

STRONG **+** body
mind



MEMBER NEWSLETTER
// WINTER 2020



DENVER HEALTH
MEDICAL PLAN INC.



HOW TO BOOST YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

Why is it that people tend to get sick in winter? Can cold weather actually cause a cold or virus? It's easy to assume so. But while the weather itself can't make us sick, other factors associated with colder temperatures can.

WHY IS WINTER COLD AND FLU SEASON?

There are a few reasons researchers believe our immune system is weakened in winter. For one, we're inside more, often in close quarters with others who may be sick. Central heat can also dry out the mucous lining in our sinuses, our first line of defense in preventing germs from entering the body. In addition, low indoor humidity makes it easier for viruses to replicate (in high humidity, they may bind with water molecules before they reach the next victim). And in colder, drier air, these viruses — particularly rhinoviruses and influenza viruses — can replicate more quickly.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A HEALTHY IMMUNE SYSTEM

As we enter cold and flu season, it's even more important to ensure you have a strong immune system. Here are a few ways you can set yourself up for a healthier winter season:

- » Increase your intake of vitamin D. In winter, when we're bundled up, it's much harder to get vitamin D from the sun. Consider taking a vitamin supplement or eat more foods rich in vitamin D, like eggs and fish.
- » More garlic, please! Eating raw garlic, which is a natural antibiotic, is one of the most effective ways to boost your immune system.
- » Eat more soup. Grandma was right when she fed you chicken soup! Soup can pack in a lot of nutrients (plus, it helps warm you up)!
- » Add herbs and spices to your meals. There are numerous herbs and spices with antibacterial benefits. Here are just a few:
 - Turmeric is a natural antioxidant with anti-inflammatory properties. It helps

If you need any of the information in this newsletter in Spanish, please call Health Plan Services at 303-602-2100 for DHMP or CHP+, 303-602-2090 for Elevate, 303-602-2116 for Medicaid Choice or 303-602-2111 for Medicare Advantage.

Si necesita en español alguna parte de la información contenida en este boletín, llame a Servicios del Plan de Salud al 303-602-2100 para DHMP o CHP+, 303-602-2090 para Elevate, 303-602-2116 para Medicaid Choice o al 303-602-2111 para Medicare Advantage.



relieve bodily discomfort and aids in digestion.

- Cayenne pepper activates the circulatory system, aids in digestion and also contains capsaicin, which can help reduce pain.
- Ginger targets cold viruses, improves digestion and can even help fight infectious diseases.
- Cinnamon is a powerful antioxidant that helps reduce inflammation, heal damaged tissue and prevent infections.

Besides eating well, staying hydrated and washing your hands frequently, there are a number of other ways you can help boost your immune system:

- » Try to reduce stress. Stress can lower your ability to fight illness. Take time to relax by meditating, doing yoga or reading a book.
- » Get your zzzs. During sleep, your immune system gets stronger. Make sure to get at least eight hours of sleep every night.
- » Connect with friends and family. Loneliness and isolation are linked to a weakened immune system. Spend time with the people you care about.
- » Treat yourself to a massage. Massage stimulates the lymphatic system, helping to transport infection-fighting white blood cells.
- » Don't smoke. It weakens your immune system.
- » Avoid too much alcohol. Alcohol

suppresses the immune system. Drink in moderation or not at all.

- » Stay active. A simple half-hour walk each day is enough to help strengthen your immune system.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY DOS AND DON'TS

Exercise can benefit your health in a number of ways — helping to lower your blood pressure, control weight, improve cardiovascular health and strengthen the immune system. But should you work out when you're sick? Well, that depends. If you have a fever, exercise could put too high a toll on the body and slow your recovery. But if you have a cold, just be careful about working out too hard — and take time to recover. Stop immediately if your chest gets more congested, you cough or wheeze or you feel lightheaded. Listen to your body.

By taking the right steps now, you can enhance your health and strengthen your immunity throughout the entire winter season.

Sources:

- www.nytimes.com/2018/02/23/well/can-being-cold-make-you-sick.html
- www.epicorimmune.com/blog/2019/01/25/can-cold-weather-cause-colds
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- www.thelifeco.com/en/blog/15-ways-to-naturally-boost-your-immune-system-this-winter/
- www.livescience.com/26983-lymphatic-system.html
- www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/how-to-boost-your-immune-system
- www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/cold-guide/exercise-when-you-have-cold#1

NURSELINE ADVICE: PEDIATRIC RESPIRATORY EMERGENCIES

With cold and flu season upon us, respiratory emergencies are the most common reason parents seek evaluation for their children in the Emergency Department (ED) during the winter months. The symptoms listed below are signs that a child is working hard to breathe, and parents should seek immediate medical attention.

SYMPTOMS

Wheezing: a high-pitched, coarse whistling sound a child makes when breathing.

Retractions: the skin between the ribs and in the neck sinks in when a child attempts to inhale.

Grunting: a low, short guttural sound that can be heard each time the child exhales.

Stridor: a high-pitched, whistling sound most often heard while taking in a breath.

Nasal Flaring: the openings of the nose spreading open while breathing.

Central Cyanosis: a bluish color of the mouth, tongue, gums, lips, face or trunk.

Tachypnea: abnormally fast breathing. Normal respiratory rates for children depend on their age. The following respiratory rates are abnormally fast:

- » 2 months or younger:
> 60 breaths per minute
- » 2 to 12 months:
> 50 breaths per minute
- » 1 to 5 years:
> 40 breaths per minute
- » 6 to 12 years:
> 30 breaths per minute
- » 12 years or older:
> 20 breaths per minute

While many respiratory illnesses are mild and non-life-threatening, others are severe and require prompt attention and treatment.

If you have questions regarding breathing difficulties, or any other health concerns, please call the Denver Health NurseLine at 303-739-1261. They can help you decide the best course of action.

By: Kathleen Jones BSN, RN, IBCLC

**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.**



Slow-Cooker Balsamic Roast

INGREDIENTS

2 lb - top round beef, chuck or any roast

1 - large sweet onion, sliced

8 oz - tomato sauce

1/2 cup - balsamic vinegar

1/2 cup - water

2 tablespoons - coconut oil

Rub Seasonings - salt, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, black pepper (to taste)



DIRECTIONS

Season the roast on both sides generously with rub seasonings. Heat coconut oil in a large pan over medium-high heat and sear each side of the roast for 3-4 minutes. Place sliced onions in the bottom of the crock pot and put seared meat on top. Combine the balsamic vinegar and tomato sauce in a bowl, mix well and pour over the meat in the crock pot. Add water to the crock pot as well. Place the lid on the crock pot and set to low heat. Cook for 6-8 hours.

SAME-DAY CARE OPTIONS

If you need care today and can't get in to see your Primary Care Provider, we have options for you...



THE NURSELINE IS HERE TO HELP YOU.

Call **303-739-1261** and speak to a Denver Health nurse about your health concerns at no cost to you. Sometimes they can even call in a prescription for you. NurseLine nurses can help you decide the best plan to get the care you need, which may include any of the following options.



DISPATCHHEALTH WILL COME TO YOU.

DispatchHealth is our on-demand health care provider that can treat a range of injuries and illnesses in the comfort and convenience of your home (available 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., 365 days a year). Visit dispatchhealth.com, download the free app or call **303-500-1518**.



VISIT AN URGENT CARE CENTER.

Denver Health offers three Urgent Care centers. There are separate Pediatric (open 24/7) and Adult (open Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. | Sat-Sun, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.) Urgent Care centers on its Main Campus at 777 Bannock St., as well as the Southwest Clinic for Pediatrics and Adults at 1339 Federal Blvd. (open Mon.-Fri., 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. | Sat.-Sun., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., closed holidays) and the Downtown Urgent Care Clinic at 1545 California St. (open Mon-Fri, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. | Sat.-Sun., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Note: You can visit any urgent care center that is convenient for you. Your DHMP plan will cover you at any urgent care center, anywhere in the U.S.



EMERGENCY ROOM.

You can access 24/7 emergency care for both children and adults on the Denver Health Main Campus at 777 Bannock St. The Denver Health Pediatric Emergency Department is designed just for kids and is completely separate from the Adult Emergency Department.

Note: If you need emergency care, go to the nearest hospital or call 9-1-1. Your DHMP plan will cover you at any emergency room, anywhere in the U.S.

WHAT'S NEW WITH YOUR PHARMACY BENEFITS?

Your pharmacy benefits are updated many times over the course of the year. To see what's changed, visit denverhealthmedicalplan.org. Hover over *Current Members*, navigate to your plan's page, click *Pharmacy* and click either *Formulary Updates* (for Elevate, Medicaid Choice, CHP+ or Employer Group plans) or *Future Formulary Changes* (for Medicare Advantage). There you will find a link to a PDF document that provides 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 the Formulary & Pharmacy Management (for Elevate or Employer Group plans), Formulary/Drug List (for Medicaid Choice and CHP+) or Formulary (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

WHY YOU SHOULD COMPLETE A HEALTH RISK ASSESSMENT



**DENVER HEALTH
MEDICAL PLAN** INC.

Medicare Advantage

If you are a Denver Health Medicare Choice or Denver Health Medicare Select member, you will have an opportunity to participate in a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) each year!

Denver Health Medicare Advantage wants 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 an 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 and 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 by calling 720-440-6394. TTY users should call 711.



DENVER HEALTH DOWNTOWN URGENT CARE™

The Denver Health Downtown Urgent Care serves the growing number of people who live, work and travel in the downtown Denver area.

The state-of-the-art center in the heart of downtown Denver treats walk-in patients seven days a week.

**Hours: Monday - Friday | 7 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturdays & Sundays | 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**

1545 California St. | Denver, CO 80202 | 303-602-6500 | [DenverHealth.org/DUC](https://denverhealth.org/DUC)



6 GREAT INDOOR WINTER WORKOUTS

1

RIDE IT OUT.

Does wiping out on black ice or feeling the cold breeze on your face while bike riding sound appealing? If not, spin class might be for you! These intense indoor cycling classes can burn hundreds of calories and keep bones strong. Interval-based rides will also strengthen the butt, thighs, calves and even the core.

2

LAP IT UP.

It's never too early to put on that swimsuit. Head to your gym or rec center's indoor pool to get in a few solid swims before summer hits. This low-impact exercise lets you exercise longer without excess muscle strain, and might even beat yoga when it comes to improving breathing technique. Bonus side effects: an improved mood and a leaner physique.

3

HIT A WALL.

An indoor rock climbing wall, that is! This non-traditional cardio workout really hits the mark for those who want to exercise their mental strength (what happens to my legs if my arms go here?). But it's about physical skill as well — scaling indoor walls will increase heart rates and torch lots of calories. Not only does it work the arm muscles, it also activates the legs, back and shoulders.

4

LACE UP.

Ice skating isn't just for kids. If it's too cold for outdoor skating to be fun, head to your local indoor rink to carve up the ice. Aside from being super fun, skating tones the legs, core and butt. At a moderate pace, ice skating also burns about 500 calories per hour.

5

ZEN OUT.

Give your mind and body a workout with yoga. Believed to reduce stress, anxiety and fatigue, yoga also improves strength and flexibility through a range of asanas (or poses). From Vinyasa flow to hot and sweaty Bikram yoga, there's a style to suit just about anyone.

6

GET YOUR GLOVES.

Make like Rocky and get to a kick-butt boxing class. A few rounds in the ring offers a full-body workout as you duck, block and throw punches. Also, because the moves focus on cardio and keeping stamina up in the ring, you'll tone muscles rather than bulk up. Technique is more important than experience, so it's okay to be a newbie!

IMPORTANT PLAN INFORMATION



DHMP'S AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENT ABOUT INCENTIVES

Denver Health Medical Plan, Inc. (DHMP) has a Utilization Management (UM) Program to ensure that members have access to quality health care. The Program utilizes a team of health care professionals to evaluate the medical necessity of services by using nationally-recognized, evidence-based clinical guidelines and community standards. The decisions are based on the appropriateness of care and services available to members within their contracted benefits. DHMP affirms the following UM Program practices:

- » UM decision-making is based only on the appropriateness of the care and services requested and the existing coverage and benefits available to the members;
- » DHMP does not specifically reward or otherwise incentivize practitioners or other individuals to issue denials of coverage or services; and
- » UM decision-making staff members do not receive financial incentives that encourage decisions resulting in underutilization.

Please contact DHMP's Health Plan Medical Management or Compliance Departments at 1-800-700-8140 if you have any questions regarding the Program and its practices.

MEMBER SURVEYS - WE APPRECIATE YOUR FEEDBACK

You can help us make Denver Health Medical Plan, Inc. (DHMP) the best health plan for you! In the next few weeks, you may receive a survey in the mail about your DHMP health insurance plan. Please take some time to fill it out and mail it back as soon as you can. If you do not have a chance to fill out this survey, you may get a call to take the survey over the phone. This survey is sent to a random group of members each year. We would like to hear your thoughts about your health plan services and benefits. If there is anything we can do to assist you, please call Health Plan Services at 303-602-2100 for CHP+ and Employer Group plans, 303-602-2090 for Elevate plans, 303-602-2116 for Medicaid plans and 303-602-2111 for Medicare Advantage plans. TTY users call 711.





DENVER HEALTH™

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FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY



EXPERT 24/7 CARE FOR YOUR CHILD'S INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

Your child will be seen by a pediatric nurse on arrival who will identify the proper level of care for your child - emergent or urgent care - so that you will be billed the appropriate copay.

WHY DENVER HEALTH?

- Pediatric experts with a passion to work with kids
- One convenient location for urgent and emergent care
- Separate waiting room just for children
- Private rooms for the support your child needs
- Denver Health accepts most commercial payers as well as Medicaid



**DENVER HEALTH
MEDICAL PLAN** INC.SM

777 Bannock St., MC 6000
Denver, CO 80204

LARGE PRINT OR OTHER LANGUAGES: If you need this newsletter in large print, in other formats or languages, read aloud or need another copy, call 303-602-2116 or 1-800-700-8140. For TTY, call 711. Call Monday to Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at no cost to you. Si usted habla español, tenemos a su disposición servicios de asistencia, gratuitos, en su idioma. Llame al 1-800-700-8140 (State Relay 711).



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Happy New Year! I hope the year ahead brings you health and wellness, which often looks different for each individual person. Set attainable goals that support your physical and mental well-being. Over time, small changes will make a big difference.

I look forward to another year serving you as the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Director of DHMP. On behalf of our entire organization, best wishes for the upcoming year and thank you for letting us serve you.

GREG MCCARTHY

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

