

A monthly wellness newsletter from Better You

Factors outside the doctor's office influence your health

Where you live, how much money you make, or the color of your skin shouldn't impact your health, but these kinds of factors matter. In fact, [social determinants of health](#), which are the conditions of the environments where you live, learn, work, and socialize, have a major impact on people's health.

For example, if it's difficult to get to a grocery store due to lack of transportation or safe walking routes, or you don't have the money to buy healthier foods, you may be missing out on important nutrients for your health. These kinds of factors can increase your risk of heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and other health conditions. Other examples of what experts call social determinants of health include:

- Racism, discrimination, and violence
- Education and job opportunities
- Polluted air and water

- Language and literacy skills

Florida Blue's been serving Floridians for 80 years. We know our communities. We live here, too. That's why we're committed to improving the conditions in which Floridians live, learn, work, and socialize through our Florida Blue Foundation and our local Florida Blue Centers.

Florida Blue Foundation

The [Florida Blue Foundation](#) is committed to addressing health equity by increasing access to healthy foods, improving mental well-being, and growing healthy communities. In 2023, the Florida Blue Foundation provided 463 grants totaling \$20.3 million focused on improving the health of local communities.

Florida Blue Centers and Community Specialists

[Florida Blue Centers](#) serve as local hubs where everybody in the community is invited to health and fitness classes like yoga or Zumba, or to participate



in social events like bingo or game nights.

Our Florida Blue [community specialists](#) are available in-person or by phone (1-877-352-5830) to help both members and non-members find:

- Community support resources, including food, housing, and transportation services
- Government programs and military and veteran services
- Children and youth services
- Referrals to mental health facilities and programs

By working together, we can create a healthier and more equitable society for everyone.

Resource: [Healthy People 2023](#)

Unpacking substance use disorder

Substance use disorders are a treatable mental health disorder that influence a person's actions and brain chemistry causing an inability to control their use of substances like drugs and alcohol. Look no farther than the news feed on your phone to see how many millions of lives substance use disorders (SUD) touch every day. In fact, did you know that in 2022, 48.7 million people in the U.S. aged 12 or older had an SUD?¹

From the teenager trying to fit in at school to the adult overwhelmed by family and work demands, SUD can affect anyone, regardless of their background, income, ethnicity, or age.

The good news is that SUD is a treatable condition.² To help unpack the complexities of

substance use disorder, [join us](#) for a webinar on Thursday, April 18 with Dr. Adam Ligas, a board-certified addiction psychiatrist and medical director for Lucet*.

During his webinar, Dr. Ligas will discuss key concepts of substance use disorder including:

- The differences between using a substance and having a diagnosed condition
- Some reasons why people use substances like drugs and alcohol
- How stigma impacts the person and their loved ones
- Treatment and recovery options
- Referrals and available resources

Substance use disorders continue to be an important



health issue in our country. And Florida Blue continues to keep physical and mental health a top priority when it comes to care.

Register today for Dr. Ligas' webinar to learn about the different paths to treatment and recovery for those struggling with SUD. This free webinar is open to everybody in the community so share with others you feel may benefit.

Resources: ¹[samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov); ²[CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)

**Florida Blue contracts with Lucet to provide behavioral health services*

Zucchini & Mushroom Sauté (Serves 4)

Ingredients:

- 2 teaspoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 small zucchini, julienned
- 1 ½ cups sliced mushrooms
- 2 teaspoons chopped fresh basil
- Salt & freshly ground pepper, to taste

Directions:

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over high heat. Add zucchini and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add mushrooms and basil and cook, stirring, until softened, about 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper.



Recipe courtesy of [Eatingwell.com](https://www.eatingwell.com); for nutritional information click [here](#).

We comply with applicable Federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex.

ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-352-2583 (TTY: 1-877-955-8773).

ATANSYON: Si w pale Kreyòl Ayisyen, gen sèvis èd pou lang ki disponib gratis pou ou. Rele 1-800-352-2583 (TTY: 1-800-955-8770).

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