

# in touch

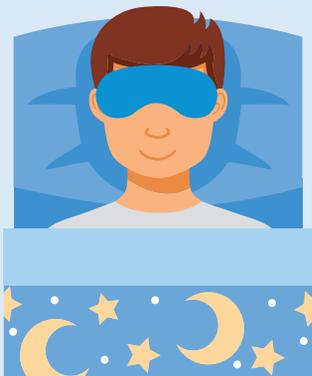
• United Food and Commercial  
• Workers Union and Participating  
• Food Industry Employers  
• Health and Welfare Fund

## in this issue:

- 2 The Brain-Boosting Benefits of Exercise
- 3 Sudoku  
Get Screened on the UFCW Mobile Unit
- 4 Men, Discuss Prostate Cancer Screening with Your Doctor
- 5 Is Blue Light Disturbing Your Sleep?
- 6 Savory Summer Recipes
- 7 Your Prescription Benefits
- 8 Path to Wellness Through Independence Blue Cross

## Sleep Tip

For better sleep, keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and cool. Somewhere between 60 to 67 degrees is an optimal sleeping temperature for most people. And stay away from alarm clocks that give off a sleep-disrupting light.



## Sleep Is Vital to Your Health

**Y**ou may not realize that a lack of sleep isn't just a lifestyle annoyance. Not getting enough sleep can also affect your health. Sleep loss causes fatigue and can make you start your day feeling groggy. More important, lack of sleep can cause serious health problems, including high blood pressure, heart disease, and obesity, to name just a few.

### How Much Sleep Should You Get?

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends adults ages 18 and older get at least seven hours of sleep each night. Why is it harmful to get less than that? Those who sleep six hours have a 33 percent increased risk for a car crash compared with those who get seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Those who sleep five hours or less have a 47 percent increased risk for a crash.

### Get Out of Bed!

Counting sheep but just can't fall asleep? Experts say if you lie in bed for too long when you can't sleep that your body starts to link your bed with being awake. If you lie in bed for more than 20 minutes without falling asleep regularly, get out of bed. Do something calming, like reading, meditating, writing in a journal, or coloring. Avoid your phone and activities that will wake you up. (For more on how phones can disrupt your sleep, turn to **page 5**.) Return to bed only when you feel sleepy.

*Tip:* Try to go to bed at the same time on a nightly basis. This will keep your internal clock on schedule.



# The Brain-Boosting Benefits of Exercise

Regular exercise is good for your mind and enhances your mental health

**Y**ou probably know that regular exercise reduces your risk for chronic conditions such as diabetes and heart disease while helping to keep your weight in check. But research shows that the psychological perks exercise provides can be just as powerful.

Here's an update on some of the brain benefits attributed to physical activity.

## Exercise Improves Sleep

If you want to hit the pillow harder at night, try hitting the gym. Exercising during the day can help you sleep better. And when you sleep better, you'll feel better when you're awake.

Physical activity makes it easier for you to fall asleep at night and may help you sleep more soundly—giving you better quality sleep. Getting enough sleep helps your brain work properly—it can help you be more creative, learn new things, pay

attention, make decisions, get along with others, solve problems, and control your emotions.

## Exercise Helps Keep You Sharp

You can't stop the clock, but exercise can help keep your mind working in tip-top shape as you age. Regular physical activity keeps your thinking, learning, and judgment skills sharp.

In fact, a study in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease* found that moderate exercise improved brain activity in areas important for learning and memory. Decreases in glucose metabolism in the brain are characteristic of Alzheimer's disease, but researchers found that among late middle-aged adults, moderate physical activity was linked with increased glucose metabolism in areas of the brain that are commonly affected by the disease.

To keep your brain sharp, especially as you get older, keep moving. Aerobic exercise or a mix of aerobic and strength-training activities, three to five times a week, for 30 to 60 minutes at a time can give you mental health benefits.

## Exercise Relieves Stress

If you're feeling stressed and overwhelmed, you may feel like you don't have time to exercise. But squeezing in a workout may be just what the doctor ordered.

When you're exercising, your body releases chemicals that help improve your mood and make you feel more relaxed. This can help relieve stress and even reduce your risk for depression.

If you feel stressed, try taking a walk. Just a 30-minute walk can help boost your mood and reduce stress. You can also try exercise programs designed to help you cope with stress, like yoga or tai chi.





# Get Screened on the UFCW Mobile Unit



## Sudoku Puzzle

	6	2				3		
9			4					7
		3						4
		6			4			
			3			1	9	
7								2
8		7						2
			1	8				
1	4		5					7

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*Puzzles are another way to boost your brain health. Try out this Sudoku. Find the answer on page 7.*

The union, your employers, and the Fund offer you the UFCW Mobile Unit for yearly preventive screenings at your workplace. The Mobile Unit offers total cholesterol, triglyceride, and glucose screenings with a blood finger stick test. Blood pressure, weight, body composition, and body mass index are also performed.

A DermaScan is available as well. It magnifies the image of your face using a black light and highlights the amount of sun damage that's happened to your face. A nurse may refer you to your doctor for follow-up.

### Your Results

You will receive a brochure with all your test results to take to your doctor. One of the nurses will explain the results and make recommendations, if needed. All care is confidential, and nothing can be released without your written permission.

A free follow-up service from a health coach is also offered.

### Take the Time to Care for Your Health

Both the union and your employer agreed to provide 15 minutes for your free screening on the Mobile Unit once a year. This time is not your break or lunchtime; it is an additional 15 minutes for you to go onto the Mobile Unit and get screened.

We would love to make you just one more of the members who we have had the pleasure of servicing. With your help, we hope to keep you healthier this year and in the future.



# Men, Discuss Prostate Cancer Screening *with Your Doctor*

June Is  
Men's  
Health  
Month

**T**he prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test checks for levels of this protein in the blood. An elevated PSA level can be a sign of prostate cancer, but it can also be due to less serious conditions.

Just because the PSA test is available doesn't mean that you should receive it. According to a recent recommendation from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF), men ages 55 to 69 should talk with their health care providers about the potential risks and benefits of PSA screening.

## The Benefits and Risks

The USPSTF notes that PSA screening can decrease the chance for death from prostate cancer for a small number of men—approximately 1.3 deaths per 1,000 men screened.

Meanwhile, screening can have false-positive results that require additional tests. It can also result in overdiagnosis. This occurs when you're diagnosed with and

treated for prostate cancer, but the cancer wouldn't have caused any problems had it gone undiagnosed. An estimated 20 to 50 percent of men diagnosed with prostate cancer through screening may be overdiagnosed.

## Talk with Your Doctor

If you're between ages 55 and 69, ask your doctor about your risk for prostate cancer and if you need a screening. If you're 70 and older, the benefits of screening don't outweigh the risks, the USPSTF says.

## Other Reasons Why Your PSA Might Be Rising

A rising PSA doesn't always mean prostate cancer. Here are other factors that can cause PSA to climb.

**Age:** PSA levels tend to increase slowly with age. Men with normal prostates can have naturally higher PSA levels as they grow older.

**Riding a bike:** Research has produced mixed results, but some studies indicate that cycling may cause PSA levels to rise (possibly because the seat puts pressure on the prostate).

**Medication:** Certain medications can increase PSA, such as those that raise testosterone levels. Ask your health care provider whether any you're taking could affect your PSA.

**Medical procedures:** Some studies suggest that digital rectal exams (DREs), which providers use to check for prostate cancer, might slightly raise PSA levels. If you're having a DRE and a PSA test, make sure to get the PSA first.

**Other prostate problems:** A noncancerous condition known as benign prostatic hyperplasia (an enlarged prostate) can elevate PSA levels—so can prostatitis, an infection or inflammation of the prostate gland.

# IS BLUE LIGHT DISTURBING YOUR SLEEP?

If you regularly watch a flat-screen TV or use a computer or mobile device before bedtime, it can impact your sleep. That's because these devices emit a blue light that can affect the release of melatonin, a hormone that induces sleep in the body.

More than **90%** of people look at some type of screen within an hour of going to bed.

The average viewer, will lose as much as **14 MINUTES** of sleep per night.

Blue light can also reduce your REM sleep. This can leave you feeling groggy the next day, even after a full night's rest.

In addition to disrupting sleep, early research shows that blue light may also be linked to other health problems, including:

- Eyestrain** (Illustration of an eye with lightning bolts)
- Eye disease, such as age-related macular degeneration (AMD)** (Illustration of an eye with blue spots)
- Obesity** (Illustration of a person with a large belly)
- Diabetes** (Illustration of a hand holding a glucose meter)
- Some types of cancer** (Illustration of cancer cells and a blue ribbon)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

STUDIES SHOW A LACK OF SLEEP CAN LEAD TO:

- Trouble making decisions
- Mood swings or depression
- Less productivity during the day
- Increased risk for colds and infections
- Increased risk for diabetes

## TIPS TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

- Reduce your exposure, especially before bedtime.
- Avoid using digital devices for an hour or two before bed.
- Dim the brightness on your screen.
- Install an app that changes the light to warmer colors.



## Cantaloupe Soup

2 cantaloupes  
1 tsp. ground ginger  
¼ tsp. nutmeg  
½ cup fat-free sour cream, plus four tsp.  
more for garnish

Cut cantaloupes in half. Remove seeds. With a spoon or melon baller, remove fruit from rind. Refrigerate rinds to use as “bowls.” Put melon into blender with ginger, nutmeg, and sour cream. Blend to a creamy consistency. Refrigerate for at least an hour to chill soup and let flavors blend. Pour soup into prepared “bowls” and swirl in a teaspoon of sour cream as garnish.

*Serves four. Each serving contains about 134 calories, 1 g fat (0 g saturated fat, 0 g trans fat), less than 5 mg cholesterol, 70 mg sodium, 29 g carbohydrate, 24 g sugar, 3 g fiber, and 4 g protein.*

## Savory Summer Recipes

Summer calls for ways to cool down. These fun and delicious recipes can help you do just that!

### Cucumber & Blackberry-Infused Water

¼ cup thinly sliced cucumber	<b>For garnish:</b>
½ cup blackberries	4 slices cucumber
4 thin slices of lime	4 blackberries
4 cups water	4 lime wedges

Place cucumber, blackberries, and lime into the infuser of an infusing pitcher (for flavoring water) or the bottom of a 6-cup tea or coffee press. Fill pitcher or press with 4 cups of water. Put infuser in place. Let pitcher sit for at least three hours or overnight in the refrigerator. Remove fruit and vegetables. Divide water into four glasses. Garnish each glass with a slice of cucumber, a blackberry, and a lime wedge.

*Serves four; a serving is 1 cup water plus garnish. Each serving contains about 4 calories, 0 g fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 0 mg sodium, 0 g carbohydrates, 0 g sugars, 0 g fiber, and 0 g protein.*

Note: The water itself doesn't have any calories; the calories come from the garnish. To add carbonation, place infused water into a soda maker.





# ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATE

by Frank Vaccaro  
Contract Administrator



## Your Prescription Benefits

**H**ealth care coverage is one of the most important benefits offered to you. It helps pay for your medical, dental, and vision care, as well as your prescriptions. The union, your employer, and the Fund's goal is to offer high-quality benefits, including medications, to all their members. *Bloomberg* reported that "between 2008 and 2016, brand-name oral prescription drugs rose 9 percent annually, while injectable drugs increased 15 percent per year. Inflation, meanwhile, was only about 2 percent."

On January 1, 2019, hundreds of medications rose in price—an average increase of 6.3 percent. These rising drug prices affect a lot of patients, but everyone is affected by higher premiums due to these higher costs.

Each one of us is the most important driver of our own health. So know about your medication, and use your prescription dollars wisely. Patients can take steps to ensure that they use their prescription medications appropriately by following the directions on the label or as explained by the pharmacist. Here are a few other tips:

- Be aware of potential interactions with other drugs, as well as alcohol.
- Never stop or change dosing without first talking with your doctor.
- Never use another person's prescription medication, and never give your prescription medication to others.
- Store all your medications safely.

Always inform your physician about all your drugs (prescription and over the counter) and dietary and herbal supplements before taking any other medications.

When it comes to your health, there are no foolish questions. At every visit, you should ask your doctor, "Are there any medications that I am on that I don't need any more?" Always use the same pharmacy so your pharmacist can track your medications and spot possible interactions.

**\*\*Remember: Always use your benefits wisely.\*\***

### Avoid Medication Mistakes

Following directions: two words we associate with success. And yet 50 percent of Americans don't follow directions when taking medication.

Some forget to take a dose. Others don't think their medication is working, so they don't take the directions seriously. Some people take fewer doses than prescribed in order to save money. And others dread the side effects of their medication so much that they avoid taking the medication altogether.

Luckily, there's a lot you can do to better follow your medication's directions:

- **Find routine.** Keep a written or computerized schedule to remind you when it's time to take your medication—and store your medications in a place where you'll notice them.
- **Don't split pills.** Several medications are not FDA-approved to be split. The actual dose in each half of these pills often varies, so while the two halves may look the same, they may not contain equal amounts of medicine. Always check with your provider before splitting a pill.

### Sudoku Puzzle Answers from page 3

4	6	2	7	5	8	3	1	9
9	1	8	4	6	3	2	5	7
5	7	3	9	2	1	8	6	4
3	9	6	2	1	4	7	8	5
2	8	4	3	7	5	1	9	6
7	5	1	8	9	6	4	3	2
8	3	7	6	4	9	5	2	1
6	2	5	1	8	7	9	4	3
1	4	9	5	3	2	6	7	8

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**UFCW and Participating Employers  
Health and Welfare Fund**  
27 Roland Ave., Suite 100  
Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054-1056

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## Are we in touch?

If you are aware of any coworkers who are not receiving the *in touch* newsletter on a quarterly basis, please advise them to call the Health and Welfare Fund office at **800-228-7484, ext. 2504**.

The Fund distributes the *in touch* newsletter to present reliable, up-to-date health information, including updates about programs and benefits available to eligible participants. Call the Fund office to obtain the status of your eligibility and verify your current address.

Your ideas are important! Let us know if there is a particular topic that you would like included in your *in touch* newsletter.



## Path to Wellness

### Through Independence Blue Cross

**C**an you picture yourself achieving your desired health outcomes? If you act on your health goals every day, you have a much better chance of achieving them. For those members eligible for Independence Blue Cross (IBC), there are many tools to help you achieve well-being.

Log in to **www.ibx.com** and use the Achieve Well-being tool. Complete your profile and start a program.

You can get rewarded with Healthy Lifestyle Reimbursements:

- **Up to \$150 back on fitness center fees**
- **\$150 back on an approved weight-management program**
- **\$150 back on a smoking-cessation program**

In addition, Blue Insider gives you discounts on many activities, such as theme parks, movie tickets, hotels, and more.

Another program, IBX Good Living, offers healthy recipes and coupons for food, beverages, health products, and baby/toddler items.

Blue 365 has featured deals and offers discounts on different services, from hearing aids to mortgages to pet insurance to travel.

At 1919 Market Street in Philadelphia, you can take free fitness classes, watch a cooking demonstration, or ask an IBC representative questions. You can also skate for free at Blue Cross RiverRink in Philadelphia by just showing your IBC card.

***So get active with IBC and enjoy all the benefits your insurance has to offer!***

Eligibility for specific benefits varies among our participants. Call the Health and Welfare Fund office to inquire about your eligibility for any of the benefits described in this newsletter. Call **800-228-7484, prompt #2**.