

STRONG **body**  
**mind**



MEMBER NEWSLETTER  
// WINTER 2026



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

# *Medications Are Most Effective* **WHEN THEY ARE CURRENT**

**Over time, you may find that you have saved a lot of medications used to treat headaches, colds, coughs and infections. This collection can grow and become dangerous if you don't check it regularly to make sure the medicines are still needed and have not expired. The expiration date on a drug is the date a manufacturer can guarantee the full potency and safety of the drug. If the expiration date has passed and you want medicine that is 100% effective, you should consider disposing of them and getting new medication(s).**

## **KNOW YOUR CURRENT MEDICATIONS**

Keep a record of your current medications and update this record when any changes happen. Your provider may change the medication you are taking or change the way you take your medication. If this happens, you should dispose of your previous medication. Storing unused medications in an easily accessible cabinet can put your loved ones in danger. According to results from the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, unused prescription drugs were the most common source of misuse and diversion in teens.

## **TAKE MEDICATIONS AS DIRECTED**

All medications should be taken as directed, and antibiotics in particular should be taken as directed and until you finish all of the medication. It is important to take all of the antibiotic medication that is prescribed to you. Do not stop taking it if you start to feel better, because stopping suddenly can minimize the effect of any antibiotics you may be prescribed in the future.

## **WHEN SHOULD I CLEAN OUT MY MEDICINE CABINET?**

It is a good idea to do a yearly review of all the medicine in your home to look for medications that haven't been used. Every drug (prescription or over-the-counter) has an expiration date on the label. This date indicates when the medication should no





longer be used. If your medication is expired it may work less effectively and may not treat your health condition. If you have unused or expired medication:

- » Disposal bins are located at seven Denver Health pharmacies to help ensure the proper disposal of unused medicine. Feel free to drop off any non-controlled unused or expired medications here.
- » The Drug Enforcement Agency also has information about take-back events where members can drop off unused or expired medications. Visit **DEA.gov/TakeBackDay** for more information.

Sources:

Harvard Health Publishing. [www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/drug-expiration-dates-do-they-mean-anything](http://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/drug-expiration-dates-do-they-mean-anything)

U.S. Food & Drug Administration. [www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/where-and-how-dispose-unused-medicines](http://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/where-and-how-dispose-unused-medicines)

U.S. Department of Justice Drug Enforcement Administration Diversion Control Division. [www.deaiversion.usdoj.gov/](http://www.deaiversion.usdoj.gov/)

Health.gov. <https://odphp.health.gov/news/201803/spring-clean-your-medicine-cabinet>



**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: *THE WINTER BLUES*

## WHAT ARE THE WINTER BLUES?

The “winter blues” describes a mild, seasonal dip in mood affecting many people when daylight hours shorten. A more serious form is Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a type of depression that starts in late fall and improves in Spring. The winter blues and SAD are common, but treatable.

## COMMON SYMPTOMS

- » Feeling sad or low most days
- » Low energy or fatigue
- » Sleeping more than usual
- » Craving carbohydrates or gaining weight
- » Withdrawing from friends or activities
- » Difficulty concentrating or feeling hopeless

## WHY IT HAPPENS

- » Less sunlight in the winter can disrupt the body’s internal clock (circadian rhythm) and lower serotonin levels, a brain chemical linked to mood.
- » Increased melatonin, a sleep hormone, may make people feel tired or sluggish.
- » People who live farther away from the equator or have a family history of depression may be at a higher risk

## WAYS TO FEEL BETTER

- » Get more light – spend time outdoors or use a 10,000-lux light box for 20-30 min in the morning.
- » Exercise regularly – physical activity boosts mood and energy, even if it’s a slow walk around the house!

- » Keep a routine – regular sleep, meals and daily structure help balance body rhythms.
- » Connect socially – reach out to friends or join a community activity, even when you don’t feel like it.
- » Talk therapy – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) can help change negative thought patterns.
- » Medication – talk to your provider if your symptoms are severe.

## WHEN TO SEEK HELP

- » If you feel persistently hopeless, can’t function at work or home, or have thoughts of harming yourself, contact the NurseLine at 303-739-1261 any time.
- » Call or text 988 to reach the suicide and Crisis Lifeline 24/7.

*Written by: Marie Richardson, DNP, BSN, RN  
Denver Health NurseLine*

Sources:  
National Institute of Mental Health. (2023, Nov). [nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder](https://nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder)  
Mayo Clinic. (2023). Diagnosis & Treatment. [mayoclinic.org](https://mayoclinic.org)  
Melrose, S. (2015). An Overview. *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*, 11, 2109–2120. [doi.org/10.2147/NDT.S78145](https://doi.org/10.2147/NDT.S78145)  
Johns Hopkins Medicine. (2024). [hopkinsmedicine.org](https://hopkinsmedicine.org)

**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.**



## Applesauce Bread

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 ½ cups – whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1 ½ cups – unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. – baking soda
- 1 tsp. – ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. – ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. – ground allspice
- ¼ tsp. – ground cloves
- 1 tsp. – ground ginger
- ½ tsp. – salt
- 2 – large eggs
- ½ cup – raw brown sugar (turbinado)  
or packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup – canola oil
- ¼ cup – plain low-fat yogurt or buttermilk
- 1 cup – applesauce
- 1 tsp. – vanilla extract
- ½ cup – walnuts, coarsely chopped (or raisins, plumped  
for 5 minutes in warm water and drained)



### DIRECTIONS

*Preheat the oven to 350F degrees with a rack in the middle. Lightly oil a loaf pan and line with parchment paper. Oil the parchment paper. Sift together the flours, baking soda, spices and salt. In a large bowl, beat together the eggs and sugar until the mixture is thick. Beat in the oil, yogurt or buttermilk, applesauce and vanilla. Whisk in the flour mixture without overbeating, and fold in the walnuts or raisins. Scrape into the loaf pan and bake 45 to 50 minutes, until the bread is firm, and a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean. Let cool in the pan for 15 minutes, then remove from pan to cool completely.*

# 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 options below.



## 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 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., 365 days a year). Visit **DispatchHealth.com**, download the free app or call **720-487-9530**. Refer to your plan coverage for cost sharing details.



## VISIT AN URGENT CARE CENTER.

Denver Health offers multiple urgent care centers across the Denver area. In addition, Denver Health offers virtual urgent care for adults through MyChart. For more information, locations and hours, please visit **DenverHealth.org/Urgent-Care**. Refer to your plan coverage for cost sharing details.

*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. Refer to your plan coverage for cost sharing details.*



## 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. For more information, please visit **DenverHealth.org/Services/Emergency-Medicine**. Refer to your plan coverage for cost sharing details.

*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. Refer to your plan coverage for cost sharing details.*



# 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

## IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO GET YOUR FLU VACCINE



**IT'S TIME!**

Did you know annual flu vaccinations are recommended for everyone age 6 months and older? There is no cost for Denver Health Medical Plan members to get a flu vaccine when you present your member ID card.

### Choose where you get your flu vaccine:

- » If you have a visit scheduled with your provider, you can get your flu vaccine at that time.
- » If you are a current Denver Health patient, you can schedule a flu vaccine appointment at Denver Health by calling **303-436-4949**.
- » Visit any retail pharmacy\* that offers the flu vaccine, such as Walgreens, King Soopers or Target. Be sure to go to the pharmacy counter (not an in-store clinic).

If you have questions about where to get the vaccine, talk to your Primary Care Provider, schedule through the MyChart app, or visit **DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Flu-Vaccines**.

*\*Some pharmacies have age limitations for children; check with your pharmacy first. Only certain types of flu vaccines are covered at \$0.*



# OPENING SUMMER 2026



## **Denver Health is expanding the city's most trusted care.**

Focused on healthy aging and lifelong wellness, a soon-to-be-opened medical center aims to help you stay active, vibrant and healthier longer.

**Denver Health  
Southeast Medical Center**  
6360 E. Evans Ave.,  
Denver, CO 80222

The new **Southeast Medical Center** advances our connection with community, expanding care from the Denver Health hospital campus, 10 family health centers, and 19-school-based health centers.



## MYCHART VIRTUAL VISITS AND TEST RESULTS

### Skip the waiting room – try a virtual visit!

Did you know our **Elevate Medicare Advantage** plans cover virtual visits at no extra cost? Now you can see your provider from the comfort of home. No travel, no waiting rooms, and no missed appointments. Stay safe and comfortable while getting the care you need, wherever you are.

#### Here's how it works:

- » Use your phone, tablet, or computer to meet with your doctor.
- » Call your clinic to request a virtual visit, or schedule directly through your MyChart account at **[DenverHealth.org/MyChart](https://denverhealth.org/MyChart)**.
- » For step-by-step instructions for scheduling and using virtual visits through MyChart, visit **[dhmp.info/mychart](https://dhmp.info/mychart)**.



---

### Get your test results faster with MyChart.

Waiting for a phone call about your test results? Skip the wait and get them as soon as they're ready by using MyChart.

#### With MyChart, you can:

- » View lab and imaging results as soon as they're available.
- » Receive instant notification instead of waiting for a call.
- » Review results securely on your phone or computer.
- » For step-by-step instructions on how to find your test results in MyChart, visit **[dhmp.info/mychart](https://dhmp.info/mychart)**.



# IMPORTANT PLAN INFORMATION



## JOIN THE DENVER HEALTH MEDICAL PLAN (DHMP) ADVISORY COUNCIL

The feedback we get from our members makes a difference! We have a Member Advisory Council and invite you to participate. Your insights will help us better respond to the needs and preferences of our valued members.

Topics are educational and will include access to covered services, coordination of services and health equity. Advisors will also assist in reviewing our health plan benefits, member materials and performance data. Feedback from the Member Advisory Council will have an impact on plan policies, future plan benefits and member experience.

All DHMP members, as well as family and caregivers are invited and encouraged to participate and meetings are open to the public. We hope you'll join us for upcoming Member Advisory Council meetings and share your ideas and feedback! The Member Advisory Council meets quarterly. Some months there may be more frequent Open Houses to help provide additional one-on-one support with a DHMP staff member in English and/or Spanish. Meeting times and locations can be found on our website at **[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Member-Advisory-Council](https://denverhealthmedicalplan.org/Member-Advisory-Council)**.

## 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 DHHA plans, **303-602-2090** for Exchange and CO Option plans, **303-602-2116** for Medicaid plans and **303-602-2111** for Medicare Advantage plans. TTY users call 711.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PHARMACY DEPT.



## MEDICARE OPIOID SAFETY PROGRAM:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and Elevate Medicare Advantage want to make sure our Medicare members are using opioid pain medications safely. Opioid medications (also known as “narcotics”) are used to ease pain. Some types are fentanyl, morphine, oxycodone and tramadol. These medications can be dangerous when taken at high doses and/or with other drugs, such as benzodiazepines. Benzodiazepines are medications commonly used for anxiety and sleep. Some types are diazepam, lorazepam and temazepam.

To make sure our members are taking these medications safely, Elevate Medicare Advantage has Formulary-Level Opioid Point-of-Sale (POS) Safety Edits that take place at the pharmacy when members fill a prescription. Additionally, there is a Drug Management Program to review and monitor members’ use of opioids.

These edits and programs do not apply to members taking opioids for palliative care, a diagnosis of cancer pain, a diagnosis of sickle cell disease, or are enrolled in a hospice or long-term care facility.

If you have questions you can talk to your provider, the pharmacy you fill your prescriptions at or call Health Plan Services. To request a coverage determination, call Health Plan Services at **303-602-2111** or **1-877-956-2111**. TTY users should call 711. Our hours of operation are 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. seven days a week.

For more information, visit **[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Current-Members/Elevate-Medicare-Advantage/Medicare-Pharmacy/Opioid-Safety-Program](https://denverhealthmedicalplan.org/current-members/elevate-medicare-advantage/medicare-pharmacy/opioid-safety-program)**.







**DENVER HEALTH  
MEDICAL PLAN** INC.™

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.  
H5608\_WinterNwsltr26\_M



## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO**

As we embark on the new year, this is a great time to either establish care with a Primary Care Provider (PCP) or schedule your annual wellness visit if you have already established care. Here at DHMP, we want to support your health and wellness. Vaccinations and routine exams are a great way to prevent or early detect illness and disease. Even if you're healthy and have no physical issues, it's important to get your annual wellness exam. Visit **[DenverHealthMedicalPlan.org/Find-Doctor](https://denverhealthmedicalplan.org/find-doctor)** to find a provider near you.

Wishing you and your family a safe and healthy 2026!

### **GREG MCCARTHY**

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

