October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month

More than 700 U.S. women are diagnosed with breast cancer every day; 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed in her lifetime. It’s estimated that 2800 men in the U.S. will also be diagnosed with breast cancer in 2023. Detected early, breast cancer has a 99% 5-year survival rate. Early detection is key to effective treatment.

Be Aware and Take Action Now!
- Breast Cancer Risk Factors
- Breast Self-Exams
- Mammogram: What to Expect
- Care management

October is National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month

In October, we observe National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month, as well as World Mental Health Day. These observances have a profound impact on individuals, communities, and society at large, providing education, fostering a supportive environment and encouraging open conversations about mental well-being.

October 8 - National Depression Screening Day

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), mental health screenings are crucial, especially for younger individuals. Approximately 50% of lifetime mental health conditions begin by age 14 and 75% begin by age 24. When conditions are caught earlier on, they can be more effectively treated, leading to better outcomes for the patient.

October 10 - World Mental Health Day

The 2023 theme for World Mental Health Day is ‘Mental Health is a universal human right.’ Recognizing warning signs in ourselves or our loved ones, understanding common mental health issues becomes essential. This is why dedicating time each year during National Depression Education and Awareness Month to learn more about mental health conditions is of paramount importance.

If you are struggling with mental health issues, remember that you are not alone. There are numerous services available that may be helpful:
- Your Employee Assistance Plan member portal, or call 1-800-395-1616 for more information
- Virtual Care is available for counseling and psychiatric services for Capital Blue Cross members
- Behavioral Health Services for Capital Blue Cross members
- Capital Blue Cross Behavioral Health Toolkit
- Ovia Health for your mental health support
- A video about how Your Thoughts Affect What You Feel and Do

Protect Yourself From the Flu

Flu season is here again. The most common symptoms of the flu include a runny nose, fever, sore throat, headache, cough, and fatigue. Getting the annual flu shot is the best way to protect yourself. Consider these additional daily actions to help protect yourself and loved ones:
- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds
- Avoid close contact with people who are ill or symptomatic
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth
- Clean surfaces often (phones, keyboards, doorknobs, etc.)

Time for Pumpkins!

Pumpkins are a gourd and a member of the Cucurbitaceae family. Its "cousins" include melons, squash, and cucumbers, and is technically a fruit, but considered a vegetable being rich in Vitamin A and fiber. All parts of the pumpkin can be consumed, the flowers, seeds, flesh, and leaves. Native Americans used the hard outer shell as bowls for storage and water. Choose firm, heavy baking/pie pumpkins for cooking, and reserve the carving pumpkins for Jack-o-lanterns at Halloween. The seeds of each variety can be roasted. Canned pumpkin puree is a readily available option for using in recipes year-round. Celebrate fall five ways with pumpkins.