



April Is National Humor Month

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

LOOKING AHEAD...

April Activity Challenge

Grab your team and get moving in the upcoming Activity Challenge.

Wellness Webinars

From mental health to healthy guts, this month's webinars are ready when you are.

Surviving Spring Allergies

The time is near - learn how to control and prevent common springtime allergy symptoms.

Financial Wellness

Take control of your money and set yourself up for long-term financial success.



Laugh It Out

April is National Humor Month! Humor Month was established in 1976 to shed light on the therapeutic effects that laughter has on our overall wellbeing. Laughter causes the release of endorphins and serotonin into our system, which can improve mood, promote new connections in the brain, soothe tension, relieve pain, and stimulate the heart, lungs and muscles. Laughing with others promotes togetherness, security, acceptance, and high-quality relationships. We are 30 times more likely to laugh with others than by ourselves! Laughter truly is contagious!

Easter Reflection

As Easter Sunday approaches on April 4, bringing this Lenten season to a close, we reflect not only on the transcendent meaning of this most holy of days, but also what we can take away as a modern lesson during hard times. Easter is and always will be a celebration of the triumphal Resurrection of Jesus after His suffering and death for our sins on the Cross. His Resurrection brought with it the promise of new life, both during our time here on Earth and as well as in Heaven for all eternity. Perhaps on this Easter Sunday, let us not only reflect on the Resurrection of Jesus, but also on the promise of resurrection in our own lives after an incredibly difficult and painful year. Let us focus on reviving, renewing, and reinventing ourselves, our lives, and our passions over the coming year, letting go of our past mistakes, and looking forward to the promise of life ahead.

APRIL ACTIVITY CHALLENGE – *Get Ready to Move!*



HOW TO GET STARTED:

1. Go to ahealthyme.com/login and click sign in/sign up.
2. On the homepage, you will see the "Challenge Widget." Click the button located within that widget.
3. A window will appear and provide you with additional Challenge information. Create a new team or to join an existing one by selecting from the dropdown menu.
4. Click the **Sign Up Now** button at the bottom of the window to complete your registration.

Are you ready for a challenge? Whether you're going for the gold by yourself or joining a championship team, get ready to move! This next Challenge through the Blue Cross AHealthyMe program doesn't require you to be at the top of your game. You just need to be willing to participate and improve yourself. Over the course of six weeks, Challenge participants will log their physical activity with the goal of completing at least 150 minutes of activity each week. Try out some chair exercises before bed, range of motion exercises when you get up in the morning, walking around town, biking in the spring weather, or even bring back exercises that were an old favorite ('80s aerobics anyone?).

150 Minutes of Exercise Is Attainable!

- 30-minute exercises, five days per week
- Two-hour cycling classes and a 30-minute walk/jog once a week
- A two-and-a-half hour dance party with your family or friends!

Challenge Registration: April 5th - 18th
Challenge: April 12th - May 24th

Wellness Webinars

Employees and spouses enrolled in one of the RCAB Health Plans and registered in the *AHealthyMe* program can earn \$20 toward their Healthy Equity HRA accounts for attending a wellness webinar. Points are awarded for a maximum of five wellness webinars/family activities per Plan Year.

Women’s Health: From Life Balance to Hormone Balance

Friday, April 9th @ 12:30pm

Especially today, it can be difficult to balance our professional, personal, and social lives without our health suffering in some way. Come and discuss diseases and health concerns that impact women and how you can bring balance to your busy lives.

[Click Here to Register](#)

Depression During Challenging Times

Tuesday, April 13th @ 4:30pm

Depression not only affects our moods and ability to function but can also intensify pre-existing conditions. This webinar will help identify stressors, find productive ways to handle depression, and explain how to seek guidance.

[Click Here to Register](#)

Financial Health: Under 50

Thursday, April 22nd @ 5pm

Student loans, building a savings account, 401(k)s, and planning for the financial long term. How are we supposed to keep up? This webinar helps participants gain a better understanding of their own financial health and how to prepare for success.

[Click Here to Register](#)

Metabolism Makeover w/ Anne Dwyer from Health and Harmony

Tuesday April 27th @ 4:30pm

Learn how to increase metabolism by managing irritants that disrupt our systems and improve lives (and guts) through healthy choices.

[Click Here to Register](#)



In Case You Missed It...

You can still view the recorded webinars from March listed below. After viewing these webinars, please self-report your viewing to Kayla Fuller, Benefits Assistant, at kfuller@rcab.org and you will earn 20 HRA dollars if you are registered in *AHealthyMe* and have not yet exceeded the maximum number of webinars/family activities for the current Plan Year (max of 5).

Beyond Sleep Hygiene: Best Sleep Practices

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

Immunity Boosters: Beat Colds and the Flu with Superfoods

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

To Have or Not to Have Caffeine? That is the Question

[Click Here to Access Webinar](#)

Relax and Unwind with James Parker-Ashley

[Click Here to Access Class](#)



Surviving Spring Allergies



Spring means warmer weather, budding trees, and new flowers, but it also means seasonal allergies with symptoms like sneezing, congestion, and itchy eyes. Although allergies can make us miserable, there are steps we can take to reduce our allergy triggers and keep them under control.

- ✂ Try to stay inside as much as possible during windy days and take advantage of going outside after a day of rain, which helps remove some pollen from the air. Pollen count is highest in the morning so be sure to avoid early morning exposure.
- ✂ Make sure to remove your outdoor clothes as soon as possible and wash away the pollen from your skin and hair after mowing the lawn or gardening.
- ✂ Consider purchasing an air purifier for your house (and even your car) to help filter clean air.
- ✂ Try an over the counter remedy! Antihistamines, decongestants, nasal sprays, and allergy eye drops can help you get rid of unwanted symptoms and enjoy the Spring season!



Take Control of Your Money!

During the pandemic, Americans have been under financial stress more than ever before. With 25% of people struggling to pay bills, the rising cost of living, and mounting debt, what can we do to take control of our finances and set ourselves up for success going forward?

- ✓ **Assess your financial situation** to evaluate how well you follow a budget, what you spend the most on, where you can cut back, and how to improve your financial education.
- ✓ If you are eligible, **enroll in the RCAB 401(k) plan** and/or consider increasing your contributions.
- ✓ **Seek the advice of a financial planner** and take an active role in your financial wellbeing. Create a realistic budget that you can stick to and watch your finances improve. Find examples of various budget templates [here](#).
- ✓ **Find easy ways to minimize spending on non-essential purchases.** Can you cut back on two coffees a week? Do you need all those streaming services? Can you cancel any unused memberships?
- ✓ **Start an emergency fund.** This might sound difficult if you're already pinching pennies but finding where you can trim your expenses and allocating some of those savings to a "rainy day fund" can help you pay for unexpected expenses.
- ✓ **Sign up for a TIAA counseling session** [here](#) and earn HRA dollars! TIAA also offers pre-recorded and live webinars about financial wellbeing. Visit www.tiaa.org/webinars to find out more.
- ✓ **Get involved in the RCAB Health Plans' Wellness Program and start earning HRA dollars**, tax-free money that helps you pay for doctor's co-pays, prescription medications and more using an HRA debit card.
- ✓ **Review your federal and MA state withholdings** to evaluate how much you over-or-under withheld. Not taking enough or taking too much? Resubmit a W4!

In good health,
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Benefits Department