tells us about how gratitude can positively impact your life. They'll review ways to make gratitude a regular part of your daily routine. And how to see the positive in even the darkest of times. Join Cigna's EAP webcast to learn how to harness the power of gratitude to enrich and empower. The webcast will be held on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 at 2 p.m. EST. Log in to register at www.Cigna.com/EAPWebcasts. The on-demand replay will be available starting two hours after the live presentation.

Omada for Cigna: Put Yourself First During the Holidays

If you or your covered adult dependents are enrolled in the ACPS medical plan offered through Cigna, are at-risk for type 2 diabetes or heart disease, and are accepted into Omada, you'll receive the program at no additional cost. You'll get a wireless smart scale and any necessary connected devices; a dedicated health coach and care team; interactive weekly lessons; a healthier lifestyle in 10 minutes a day; and long-term results through changes to habits and behavior. Get started at www.omadahealth.com/acpsmd.

Red Bean Soup

Try out this yummy soup. Even the kids will love it. Red beans are packed with protein and are high in fiber, folate, potassium, magnesium, and B vitamins that are good for a heart-healthy diet. Source:



Ingredients:

- 2 cups red beans
- 1 tsp. ginger, minced
- 1 tsp. garlic, minced
- 1 cup coconut milk
- ½ cup chicken broth
- ¼ cup coconut sugar
- Zest of one tangerine
- 1 pinch kosher salt
- 1 pinch toasted sesame seeds
- 3 sprigs of mint
- 1 tbsp. sesame oil
- Mung beans (optional)

Directions:

1. In an 8-quart pot over medium heat, add sesame oil then garlic and ginger. Quickly sauté.
2. Then add broth, coconut milk, zest, coconut sugar, salt and beans. Simmer for 30 minutes, remove zest, and puree.
3. Serve hot and garnish with sesame oil, chili flakes, toasted sesame seeds, mung beans (optional), and mint.

Homemade Chocolate Bark

Line a baking pan with parchment paper. In a double boiler, melt 1 lb. of dark chocolate over low heat until smooth. Remove from the heat and use a rubber spatula to evenly spread chocolate over parchment-lined pan. Immediately sprinkle chocolate with ¾ cup of chopped nuts of your choice (suggestions include walnuts, pecans, almonds, pistachios, or hazelnuts) and with ¼ cup of chopped dried fruit of your choice (suggestions include cherries, cranberries, apricots, or raspberries). Let cool slightly, then freeze for 2 hours or until solid. Once frozen, remove from the freezer and break into pieces. Enjoy!