



# HEALTHY: USPS

Your Well-Being  
is Our Priority



## September 2020

### *Autism Spectrum Disorder*

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a group of developmental disorders that affect social, communication, and behavioral skills. ASD is also considered a spectrum disorder due to the varying types and severity of behaviors that people experience. ASD can be diagnosed at any age, but it usually begins during childhood by age two, and generally lasts throughout a person's life.

ASD now includes three conditions which were previously diagnosed separately: autistic disorder, Asperger's syndrome, and pervasive developmental disorder not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS). Children and adults with autism spectrum disorder could exhibit some of the following behaviors, among many others:

- Avoid eye contact or prefer to be alone.
- Do not respond to verbal attempts to gain attention.
- May be interested in people, but not certain how to talk, play, or relate to them.
- Have trouble expressing words or understanding feelings of others or themselves.
- Repeat actions, words, or behaviors.
- Concerned about slight changes in routine.

Individuals with ASD may experience challenges, but they also display numerous talents, including strong visual and auditory learning, remembering details and people, and success with math, science, music, and arts.

ASD is present in all ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups, however, it is four times more likely to be found in boys than girls. The causes and risk factors remain unknown, but scientists believe biologic, environmental, and genetic factors may play a role. Some people may have concerns that ASD could be linked to the vaccines that children receive. However, research continues to demonstrate that there is no link between vaccines and developing ASD.

There is no medical test to diagnose ASD, but doctors can reliably evaluate a series of behavioral, emotional, and developmental skills. While there is no cure, early intervention and treatment services can improve lifetime development, such as speech therapy, physical and occupational therapy, social skills training, and sensory integration.

Sources: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) & [National Institutes of Health](#)

### Five-Year Rule

Planning for retirement isn't just making sure your financial ducks are in row. It also includes making sure you meet the requirements to continue your health and life insurance in retirement.

To continue your Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) or Federal Employee Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) in retirement you must meet the requirements. Specifically, for FEHB, the requirements are:

- You must be entitled to retire on an immediate annuity under a retirement system for civilian employees (including retirements under FERS Minimum Retirement Age + 10); and,
- You must have been continuously enrolled (or covered as a family member) in any FEHB plan(s) for the five years of service immediately before the date the annuity starts, or for the full period(s) of service since his/her first opportunity to enroll (if less than five years).

Keep in mind, you do not have to be enrolled in the same plan for five years prior to your retirement. You can also be covered under your spouse's FEHB plan; however, you must have been covered for five years prior to retiring if you wish to pick up FEHB in retirement.

If you would like to continue your FEGLI in retirement, the requirements are the same as FEHB with one exception. You could not have previously converted to an individual policy. You must also meet the five-year/all opportunity requirement for Basic and each type of Optional insurance in order to continue it into retirement.



## A Note from your National Safety Team: Heat Related Illness

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the best way to avoid a heat-related illness is to limit exposure outdoors during hot days.

Follow these tips to stay safe:

- Air conditioning is the best way to cool off
- Drink water, even if you don't feel thirsty, and avoid alcohol
- Wear loose, lightweight clothing and a hat
- If possible, avoid spending time outdoors during the hottest parts of the day
- Wear sunscreen; sunburn affects the body's ability to cool itself
- Pace yourself when you run or otherwise exert your body

Source: The National Safety Council

## Sweet Potato and Apple Bake

### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. Put sweet potatoes in a baking dish.
3. Add apples to the baking dish.
4. Pour 2 tablespoons of the sweet potato liquid over the mixture.
5. Mix brown sugar, pecans, flour, and melted butter together in a small bowl.
6. Sprinkle over the top of the sweet potato/apple mixture.
7. Bake for 20-30 minutes until the top is golden brown and bubbly.

Notes – Granny Smith apples tend to work best in this recipe.

Calories: 231 Fat: 9g Sodium: 64mg Carbohydrate: 38g Protein: 3g Fiber: 4g

### Ingredients

**3 ½ cups** sweet potatoes, drained (2 – 15ounce cans; save 2 tablespoons of the liquid)  
**2 cups** apples (peeled, cored, and cut into bite-sized pieces)  
**6 teaspoons** brown sugar (2 tablespoons packed)  
**½ cup** chopped pecans  
**2 tablespoons** flour  
**2 tablespoons butter, melted** (unsalted)

Nutrition Serving Size:  
6 servings of ¾ cup each

Source: [Choose My Plate](#)