

STRONG **body**
mind



MEMBER NEWSLETTER
// SUMMER 2025



DENVER HEALTH
MEDICAL PLAN INC.™



The many benefits of a **LOW SODIUM DIET**

While the body requires some sodium to help balance fluid levels and regulate muscle and nerve function, too much can be harmful to our health. The American Heart Association recommends aiming for less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium per day (which is only about a teaspoon of salt) — 1,500 milligrams per day, ideally. But the average person consumes more than 3,400 milligrams a day and most likely doesn't even realize it.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF REDUCING SODIUM INTAKE

When you consume too much sodium, excess water is drawn into the bloodstream, increasing blood pressure and your chances of developing heart disease. A low-sodium diet not only helps control cardiovascular health, it benefits your health in a variety of other ways as well.

- » **Lowers your risk for kidney disease**
With less sodium in your system, your kidneys don't have to work as hard to remove excess fluid from the body.
- » **Builds stronger bones**
Too much salt can result in calcium loss from the bones. Lowering salt intake helps maintain bone strength.
- » **Decreases the chance of liver disease**
A low-sodium diet helps manage the buildup of fluid in the abdomen.
- » **Helps control diabetes**
Lowering your sodium intake helps you maintain normal blood pressure levels and keep blood sugar under control.
- » **Can lower the risk of stomach cancer**
Reduced sodium correlates with less *H. pylori* bacteria, a high-risk factor for stomach cancer.

FOODS TO AVOID

It's easy to OD on sodium if you eat processed, prepackaged foods. Try to avoid items like chips, canned meals, lunch meats, frozen dinners and high-sodium sauces. And make sure to check food labels for sodium content — if possible, opt for low-sodium versions of the foods you usually buy.





Also, be wary of restaurant food, which is commonly packed with sodium. Ask about the sodium content before ordering and get salad dressings and sauces on the side.

FOODS TO EMBRACE

A good rule of thumb is to eat foods in their natural state, such as fruits, veggies, nuts, eggs, legumes and whole grains. However, if you do want canned or frozen items, choose options with no sauce — or you can always rinse them before use. Also, put down your saltshaker. There are many other healthier ways to season your food:

- » Fresh or dried herbs and spices (paprika, dill, basil, oregano, Italian blend, etc.)
- » Chopped onions, garlic or peppers
- » Lemon or lime juice
- » Vinegars and oils

HEALTHY SUBSTITUTES

When you have a craving, satisfy it with a low-sodium alternative:

- » Craving chips and dip? Try veggies and hummus.

- » Want packaged popcorn? Make air-popped popcorn with dill or chili powder.
- » Hungry for cured meat? Snack on low-sodium deli meat wrapped in lettuce leaves.
- » Feel like ice cream? Indulge in some yogurt with fresh fruit.
- » Thirsty for soda? Quench your thirst with sparkling water.

Be patient and ease yourself into your new diet. In time, eating low-sodium foods will become second nature.

Sources:

DHMP Blog Post – <https://www.denverhealthmedicalplan.org/blog/benefits-low-sodium-diet>

CDC – <https://www.cdc.gov/salt/reduce-sodium-intake/index.html>

Healthline – <https://www.healthline.com/health/high-blood-pressure-hypertension/lower-it-fast>

Mayo Clinic – <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/in-depth/high-blood-pressure/art-20046974>

Health Plan Services Phone Numbers (TTY 711):

DHHA / CHP+ Members: 303-602-2100

Exchange/COOP Members: 303-602-2090

Medicaid Choice Members: 303-602-2116

Medicare Members: 303-602-2111

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

NURSELINE ADVICE: ESSENTIAL SUMMER TIPS

During the summer months, people are often more active outdoors enjoying the warm temps and sunshine. You may spend time with family and friends, playing more with your pets, hiking, biking and enjoying all the mountains have to offer. Help ensure a fun, safe summer by following these safety tips.

CHECK:

Prior to heading outdoors, check the weather forecast. Colorado weather can change rapidly. A sunny morning can turn into an afternoon of thunderstorms, hail and tornadoes. Be sure to have a fully charged cell phone, rain gear and sunscreen with you prior to heading out for an adventure. Pay attention to areas that you could use to seek shelter during a storm, if necessary.

APPLY:

Use Sunscreen. Colorado has a very high rate of skin cancer due to the altitude and amount of time spent outdoors. Be sure to apply broad spectrum sunscreen of at least 30 SPF twenty minutes prior to heading outside, and frequently (at least every two hours) after. Don't forget your face and ears!

HYDRATE:

Drink plenty of water during any outdoor activity. With Colorado's high altitude and dry climate, people need to hydrate. Without any extra exercise, men in Colorado should drink 100 ounces of water per day, while women need about 75 ounces. Be sure to

drink more than the minimum when playing outdoors. Consider adding electrolytes to your water, which can facilitate the absorption of water into your bloodstream and cells. Remember to bring extra water for your dog if they are joining you on your adventures!

PACK:

Have a basic first aid kit, including bandages, tape, anti-itch cream, cleaning wipes and tweezers on hand for minor cuts, scrapes and splinters. Also, bring along bug spray and apply it after sunscreen.

*Written by: Mary E. Maltby, RN, BSN
Denver Health NurseLine*

Sources:

American Red Cross Summer Safety Tips (2025)
www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/summer-safety.html?srsltid=AfmBOop-qghaQbmPVRQLbuxTva8K3FvCht-d_SKEOeiVapMxfqZBOGtn

MedStar Health 7 Essential Summer Safety Tips for All Ages
(Aug 3, 2022) www.medstarhealth.org/blog/7-essential-summer-safety-tips-for-all-ages

DHMP Blog Post Summer Fun and Protection
www.denverhealthmedicalplan.org/blog/summer-fun-and-protection

**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.**



Black Pepper Tofu

INGREDIENTS

1 ¼ lbs. – firm tofu (or substitute chicken), cubed
2 – shallots, diced
6 – red chilis, diced
8 – cloves garlic, diced
12 – green onions, sliced
3 tbs. – ginger
8 tbs. – soy sauce
1 ½ tbs. – sugar
5 tbs. – black pepper, crushed
Vegetable oil (or other oil for frying)
Cornstarch



DIRECTIONS

Fill a large frying pan with roughly 1/4 inch of oil and heat. Dust the tofu lightly with cornstarch, then add to the hot oil. Fry, turning the tofu until golden all over. Remove the tofu and sediment from the pan. In the same pan, (add more oil if necessary) sauté the shallots, chilis, garlic and ginger on medium-low heat for 15 minutes, stirring occasionally until shiny and soft. Add the soy sauce, sugar and black pepper. Mix in the tofu and green onions; stir and let warm back up. Serve with steamed or fried rice.



DENVER HEALTH™

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FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY

The only hospital in Colorado capable of providing the highest level of medical and trauma care to patients of all ages.

Pediatric Acute Medical & Trauma

ACUTE CARE | PICU | SURGERY | NEUROLOGY | LEVEL III NICU | NURSERY | CHILD LIFE

We take all patients 0-18 years with asthma, RSV, pneumonia, seizures, UTIs, cellulitis, Kawasaki Disease, ingestions, eating disorders and much more.

We have a multidisciplinary team of pediatric specialists including hospitalists, critical care, neonatology, epileptology, psychiatry, radiology, speech, nutrition, child abuse and social work.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

PEDIATRIC EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT & URGENT CARE

Dedicated pediatric waiting room & triage RN

Excellent wait times

Pediatric-trained providers and staff

PEDIATRIC LEVEL TWO TRAUMA & SURGICAL CARE

Pediatric general surgery & trauma surgery

Pediatric neurosurgery

Pediatric orthopedic surgery

Pediatric hand & microvascular replantation

Pediatric ear, nose & throat (ENT)

As Denver's only pediatric trauma center, our surgeons are world leading experts in trauma care.

We are the only pediatric and adult trauma center in the state, providing care to patients of any age.



**24/7 CONSULTS &
DIRECT ADMISSIONS**

MEDICAL: 1-303-602-5000
TRAUMA: 1-866-DH TRAUMA

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. Click *Pharmacy* under "Member Resources." There you will find documents that provide any changes in your plan's formulary. These include 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) upon enrollment and annually thereafter!

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 that 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 may mail you the HRA. We may provide an online option. We may follow-up with phone calls to complete the assessment. 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 added to your FlexCard. You can purchase qualifying healthy food at approved stores. For more information or questions, call our Care Management Department at **303-602-2184** or visit **DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org**.



DENVER HEALTH™

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FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY

NEED CARE FAST?

DENVER HEALTH VIRTUAL URGENT CARE

Get the care you need - without leaving home.

With **Virtual Urgent Care**, Denver Health Medical Plan members can skip the waiting room and connect with a trusted Denver Health provider.

Whether it's a cold, minor injury, or medication refill, Denver Health Virtual Urgent Care is here for life's journey.

It's fast, easy, and part of your DHMP plan.

[SCHEDULE A VIRTUAL URGENT CARE VISIT](#)

Available to DHMP members at no extra cost.

303-436-4949



MEDICAID CHOICE MEMBERS: EARLY AND PERIODIC SCREENING, DIAGNOSTIC AND TREATMENT

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) is a Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) program that covers prevention, diagnostic and treatment services for members aged 20 and under, as well as pregnant people. This program is set up to find health problems early. The goal is for children and adolescents to get appropriate preventive, dental, mental, developmental, and specialty care. Your child can get these services at **NO COST** to you:

- » Screening Services
- » Well Child Check-Ups
- » Immunizations
- » Vision Screening/Eyeglasses
- » Physical or Occupational Therapies
- » Hearing Screening Services

Most EPSDT services will be available within Denver Health. Your doctor may also refer you to services outside Denver Health. If you have questions about EPSDT services or scheduling an appointment, you or your doctor may call Health Plan Services at **303- 602-2116**. If you have questions about transportation to and from an appointment, you can call Intelliride at **855-489-4999**. For more information about the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) Preventive Care Recommendations please visit: downloads.aap.org/AAP/PDF/periodicity_schedule.pdf.



IMPORTANT PLAN INFORMATION



As a valued DHMP member, you should be aware of certain rights and responsibilities that you are entitled to and responsible for.

MEMBERS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- » Have access to practitioners and staff who are committed to providing quality health care to all members without regard for race, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, sexual preference, political party, disability or participation in a publicly financed program.
- » Obtain available and accessible services covered by the contract.
- » Receive medical/behavioral health care that is based on objective, scientific evidence and human relationships.
- » Be free from any form of restraint or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience or retaliation.
- » Have a partnership based on trust, respect and cooperation among the provider, staff and member that will result in better health care.
- » Be treated with courtesy, respect and recognition of your dignity and right to privacy.
- » Receive equal and fair treatment, without regard to race, religion, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, sexual preference, political party, disability or participation in a publicly financed program.
- » Choose or change your Primary Care Provider (PCP) within the network of providers, to contact your PCP whenever a health problem is of concern to you and arrange for a second opinion at no cost to you, if desired.
 - Note: You may change your PCP at any time. The change will be effective immediately when you make an appointment with a new provider. You do not need to notify DHMP.
- » Expect that your medical records and anything that you say to your provider will be treated confidentially and will not be released without your consent, except as required or allowed by law.
- » Get copies of your medical records or limit access to these records, according to state and federal law.
- » Know the names and titles of the doctors, nurses and other persons who provide care or services for you.
- » Have a candid discussion with your provider about appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for your condition, regardless of cost or benefit coverage.
- » Participate with providers in making decisions about your health care.
- » Request or refuse treatment to the extent of the law, and to know what the outcomes may be.
- » Receive quality care and be informed of the DHMP Quality Improvement (QI) Program.
- » Receive information about DHMP, its services, its practitioners and providers and members' rights and responsibilities, as well as prompt notification of termination or other changes in benefits, services or the DHMP network. This includes how to get services during regular hours, emergency care, after-hours care, out-of-area care, exclusions and limits on covered services.
- » Learn more about your PCP and their qualifications, such as medical school attended or residency. Go to **[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Find-Doctor](https://denverhealthmedicalplan.org/Find-Doctor)** for our web-based directories or call Health Plan Services.

IMPORTANT PLAN INFORMATION



- » Express your opinion about DHMP or its providers to legislative bodies or the media without fear of losing health benefits.
- » Receive an explanation of all consent forms or other papers DHMP or its providers ask you to sign; refuse to sign these forms until you understand them; refuse treatment and to understand the consequences of doing so; refuse to participate in research projects; cross out any part of a consent form that you do not want applied to your care; or to change your mind before undergoing a procedure for which you have already given consent.
- » Instruct providers about your wishes related to advance directives, such as durable power of attorney, living will or organ donation.
- » Receive care at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, for emergency conditions, and care within 48 hours for urgent conditions.
- » Have interpreter services if you need them to get health care.
- » Change enrollment during the times when rules and regulations allow.
- » Have referral options that are not restricted to less than all providers in the network that are qualified to provide covered specialty services; applicable copays apply.
- » Expect that referrals approved by DHMP cannot be changed after prior authorization or retrospectively denied except for fraud, abuse or change in eligibility status at the time of service.
- » Make recommendations regarding DHMP's Member Rights and Responsibilities policies.
- » Voice a complaint or appeal a decision concerning the DHMP organization or the care provided and receive a reply

according to the complaint/appeal process.

MEMBERS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- » Treat providers and their staff with courtesy, dignity and respect.
- » Pay all premiums and applicable cost sharing (i.e., deductible, coinsurance, copays).
- » Make and keep appointments. Be on time or call if you will be late or must cancel an appointment. Have your DHMP identification card available at the time of service and pay for any charges for non-covered benefits.
- » Report symptoms and problems to your PCP, ask questions and take part in your health care.
- » Learn about any procedure or treatment and think about it before it is done.
- » Think about the outcomes of refusing treatment that your PCP suggests.
- » Follow plans and instructions for care that you have agreed upon with your provider.
- » Provide, to the extent possible, correct and necessary information and records that DHMP and its providers need in order to provide care.
- » Understand your health problems and participate in developing mutually agreed upon treatment goals, to the degree possible.
- » State complaints and concerns in a civil and appropriate way.
- » Learn and know about plan benefits (i.e., which services are covered and non-covered) and to contact a DHMP Health Plan Services representative with any questions.
- » Inform providers or a representative from DHMP when not pleased with care or service.
- » Notify DHMP of any third-party insurance, including Medicare.



**DENVER HEALTH
MEDICAL PLAN** INC.TM

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. These include 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

DHMP recently released our Annual Report showing the company's previous year's financial results. The 2024 Annual Report is available on our website at the link below, or you can scan the QR code above: **dhmp.info/annualreport2024**

With the warmer weather here in Colorado, I encourage you to explore the great outdoors, and all this wonderful state has to offer. Wishing you and your family a safe and healthy summer!

GREG MCCARTHY

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

