



COVID-19 Vaccine – What You Need to Know

As the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available to more people, the Office of Group Benefits wants you to have all the available information on where to get the vaccine and how it will be covered.

For **active employees, their covered dependents and non-Medicare retirees**, the vaccine will be covered no different than the flu shot. If you go to a pharmacy to receive the vaccine, there will be no out-of-pocket cost to you. If you go to your primary care physician to receive the vaccine (when it is available to physicians' offices), you may be required to pay your normal visit copay/coinsurance if you receive the vaccine in addition to other services.

For **retirees with Medicare**, the COVID vaccine will be covered under regular Medicare at no cost to you.

The Louisiana Department of Health is coordinating the COVID-19 vaccine distribution effort in Louisiana. As more vaccines become available from the CDC, more individuals and groups will be offered a vaccination. You can learn more about the State's rollout plan for the COVID-19 vaccine at ldh.la.gov/covidvaccine.

OGB encourages members to get the vaccine when it is made available to them. Until then, continue to follow the guidelines set forth by the CDC and the Louisiana Department of Health:

- Wear a mask to protect yourself and others. The mask should be worn over your nose and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths) from others who don't live with you.
- Avoid crowds. The more people you are in contact with, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID-19.
- If you are sick, stay home. Isolate yourself from other members of your family to prevent spread to them and the people they may have contact with.
- Get tested! If you have symptoms, call your health care provider about getting tested.



COVID-19 VACCINE

HOW IT WORKS

LOUISIANA
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1) INSTRUCTION MANUAL

The COVID-19 vaccine does not contain a dead or weakened virus, but a genetic instruction manual that tells your immune system how to respond and protect you from exposure to the actual virus.

2) MESSENGER RNA

The technology used in the vaccines is not new. Called mRNA, or messenger RNA, it has been around for decades. This is the first time mRNA has been used in a vaccine, but the effect is the same as other vaccines.

3) EFFECTIVE PROTECTION

Your body gets protection without the serious consequences of a severe illness due to COVID-19 exposure. The Pfizer vaccine is taken in two doses, and is safe and more than 90% effective in preventing COVID-19.

It's easy to protect your health with Blue Cross and Catapult Health

With just one quick checkup, you can get a free, preventive health exam AND earn a credit toward next year's health insurance premium. [Watch this video](#) to learn what a checkup includes.

OGB members with Blue Cross health plans can earn a \$120 premium credit on next year's health insurance premium. You just have to have a Catapult Health preventive exam this year. You have until **Aug. 31, 2021**, to get your checkup.

Taking part in a Catapult Health clinic is just as safe as going to your doctor's office. All Catapult technicians follow strict rules to keep you safe. You will meet with a certified Nurse Practitioner through a secure online portal, limiting the number of people onsite. Please wear a mask and do not attend your appointment if you feel sick.

Visit www.timeconfirm.com/OGB to schedule your appointment. If there are no appointments currently available at your workplace or in your area, please check again. Catapult adds new appointments as clinics are planned.

If you got your premium credit for a prior year, you will need to earn it again for 2022. To get your checkup, you must be the primary member on a 2021 OGB Blue Cross plan that is in effect at the time of the checkup. To get the credit, you must be the primary member on an OGB Blue Cross policy in 2022.

If you cannot come to a Catapult Health clinic in person OR are pregnant, visit www.bcbsla.com/OGB. Then scroll down to OGB Customer Forms, select and download the Catapult Expectant Mother or Catapult Health Primary Care Provider form. Follow the instructions on the form.

Upcoming Clinics

Below is a list of clinics scheduled throughout the state. Remember, you have until **August 31, 2021** to get your preventive health checkup in order to be eligible for the 2022 wellness credit!

Live Better Louisiana Clinics	
Date	Location
02/01 - 05/2021	Claiborne Building (Baton Rouge) Northwestern State University (Natchitoches) Franklinton Primary School Washington Parish (Franklinton) Central LA Supports and Services Center (Alexandria) Dixon Correctional Institute (Jackson)
02/08 - 11/2021	Bienville Building (Baton Rouge) Southeastern Louisiana University (Hammond) Alumni Center
02/17 - 19/2021	Pinecrest Supports and Services Center (Pineville) West Ridge Middle School - Ouachita Parish School Board (West Monroe) East Baton Rouge Housing Authority (Baton Rouge) Pointe Coupee PSB Central Office (New Roads) Vernon Parish School Board - Vernon Middle School (Leesville) Southwest Louisiana War Veterans Home (Jennings)
02/22 - 27/2021	Commissioner of Insurance (Baton Rouge) Dept of Agriculture and Forestry (Haughton) University of New Orleans (New Orleans) VFMC (Jackson) University of Louisiana Lafayette (Lafayette) Nicholls State University (Thibodaux) Vernon Parish School Board - Pitkin HS (Pitkin) Louisiana School for the Deaf and Visually Impaired (Baton Rouge) Harvey State Office Building (Harvey) LSERS Office (Baton Rouge) Sabine Parish School Board - Florien High School (Florien)

Make Heart Health Part of Your Self-Care Routine

Devoting a little time every day to care for yourself can go a long way toward protecting the health of your heart. Simple self-care, such as taking a moment to de-stress, giving yourself time to move more, preparing healthier meals, and not cheating on sleep can all benefit your heart.

And that's a good thing, because heart disease is largely preventable and focusing on improving your heart health has never been more important. Heart disease is a leading cause of death for women and men in the United States. People with poor cardiovascular health are also at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Here are few self-care tips to try every day to make your heart a priority:

- **Self-Care Sunday** – Find a moment of serenity every Sunday. Spend some quality time on yourself.
- **Mindful Monday** – Be mindful about your health and regularly monitor your blood pressure or blood sugar if needed. Keep an eye on your weight to make sure it stays within or moves toward a healthy range. Being aware of your health status is a key to making positive change.
- **Tasty Tuesday** – Choose how you want to approach eating healthier. Start small by peppering up your meals with a fresh herb or spice as a salt substitute. Get adventurous and prepare a simple, new, heart-healthy recipe. Or go big by trying a different way of eating, such as the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension ([DASH](#)) eating plan, which is scientifically proven to lower blood pressure. DASH is flexible and balanced, and it includes plenty of fruits and vegetables, fish, poultry, lean meats, beans, nuts, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.
- **Wellness Wednesday** – Don't waffle on your wellness. Move more, eat a fruit or vegetable you've never tried, make a plan to quit smoking or vaping, or learn the signs of a heart attack or stroke. You could be having a heart attack if you have chest and upper body pain or discomfort, shortness of breath, cold sweats, nausea, or lightheadedness. You might be having a stroke if you have numbness in the face, arm, or leg; confusion; trouble talking or seeing; dizziness; or a severe headache.
- **Treat Yourself Thursday** – Treats can be healthy. Try making a dessert with fresh fruit and yogurt. Then stretch your imagination beyond food. Host a family dance party, take a few minutes to sit still and meditate, go for a long walk, or watch a funny show. Laughter is healthy. Whatever you do, find a way to spend some quality time on yourself.
- **Follow Friday** – Follow inspiring people and pages on social media, or text a friend to help you stick to your self-care goals. Remember to take care of your mental health, too. Two of the main hurdles to self-care are depression and a lack of confidence, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association*. If your mental health gets between you and your fabulous self, take action to show your heart some love. Reach out to family and friends for support, or talk to a qualified mental health provider.
- **Selfie Saturday** – Inspire others to take care of their own hearts. Talk about your self-care routine with loved ones or share a selfie on your social media platforms. Having social support and personal networks can make it easier to get regular physical activity, eat nutritious foods, reach a healthy weight, and quit smoking.

Learn more about heart health and heart-healthy activities in your community, and see what others are doing for their heart health, at nhlbi.nih.gov/ourhearts or follow #OurHearts on social media.



The graphic features a purple background with a white speech bubble containing the text "#OurHearts devote time to self-care". Below this is a photograph of an older man and woman walking together in a park. To the right, the text reads "Self-care for your heart is really self-care for your whole self." Logos for the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NIH) and the American Heart Association are visible in the top right corner.

Garlic Butter Chicken Bites with Lemon Asparagus



So much flavor and so easy to throw together, this chicken and asparagus recipe is a winner for dinnertime! Chicken bites are so juicy, tender, and delicious you'll eat them hot right off the pan! This low carb, keto-friendly dinner is ready in under 30 minutes.

Ingredients:

- 3 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (cut into bite-sized chunks)
 - 2 bunches of asparagus, rinsed and trimmed
 - ½ cup butter, softened
 - 1 tsp olive oil
 - 2 tsp minced garlic
 - 1 tsp Italian seasoning
 - 1 tbsp. hot sauce (optional)
 - ½ cup low sodium chicken broth
 - Juice of ½ lemon
 - 1 tbsp. minced parsley
 - Crushed red pepper flakes (optional)
- Chicken Seasoning:
- 1 tsp salt
 - 1 tsp black pepper
 - 2 tsp onion powder

Directions:

1. To prepare the chicken bites recipe and asparagus in garlic butter sauce: Start to slice chicken breasts into bite-sized chunks and season with salt, pepper, and onion powder. Let sit in a shallow plate while you prepare the asparagus.
2. Wash and trim the ends of the asparagus, then blanch them in boiling water for 2 minutes, then soak in ice water to stop the cooking asparagus. This way, asparagus will cook faster and evenly in the skillet. You can skip this step if you have skinny asparagus. Drain and set aside.
3. Heat half butter and olive oil in a large cast-iron skillet over medium-low heat. Gently stir-fry the chicken bites on all sides until golden brown. Lower the temperature, add one teaspoon minced garlic and Italian seasoning and stir and cook with chicken bites until fragrant. Remove the chicken bites from the skillet and set aside to a plate. You might have to work in batches to avoid crowding the pan and have steamed chicken bites instead of brown.
4. In the same skillet over medium-high, add minced garlic then deglaze with chicken broth (or wine). Bring to a simmer and allow to reduce to half the volume. Add remaining butter, lemon juice, hot sauce, parsley. Give a quick stir to combine.
5. Add the blanched asparagus and toss for 2 minutes to cook it up. Add the sautéed chicken bites back to the pan and stir for another minute to reheat. Garnish the chicken and asparagus with more parsley, crushed chili pepper, and lemon slices and serve your garlic butter chicken bites and asparagus immediately. Enjoy!

For more information, visit us at www.bcbsla.com/ogb

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