

May 2025



## **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

Mental Health Awareness Month is observed in May each year. It is a time dedicated to raising awareness about mental health issues, reducing stigma, and promoting understanding and support for those affected by mental health conditions. This observance aims to educate the public about mental health, advocate for policies that support mental health care, and encourage individuals to prioritize their mental wellbeing.

### **Importance of Mental Health Awareness Month:**

- **Reducing Stigma:** By raising awareness, the observance helps to normalize conversations about mental health and reduce the stigma associated with mental illness.
- **Education and Awareness:** It provides an opportunity to educate the public about the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions, the importance of early intervention, and the availability of resources and support.
- **Encouraging Support:** This month encourages individuals to support friends, family, and colleagues who may be experiencing mental health challenges.
- **Promoting Self-Care:** It emphasizes the importance of self-care and encourages individuals to take proactive steps to maintain their mental wellbeing, such as practicing mindfulness, seeking therapy, or engaging in activities that promote mental health.

By promoting mental health awareness, we can create a society that cares about mental wellbeing and supports those who need it.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH**

---

### **IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (EAP)**

---

### **CREATING MINDFUL MOMENTS**

---

### **BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT: HEADWAY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

---

### **ENERGY SMOOTHIE BOWL**

---

### **RESOURCES TO KNOW**

# IMPORTANCE OF EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS (EAP)

Personal life challenges are reported to account for 20 percent of stress, according to the American Institute of Stress. The effects of personal issues may carry over into the workplace, and potential problems include decreased performance, more days missed from work and poor customer service. Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) can help manage these challenges.

An employee assistance program is a benefit that may be offered to you to help manage a variety of potential challenges in your personal life that might affect job performance and it's important to get support during those tough times. EAPs offer a range of services, including counseling, stress management, and resources for personal and professional challenges.

## EAPs are highly beneficial for several reasons:

- **Confidential Support:** EAPs offer confidential services, allowing you to seek help without fear of judgment or repercussions at work. This confidentiality encourages you to address sensitive issues you might otherwise avoid.
- **Access to Professional Help:** EAPs provide access to trained professionals, such as counselors and therapists, who can offer expert guidance and support for a wide range of personal and work-related issues, including stress, anxiety, depression, and family problems.
- **Early Intervention:** By using EAP services, you can address issues early before they escalate into more significant problems. Early intervention can prevent minor issues from becoming major obstacles to personal and professional well-being.
- **Improved Work-Life Balance:** EAPs can help you manage stress and other challenges that affect your work-life balance. By addressing these issues, you can achieve a healthier balance between your personal and professional life.
- **Enhanced Coping Skills:** Through counseling and support, you can develop better coping strategies for dealing with stress, conflict, and other challenges. These skills can improve your resilience and ability to handle future difficulties.
- **Reduced Stress and Anxiety:** EAPs can help you manage stress and anxiety, leading to improved mental health and overall wellbeing. This may result in better focus, productivity, and performance at work.
- **Support During Life Transitions:** EAPs can provide valuable support during significant life transitions, such as marriage, divorce, the birth of a child, or the loss of a loved one. Having professional guidance during these times can ease the transition and reduce stress.
- **Resource for Crisis Situations:** In times of crisis, such as a personal emergency or a traumatic event, EAPs offer immediate support and resources to help you cope and recover.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

If you are experiencing significant distress, emotional pain, or disruptions to your daily functioning - you should reach out for help and support.

- Leverage an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) if one is available
- Access telehealth mental health resources
- Connect with community resources:
  - **Call the NAMI HelpLine at 1-800-950-6264** - nationwide peer-support service providing information, resource referrals, and support
  - **Call or Text 988** to speak with a trained crisis counselor 24/7
- **If you are in a crisis, call or text 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline or chat at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org), or text the Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741)**



## CREATING MINDFUL MOMENTS

Mindful moments can change the way you experience your life. Being mindful means being self-aware and in tune with your surroundings. Embracing mindful moments can make a significant difference in your daily life, leading to greater satisfaction and resilience. Integrating mindfulness into your daily routines can also enhance your mental and physical health.

**By creating mindful moments each day, you can experience a range of health benefits, like the following:**

- **Stress Reduction:** Regular mindfulness practices can lower stress levels by promoting relaxation and reducing cortisol, a stress hormone.
- **Improved Focus:** Short breaks for mindfulness can enhance concentration and productivity, helping you stay engaged with your tasks.
- **Enhanced Emotional Wellbeing:** Mindfulness can lead to a greater sense of emotional balance and resilience, improving your overall mood and outlook.
- **Better Sleep Quality:** Engaging in mindfulness activities before bedtime can improve sleep patterns and reduce insomnia.
- **Reduced Physical Tension:** By incorporating mindful practices, you can alleviate physical symptoms of stress, such as headaches and muscle tension.

**To make mindfulness a part of your daily routine, set aside a few minutes each day for practices such as guided meditation, simple breathing exercises, or by incorporating one (or more) of the strategies below:**

- Journaling can help you process your thoughts and feelings, while listening to soothing music can provide a much-needed mental break.
- Art therapy and doodling can help create a mind-body connection to the present moment.
- Single-tasking—the opposite of multi-tasking—can reduce anxiousness and overwhelm. By focusing on just one thing at a time, you can be more present in that moment.
- Listen more actively by reducing distractions when others are speaking to you. Giving your full attention will help strengthen your relationships by showing them you value their time.

Mindfulness is not about achieving perfection; it is about creating moments of presence and awareness amidst your busy schedule.

This Mental Health Awareness Month, we encourage you to consider the ways that you can integrate mindfulness and meditation into your daily routine to maintain mental wellbeing. For a limited time, get free access to this meditation from Headspace: [Five Mindful Minutes](#).



## BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT: HEADWAY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Headway's mission is to make mental healthcare affordable and accessible. To do this, Headway works with Blue Cross NC to simplify the process of finding and booking an in-network mental health clinician, which allows clinicians to easily run their practice and have more time for their clients.

Headway provides in-network therapist recommendations and appointment slots at no cost to you. You'll only pay your patient responsibility (depending on your copay or deductible) for in-network care with your Blue Cross NC plan.

### Access to effective and high-quality mental health care:

- Availability within 48 hours
- Virtual or in-person appointments
- Personalized matching support
- Instant booking

### OPTIONS FOR CARE:

**Therapy:** Therapists are supportive licensed professionals who can help you work through everyday challenges, life changes or anything that might be affecting you.

**Medication Management:** Psychiatrist and psychiatric nurse practitioners are able to prescribe medication to support mental health treatment.

### HOW IT WORKS:

- **Tell them what you're looking for**
  - Choose your concerns and/or preferences for therapy to filter results to find the best provider match for you.
- **Use your Blue Cross NC plan**
  - Headway will use your details to calculate the exact cost before your session.
- **Start therapy**
  - Choose a therapist from your matches and book your first appointment right on Headway.

### [CLICK HERE TO SEE YOUR COSTS BEFORE YOU BOOK](#)

- Enter your insurance details to check your exact price.

### GET STARTED

[Click here](#) to get started or scan the QR code below.



You also have access to a wide variety of additional mental health resources through Blue Cross Blue Shield NC. Watch this video to learn more about the resources available to you.

[WATCH NOW](#)

# ENERGY SMOOTHIE BOWL

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1 frozen banana
- 1/2 cup mixed berries
- 1/4 cup spinach
- 1/4 cup Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 1/2 cup almond milk
- Toppings: sliced almonds, granola, shredded coconut

## INSTRUCTIONS:

- Blend the frozen banana, mixed berries, spinach, Greek yogurt, chia seeds, and almond milk until smooth.
- Pour the smoothie into a bowl and top with fresh fruit, sliced almonds, granola, and shredded coconut.

### NUTRITION FACTS

Calories 300  
Total Fat 10g  
Fiber 8g  
Carbohydrate 40g  
Protein 12g



Benefit	Vendor	Website/Email/Contact
Medical	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	<a href="https://www.bluecrossnc.com/">https://www.bluecrossnc.com/</a>
Blue Connect	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	<a href="#">Blue Connect</a>
My Pregnancy Program	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	Download the <i>My Pregnancy through Blue Cross NC</i> app to get started
NCHIP Concierge	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	1-800-795-9402
Mental Health/Substance Abuse	BlueCross BlueShield of NC	<a href="#">Find a therapist   Headway</a>



HAVE SOMETHING YOU  
WANT TO SHARE?  
LET US KNOW!

