

STRONG **body**  
**mind**



MEMBER NEWSLETTER  
// **SPRING 2024**



**DENVER HEALTH**  
**MEDICAL PLAN** INC...



# HOW TO ESTABLISH CARE



**Establishing care is the process of beginning a long-term relationship with a primary care provider (PCP). They will be your trusted source for all your day-to-day medical needs. Your PCP can help ensure your well-being long into the future. Your PCP will teach you ways to manage your health, treat a wide range of illnesses and injuries, and help you access specialty care when you need it. The first time you see your PCP, the appointment will be billed as “establishing care.”**

## THE IMPORTANCE OF ANNUAL WELLNESS VISITS

You may feel fine. But it’s important to see your PCP for an annual wellness visit. It’s one of the most important ways you can optimize your current health. Also, you can catch any concerns early on. That way, they don’t develop into something more serious down the line.

During your visit, your PCP will usually record your height, weight and vitals. Your PCP will also take a blood and/or urine sample. In addition, your PCP will provide any needed vaccinations and perform a physical exam. Depending on your particular risk, age and gender, your PCP may also perform specific screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, osteoporosis, diabetes, cervical cancer or STDs.

Even if you’re healthy and have no physical issues, it’s important to get annual wellness exams. You can gain valuable information. It will help you stay on top of your health.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT


Before your wellness visit, you’ll fill out a medical history form. So, it’s important to gather all information regarding your medical history ahead of time, including:

- » Past medical records and test results
- » Vaccination history
- » List of current medications and supplements
- » Notes about any allergies or symptoms
- » Records of previous surgeries
- » Family medical history
- » Any other questions or concerns
- » Your health insurance member ID card

After reviewing your form, your provider will talk to you more in depth about your medical history. They will ask about your lifestyle, e.g., diet, alcohol and tobacco use, exercise habits, etc. This can help reveal other types of issues. They may need to be addressed.

## THE PROVIDER-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP

Your annual visit is the perfect opportunity to be candid with your PCP about your health. The Affordable Care Act ensures annual wellness visits are provided at no cost. There could be a fee if you ask to discuss a particular concern. Make sure to ask your PCP at the start of your visit what



you may talk about. So your wellness visit stays free. You can always make a follow-up appointment to address other issues.

When you establish a long-term relationship with your PCP, you'll build a foundation of trust. This will enable you to feel more comfortable opening up about intimate or embarrassing topics. That's why it's so important to have these types of conversations with a PCP. In fact, according to the Match Made in Medicine study performed by Zocdoc, 70% of patients feel more comfortable discussing embarrassing symptoms with a long-term provider than one they just began seeing. In addition, four out of five patients are more likely to accept advice from a doctor they already know and trust.

Dr. Donald Rebhun puts it this way, "Everyone gets scared when they are faced with a health issue, even doctors themselves. Making sure there is a two-way dialogue and that both the patient and doctor are being heard and understood is important."

## THE VALUE OF A SHORTER WAIT TIME

The best time to establish care with a new PCP is when you're feeling well — so if you get sick, you'll already have a relationship and a path for getting help. Getting care when you really need it can be more challenging if you don't already have an established PCP. Your first appointment usually takes the longest. Subsequent shorter appointments at a later date will be much easier to schedule.

### Sources:

Vera Whole Health: <https://www.verawholehealth.com/blog/how-to-communicate-the-benefits-of-establishing-care>

Cleveland Clinic: <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/16507-the-importance-of-having-a-primary-care-doctor>

Mantachie Rural Health Care, Inc.: <https://www.mantachieclinic.org/the-benefits-of-an-annual-wellness-visit/>

MANA Medical Associates: <https://mana.md/whats-included-in-a-wellness-exam/>

Zocdoc: <https://thescript.wpengine.com/blog/article/secrets-long-term-doctor-patient-relationships/>

*Denver Health Medical Plan, Inc. (DHMP) has been approved by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to operate as a Special Needs Plan (SNP) through 2023. This was based on a review of DHMP's Model of Care.*

*If you need any of the information in this newsletter in Spanish, please call Health Plan Services. Si necesita en español alguna parte de la información contenida en este boletín, llame a Servicios del Plan de Salud.*

*DHHA / CHP+: 303-602-2100, Elevate Exchange / Colorado Option: 303-602-2090, Medicaid Choice: 303-602-2116, Medicare Advantage: 303-602-2111*

# NURSELINE ADVICE: THE SEASON FOR SNEEZING

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 25% of adults and nearly 20% of children suffer from allergic rhinitis. This is more commonly called allergies, or hay fever. The symptoms (itchy, watery, reddened, puffy eyes, sneezing, runny or stuffy nose, itchy throat) are produced when our immune system overreacts to usually harmless allergens. These may be pollen or animal dander.

Seasonal allergies are often caused by pollen from trees, grasses and weeds. They are typically more common in warmer weather. Perennial allergies are experienced year-round from exposure to things like dust mites, animal dander and mold.

Younger children may have a bruised appearance under their eyes. This is caused by swelling, or edema under the eye from chronic nasal congestion. They may also have a crease above and below the bridge of the nose from rubbing their nose. Another sign is the “allergic salute”. The child repeatedly pushes upward on their nose with their palm to open the sinus passage and relieve the itching. These symptoms may seem minor or self-limiting. But researchers found that children with allergies missed more school, had poorer performance and poorer sleep. The kids also suffered from lower confidence. That is because of the perception of looking unattractive.

Fortunately, most allergies can be treated quite effectively with over-the-counter antihistamines. In some cases, a nasal steroid or decongestant may be added. Ask your provider before using over-the-counter medications if you have chronic health

conditions. Some people with allergies may receive a weekly injection. It deposits a tiny amount of the allergen under the skin. Over time, this will desensitize them to the allergen. They will stop reacting to that allergen.

You can help control allergy symptoms by avoiding the outdoors when the pollen count is high. Many weather sources will give pollen counts and forecasts along with the weather. Help control allergens in your home. Keep windows closed. Vacuum often. Dust furniture. Change filters as recommended for heating and air conditioning systems.

*Written by: Kerri Reynolds, RN, BSN  
Denver Health NurseLine*

#### Sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2023, February 1). Allergies. Retrieved from CDC/National Center for Health Statistics: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/allergies.htm>

M.S. Blaiss, MD et al. (2018). The burden of allergic rhinitis and allergic rhinoconjunctivitis on adolescents. *Annals Allergy Asthma Immunology*(121), 13. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.anai.2018.03.028>

Muhammad Imran Arif, M. e. (2023). Exploring Novel Therapeutic Approaches for Allergic Rhinitis in Children: Current Trends and Future Perspectives. *Journal of Xi'an Shiyou University, Natural Sciences Edition*, 66(8), 31. doi:10.17605/OSF.IO/QKH73

Pollen.com. (2024, February 8). Retrieved from National Allergy Map: <https://www.pollen.com/map>

**The Denver Health NurseLine  
is available to talk with you about  
any health concerns or questions  
24 hours a day, 7 days a week!  
Give them a call at 303-739-1261.**

# Apple & Cranberry Poppyseed Dressing Salad

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 – 10 oz. spring salad mix
- ½ – onion, sliced
- 1 – tomato, sliced
- ½ – cucumber, diced
- ½ – green apple, diced
- 2 – hard boiled eggs, sliced
- ¼ cup – dried cranberries
- ¼ cup – poppyseed dressing



## DIRECTIONS

*Slice and dice up the eggs, onions, tomatoes, cucumbers and apples as listed above. Place the spring salad mix into a large salad bowl. Add chopped ingredients. Top with dried cranberries. Pour in the poppyseed dressing. Toss everything in the bowl to coat thoroughly. This is a great salad you can serve on the side of a main dish. Or add roasted chicken and enjoy as a serve-alone meal. Scan the QR Code above. Watch an instructional video!*



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## Elevate Mind is a mental health benefit available to Exchange, Colorado Option, Medicare Advantage, and DHHA Employer plan members within Denver Health Medical Plan (DHMP).

It's ok to not be ok. We encourage our eligible members to utilize this benefit as needed. Elevate Mind is easy. It is a fast way to get the mental health care you need, when you need it, via phone or video. Simply select a provider and connect.

Licensed therapists and psychologists are here to help you. You can schedule an appointment with one of our providers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. These professionals have been hand-selected, U.S. trained and board-certified to deliver you the very best care.

### Services Include:

- » **THERAPY:** therapy is available with certified therapists and counselors to help you work through life's challenges.
- » **PSYCHIATRY:** licensed and registered psychiatrists can help with many challenges you are facing. They are also able to prescribe medications (if necessary) and work with your preferred pharmacy.
- » **URGENT CARE:** virtual urgent care is available through Elevate Mind. However, if you are having a medical or mental health emergency, please call 9-1-1 or go to your nearest Emergency Room. Urgent care cost sharing will apply.

No referral is necessary; cost sharing will apply.  
You will need your Member ID# found on the back of your ID Card to register as a subscriber.

For more information about your mental health benefits and to verify eligibility, visit:  
[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Importance-Mental-Health](https://DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Importance-Mental-Health)

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Visit [ElevateMind.org](https://ElevateMind.org) or download the Elevate Mind mobile app for iPhone and Android devices!



# WHAT'S NEW WITH YOUR PHARMACY BENEFITS?

Depending upon your plan, your pharmacy benefits may be updated over the course of the year. To see what's changed, visit **DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org**. Hover over *Members*, navigate to your plan's page, then click *Pharmacy* under "Member Resources." There you will find documents that provide any changes in your plan's formulary, such as newly added drugs, newly added generics and more!

Your plan's webpage and formulary documents, called *Formulary & Pharmacy Management* (for Exchange, CO Option or Employer Group plans), *Formulary/Drug List* (for Medicaid Choice and CHP+) or *Drug List* (for Medicare Advantage), provide:

- » A list of covered drugs, along with restrictions and preferences
- » Details on how to use the formulary and pharmaceutical management procedures
- » An explanation of limits or quotas
- » Details on how prescribing practitioners must provide information to support an exception request (non-urgent requests may be processed the next business day)
- » Your plan's process for generic substitution, therapeutic interchange and step-therapy protocols

## \$25 REWARD: COMPLETE A HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT



**ELEVATE  
MEDICARE ADVANTAGE**  
Denver Health Medical Plan Inc..

If you are an Elevate Medicare Choice (HMO D-SNP) member, you will have an opportunity to participate in a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) each year!

We want you to be healthy and feel good. By answering the questions on the HRA, we will identify your health risks and try to lower them. Each year, we will ask you to complete a HRA. So we know if there were any changes in your health. This will also help us know if you need more help. Your answers to these questions do not affect your insurance coverage. They may be shared with your doctor. We can work with your doctor and health care team to try and improve your health.

We will call you to complete the HRA over the phone. Or we may mail you the HRA. You can also call us to complete the HRA at **1-833-292-4893**. TTY users should call 711.

Completion of a health survey will qualify Elevate Medicare Choice (HMO D-SNP) members for the \$25 reward. Upon completion of the survey, the reward will be sent to the mailing address we have on file for use at participating merchants. For more information or questions, call our Care Management Department at **303-602-2184** or visit **DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org**.

# DOWNLOAD OUR 'MyDHMP' MEMBER PORTAL MOBILE APP!

The 'MyDHMP' member portal mobile app is your go-to resource for managing your health insurance plan anytime, anyplace. With it, you will be able to access important information, member materials (including ID Cards), communicate with us, check claim status and more — right from your tablet or smartphone.



**Visit [DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org](https://DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org) and click on 'MyDHMP Portal' or download the 'MyDHMP' mobile app for iPhone and Android devices!**





# DENVER HEALTH BARIATRIC SURGERY CENTER™

**Diana Corona lost more than 100 pounds after bariatric surgery. She had an ongoing commitment to an active lifestyle and careful dietary monitoring.**

**We are now accepting adolescent and adult patients, ages 16-65.**

*Call **303-602-1756**. Or scan the QR code to start your journey toward a new life!*



# IMPORTANT PLAN INFORMATION



## QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Making sure our members get good care. Help is the mission of Denver Health Medical Plan, Inc. (DHMP). To help in that effort, we have a Quality Improvement (QI) Program. The goal of the QI Program is to review how well we have done as your health plan, to compare this work to our goals and to learn how we can do better. Each year, we look at data on how we handle members' care. Then measure our work and progress against benchmarks used by the whole country.

The goal of our QI Program is to make sure you have:

- » Access to good care
- » Programs that cater to your specific needs
- » Support for chronic condition
- » Support when you need extra help, such as after a hospital stay

You can find results for our QI Program on the DHMP website:

**[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Quality-Improvement-Program](https://denverhealthmedicalplan.org/Quality-Improvement-Program)**

## BENEFIT MAXIMUMS

If you are using benefits such as outpatient therapy visits, durable medical equipment or chiropractic and are close to reaching your benefit maximum, contact Health Plan Services at **303-602-2100** to speak to a representative about any options you may have.

## TRANSITION OF CARE

If you or your dependent is seeing a pediatrician and are ready to change to a General or Family practitioner, there are three ways to get help:

- » Call the Denver Health Appointment Center at **303-436-4949** to get help finding a new provider and making your first appointment
- » Use the online Provider Directory at **[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org](https://denverhealthmedicalplan.org)**
- » Ask your provider for help with the transition



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PHARMACY DEPT.



## OPIOID INFORMATION

With most medications, your provider and you weigh the risks versus the benefits to determine the best decision for care. The use of prescription opioids for pain is no different. This class of medication can assist in providing effective pain management that allows a patient to enjoy life without the restrictions of severe pain. But long-term use of opioids can be more harmful than it is helpful due to serious risks and potential complications. Risks and complications include:

- » Addiction, abuse and overdose
- » Sleepiness and dizziness
- » Tolerance, taking more medication for the same pain relief
- » Constipation, nausea, vomiting and dry mouth
- » Confusion
- » Depression
- » Increased sensitivity to pain
- » Low levels of testosterone
- » Physical dependence, symptoms of withdrawal when medication is stopped
- » Itching and sweating

There are other options to treat pain that do not involve opioids. Other options that may be covered by your plan include chiropractic care, physical therapy, exercise, cognitive behavioral therapy, Over-The-Counter (OTC) Tylenol (acetaminophen), nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors. Talk to your provider about the right treatment for you. If opioid treatment is the right option for you, the plan does cover naloxone injection and Narcan nasal spray to treat the occurrence of an overdose. Please contact Health Plan Services to find out your cost of copay.

## ELEVATE MEDICARE ADVANTAGE MEMBERS – DID YOU KNOW?

- » Physical therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy are available through your medical benefit (prior authorization or referral required).
- » Chiropractic care and acupuncture (for lower back pain) are covered (no referral required).
- » Over-The-Counter (OTC) acetaminophen, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as ibuprofen, naproxen, and arthritis pain gel are available through your OTC benefit at no charge (up to your maximum quarterly OTC plan benefit). For more information, visit [DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Medicare-Flexcard](https://DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Medicare-Flexcard).
- » Serotonin and norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors such as duloxetine and venlafaxine ER are Tier 2 and available with a prescription. Some quantity limits may apply.
- » An annual membership to Denver Parks and Recreation is available at no cost to you. For more information, visit [DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Denver-Parks-And-Recreation-Membership](https://DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Denver-Parks-And-Recreation-Membership).
- » Naloxone injection and naloxone nasal spray are available without a prescription at participating pharmacies. To find a participating pharmacy, visit [StopTheClockColorado.org](https://StopTheClockColorado.org) or ask your pharmacist.

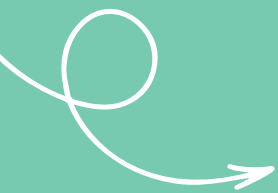


**DENVER HEALTH  
MEDICAL PLAN** INC.<sup>SM</sup>

777 Bannock St., MC 6000  
Denver, CO 80204

**LARGE PRINT OR OTHER LANGUAGES:** If you have questions about this notice, we can help you for free. We can also give it to you in other formats like large print, audio or in other languages. Please call 303-602-2116, toll free 1-855-281-2418, or 711 for callers with speech or hearing needs.

Elevate Medicare Advantage is a Medicare-approved HMO plan. Enrollment in Elevate Medicare Advantage depends on contract renewal. The Plan also has a written agreement with the Colorado Medicaid Program to coordinate your Medicaid benefits.  
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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Spring is a great time to focus on your physical and mental well-being. With warmer temps on the way, it's easy to find a wide array of outdoor activities to boost your mood and help you become more active. A few ideas include: picnicing in a nearby park, biking to work, attending a sporting event, or visiting your local farmers' market.

In addition, May is Mental Health Awareness Month! Elevate Mind is an easy, fast way to get the mental health care you need. I encourage eligible members to utilize this benefit as needed. Visit [ElevateMind.org](https://www.elevatemand.org), download the Elevate Mind mobile app or scan the QR code above.

**GREG MCCARTHY**

Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director  
Denver Health Medical Plan, Inc.

