



BlueCross BlueShield
of Vermont

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QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

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3 FACTS ABOUT CHILDREN, TEENS, AND THE COVID-19 VACCINE



Fact: All children over the age of 12 should get vaccinated.

The CDC recommends everyone over the age of 12 get the vaccine as soon as possible — it's available for free, regardless of your health insurance or immigration status.

Fact: The vaccine is safe.

The COVID-19 vaccines were developed under the most intensive and comprehensive safety monitoring system in US history. They are considered safe and effective. However, there are things you can do to ensure your child's vaccination is comfortable:

- Tell your child what to expect.
- Explain the benefits of getting vaccinated to your child.
- Allow your child to remain seated for 15-30 minutes following the vaccine to make sure there is no adverse reaction. Common side effects include pain, redness, or swelling at the shot site.

Fact: Myocarditis is extremely rare in children after getting the COVID-19 vaccine.

Despite what you may hear, myocarditis, or heart inflammation, is extremely rare in young children after getting the vaccine. Experts agree that the benefits of the vaccine far outweigh the risk of heart inflammation — your child is more likely to experience heart inflammation from the COVID-19 virus itself than the COVID-19 vaccine.

Source: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

COVID-19: Celebrating Safely During the Holidays



Whether you're attending a celebration or hosting a gathering, there are steps you can take to stay healthy and safe during this COVID-19 era.

Attending a celebration

- Stay local.
- Communicate expectations for celebrating together.
- Consider taking your own food and drinks.

Hosting a gathering

- If you're sick or have been exposed to COVID-19, cancel the gathering.
- Keep it local, small, and short.
- Provide single-use and disposable items like plates and utensils.
- Sanitize surfaces frequently.
- Consider staying outdoors if you're concerned about exposure or gathering with people who are unvaccinated. If gathering indoors, ensure proper ventilation—for example, open the windows and doors.
- Provide hand sanitizer.

In both instances, it's safest to gather with vaccinated people. Unless someone's been exposed to the virus, there's not necessarily a need to wear a mask. However, if you're gathering with unvaccinated people, encourage everyone to wear a mask and have extras available for your guests.

If celebrating in person isn't an option, you can still get together!

- Host a virtual celebration.
- Drive or walk around and visit your neighbors from a safe distance.

Source: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

CREATIVE WAYS TO EXERCISE AT HOME

Getting creative with your exercise can bring fun into your home and keep you engaged and motivated. Here are just a few ideas:

Take it online. Online workout classes and fitness videos can be done at your own pace on your own time. Use a fitness app on your smartphone or check YouTube for a variety of exercise videos.

Use your bodyweight. Try things like jumping jacks, pushups, sit-ups, or squats.

Create an obstacle course. Whether it's bobbing and weaving around pillows or bear-crawling down the hall, you'll be surprised at just how much your heart rate increases.

Channel your inner child. Play four-square or hopscotch, jump on the trampoline, or hula hoop!

Engage in exergames. If you need motivation to get up and move, exergames like Wii-Fit, EA Sports Active, and Everybody Dance are great options.

Get active during commercial breaks. When you're watching TV, do jumping jacks or jump rope during commercial breaks.

Dance it out. Have a dance party with your family members at home or with friends via Zoom.

Sources: [medicalxpress.com](https://www.medicalxpress.com) [verywellfit.com](https://www.verywellfit.com)

4 Ways to Living Sustainably



Every day we make choices that affect our environment — unfortunately, some of those choices can negatively impact our Earth. You can reduce your environmental footprint by living sustainably — making conscious choices that reduce your carbon footprint and conserving the Earth's resources.

Here are four ways to living sustainably:

- 1. Reduce energy use.** Turn off and unplug electronic devices and appliances when they're not in use. Replace your light bulbs with LED lights — they're more energy-efficient.
- 2. Properly dispose of items.** Recycle plastic, glass, paper, and even electronics. Check your local area to see if they have programs to recycle electronics like old laptops, phones, printers, TVs, and even batteries.
- 3. Say no to plastics.** Ditch single-use items like plastic grocery bags, water bottles, and straws and replace them with reusable ones. Take your own bags to the grocery store or buy a reusable water bottle and straw (a stainless steel one, for example).
- 4. Be water-wise.** For example, turn the water off while you brush your teeth or shorten your shower time.

Source: biologicaldiversity.org

FEATURED RESOURCE:

Self-Care Resource Center

This quarter's resource features the Self-Care Resource Center from the American Psychological Association. Here you can find information to help you understand the benefits of self-care and how to apply it to your everyday life.

American Psychological Association

<https://www.apa.org/topics/working-psychologist/self-care>