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# GOOD HEALTH

A JOURNAL DEDICATED TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH

WINTER 2008

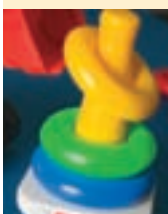
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For children younger than 6 years, over-the-counter cough medicine isn't advised.

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## family FITNESS

LEAD THE WAY TO A WHOLESOME LIFESTYLE

**It's not always easy to make healthy** choices, particularly if you're trying to do everything by yourself.

But if you get the whole family involved, it can be easier for everyone to stay on track, according to the National Institutes of Health.

Not only will a wholesome diet and exercise help your family avoid diabetes, heart disease, and certain forms of cancer, a healthy lifestyle can also raise everyone's self-confidence and energy levels and lower stress.

Just don't try to do too much too fast. Your family is more likely to get on board if the changes are small and easy to start with.

For example: ➤ Eat breakfast every day. It doesn't have to be an elaborate, time-consuming meal. Think low-fat, high-fiber foods, such as whole-grain cereal with nonfat

milk. And add some fruit. ➤ Encourage healthy snacking. Try putting out a bowl of fruit for everyone to sample, or have minicarrots in the fridge ready to eat. ➤ Organize a family walk or bike ride after dinner a few nights a week. Or plan to walk to school with your kids a couple mornings a week. ➤ Replace screen time with active time. Get everyone to agree to no more than two hours a day of TV, video games, or computer time. Avoid putting a TV in your child's bedroom. Suggest active alternatives instead, such as tossing a ball or Frisbee, walking the dog, or visiting a recreation center near your home. ➤ Make sporting events a family affair. Go to your kids' soccer games and cheer them on. Then have them come to your games and cheer you on.

Remember: Your kids look to you as their role model. When you eat right and stay active, you teach valuable lessons about leading a healthy life.



CLICK

For more healthy lifestyle tips, visit the National Institutes of Health website at [www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov).

## ADD THEM OR SUBTRACT THEM, **100 calories** MAKE A DIFFERENCE

One hundred calories doesn't sound like a lot. And in some ways, it's not. It's about what you'd find in just 1½ tablespoons of regular mayonnaise or 8 ounces of a soft drink.

But 100 calories here and 100 calories there add up. If

you increase your daily calorie intake by 100 calories, for example, in 35 days you will have consumed 3,500 extra calories—the amount that equals 1 pound of body fat.

On the other hand, if you cut just 100 calories from your

diet each day, it may help you lose weight. And if you burn 100 extra calories every day, it essentially doubles your efforts.

So how can you make a 100-calorie difference in your diet? The American Dietetic Association offers these

suggestions.

To cut 100 calories: ➤ Put mustard on your sandwich instead of mayo. ➤ Switch to fat-free salad dressing. ➤ Order thin-crust pizza instead of pan pizza. ➤ Drink water with lemon instead of a soft drink.

To burn 100 calories:

➤ Get up 15 minutes early to exercise. ➤ Stand up and move around while talking on the phone. ➤ Go for a 15-minute walk during your lunch break. ➤ Get off the bus early and walk the extra distance.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HEALTH PLANS

# YOUR PARTNER IN good health

**At Rocky Mountain Health Plans (RMHP),** we want to be your partner in good health. That means we are here to help you understand your coverage and the advantages you gain through membership in our Medicare plans.

## Premiums and Service

It is true that medical and pharmacy costs tend to go up over time and RMHP is not immune to this trend. Each year, we make a budget for how much we expect to pay doctors for their services, how much drugs will cost, and the costs to cover the services our Members need. Based on these costs, we responsibly set our monthly premium to ensure we can fulfill our promise to our Members. We price our products fairly, follow the rules, and will always be honest with you about costs, no matter what.

## The Rocky Mountain Difference

Our Medicare health plans are focused on providing value for your premium. For example, your favorite doctor or hospital is most likely a part of our network. The prescription drugs you take are very likely covered. On top of that, you don't need to ask for permission before seeing specialist

doctors, and we guarantee you have access to doctors and hospitals in the community through our provider network.

Our plans offer Medicare beneficiaries comprehensive coverage, access to quality health care, and excellent customer service. They also provide all services covered by Medicare Part A and Part B and offer additional coverage and benefits such as free preventive care, Part D prescription drug plan options, and more.

**WE PRICE OUR PRODUCTS FAIRLY, FOLLOW THE RULES, AND WILL always BE HONEST WITH YOU ABOUT COSTS, NO MATTER WHAT.**

We are committed to you and to Colorado. Our customer service is local, not in another state or country. And we are Colorado's only independent, not-for-profit health plan. That means we answer to you, not to Wall Street.

If you have questions about our Medicare coverage, please call RMHP Customer Service at **800-346-4643** or on the toll-free TTY/TDD number, **800-704-6370**, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Mountain Time), Monday through Friday. Part D benefit questions: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Mountain time), Monday through Friday. From Nov. 15 through March 1, we are also available 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. (Mountain time) on weekends and most holidays.

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## NO safe ALTERNATIVES TO CIGARETTES

A safe cigar? A nontoxic pipe? Harmless chewing tobacco? Forget it. Tobacco is toxic no matter how you use it.

Cigars, including those that are smaller-sized, contain the same toxic compounds as cigarettes. Some large cigars can contain as much tobacco as a whole pack of cigarettes.

Smoking a pipe is dangerous for the same reasons. Though many people don't inhale cigar and pipe smoke, both can increase the risk of cancer of the lung, throat, mouth, esophagus, and larynx, as well as other kinds of cancer. These cigarette alternatives also raise the risk for heart disease, stroke, and chronic lung disease.

Smokeless snuff and chewing tobacco carry risks such as gum disease, tooth loss and damage, or mouth cancer.

Cigarette alternatives can be highly addictive, even if you don't inhale—the nicotine is absorbed through the lining of your mouth. And other chemicals in these products also raise the risk for lip, mouth, tongue, and other cancers.

Sources: American Cancer Society; Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids



**CALL** You can get the help you need to quit tobacco. Call the Colorado Quitline at **800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669)** today.



## Help us STOP FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

At Rocky Mountain Health Plans (RMHP), compliance means doing the right thing and conducting business with high standards of integrity. We are committed to following all laws and regulations.

RMHP has established a 24-hour hotline number to report any complaints or concerns you may have relating to compliance issues, including fraud, waste, and abuse. Other types of compliance concerns that should be reported include disclosing personal information, conflicts of interest used for personal gain, and accepting inappropriate gifts, gratuities, bribes, or kickbacks.

**What should I report?** Information to include in your report: ▶ A description of

what happened and how you became aware of it. ▶ Who is involved. ▶ Where and when the incident took place. ▶ Your name and contact number (optional).

**Your call is confidential** RMHP will maintain the confidentiality of the caller to the fullest extent allowed by law and the nature of the investigation. Callers may remain anonymous. RMHP will investigate and follow up on all Compliance Hotline reports made in good faith.

Members of RMHP Medicare plans may also report concerns regarding fraud, waste or abuse related to the Medicare Prescription Drug Plan by calling **877-7-SAFE-RX (877-772-3379)**.



**CALL** Call our Compliance Hotline at **970-248-5101** or toll-free at **888-237-1179**.

# women & HEART DISEASE

SOME SIMPLE ANSWERS ABOUT HEART DISEASE AND WHAT YOU CAN DO TO LOWER YOUR RISK



**Do you have** questions about heart disease? Many women do, starting with just how concerned they should be about what is sometimes mistakenly considered more of a men's problem. While women may be more aware of breast cancer, heart disease is a much more common problem.

In fact, heart disease is the No. 1 killer of both men and women in this country, according to the federal Office on Women's Health. One woman in three dies of heart disease.

What else do you need to know about heart disease? Let's start with the basics:

**Q What is heart disease?**  
**A** Heart disease is a group of abnormal

heart conditions affecting the heart and the blood vessels in the heart.

The most common—coronary artery disease (CAD)—occurs when the heart's arteries grow hard and narrow, making it difficult for blood to reach the heart. CAD can lead to chest pain and heart attack.

**Q What are the signs of a heart attack?**  
**A** Signs of a heart attack may include an uncomfortable feeling in the chest, arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach.

And some people may feel sick, have trouble breathing, or break out in a cold sweat.

Keep in mind that women can sometimes have more vague symptoms, such as anxiety, fatigue, trouble sleeping, or indigestion.

**Q Are there other types of heart disease?**  
**A** There are two additional types: heart failure, a condition where the heart is unable to pump blood to the body as well as it should; and arrhythmia, which is a change in the way the heart beats.

**Q Which women are at higher risk for heart disease?**  
**A** Risks go up for women who are age 55 or older, are smokers, have a

family history of the disease, and rarely exercise.

Others at risk include women with health conditions such as high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity.

**Q What steps can I take to lower my risk of heart disease?**


**A** To start, make lifestyle changes that improve your diet and increase your physical activity, and stop smoking.

Also, conditions that

can raise the risk of heart disease—such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes—often have no symptoms, so it's a good idea to be tested for those conditions regularly.

**Q Where can I get more information?**

**A** Talk to your doctor to learn more about heart disease. You can also contact the National Women's Health Information Center at 800-994-9662.

CLICK  For more information about heart disease and steps you can take to lower your risk, visit the National Women's Health Information Center website at [www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov).



## A healthy PREGNANCY

Are you pregnant or planning to become pregnant soon? We have a prenatal program just for you.

The program includes obstetrical nurses specially trained to assist you during your pregnancy. We have a case management program to help you with any complications, such as high blood pressure, nausea and vomiting, preterm labor, twins or multiples, and other pregnancy complications.

We will send you a pregnancy health screening form to assess your needs. There are also many resources available

to assist you with having a healthy pregnancy.

When you return your screening form, you will receive the education material you requested and a \$10 gift card to Target.

If you are interested in this RMHP program, please call our prenatal nurses:

**Janice Ferguson, RNC**  
 800-843-0719, ext. 7890 or  
 970-244-7890

[janice.ferguson@rmhp.org](mailto:janice.ferguson@rmhp.org)

**Heather Stephens, RN**  
 800-843-0719, ext. 7804 or  
 970-244-7804

[heather.stephens@rmhp.org](mailto:heather.stephens@rmhp.org)

JUST ASK

**Q** Are over-the-counter cough and cold medicines safe for children?

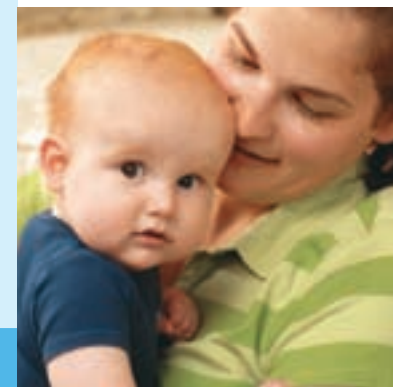
**A** If your child is younger than 6, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) has warned that over-the-counter antihistamines, decongestant liquids and cough medicines designed for kids “are not effective in children younger than 6 years and can have potentially serious side effects.” The AAP advises that children older than 6 years should not be given these medicines without permission from a doctor. In any case, children should never be given medicine for adults.

According to the AAP, there are ways to ease your child’s cold symptoms without using cough or cold medications. For example:

- ▶ Use saline (saltwater) drops to relieve a stuffy nose. Avoid drops that contain medicine.
- ▶ Use a suction bulb to clear the nose of an infant up to 6 months old.
- ▶ Place a humidifier in the child’s room.
- ▶ Offer the child lots of fluids.
- ▶ Give acetaminophen or ibuprofen to relieve fever. Never give aspirin to children.

If you have questions about the use of any medicine—or if your child’s condition worsens—contact your doctor.

Source: American Academy of Pediatrics



COLD AND FLU SEASON

# HELP YOUR FAMILY stay well



**It’s a fact that families share more than** just quality time together—they share some unwelcome germs too.

A cold or flu in one family member often means that sickness will soon make the rounds at home. However, these tips can help your family stay well during cold and flu season.

**Practice prevention** The best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each year. A yearly vaccination is particularly important for those at high risk of complications—such as people over 50 and those with chronic health problems. Also, health experts now recommend that children from 6 months to 18 years old get a yearly flu shot. Check with your doctor about which family members need the flu vaccine.

In addition, some people, including those with chronic health problems or people older than 65, may need a vaccination against bacterial pneumonia.

While there isn’t a cold vaccine yet, you can remind everyone to practice these healthy habits: ▶ Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow. ▶ Wash your hands often with warm water and soap. Scrub for about 20 seconds (about the time it takes to sing the

“Happy Birthday” song twice). Use paper towels for drying hands. ▶ Keep your distance from sick people.

**When sickness strikes** Sure, we don’t have a cure for the common cold, but you can feel better while you recover. To ease cold and flu symptoms, the American Academy of Family Physicians recommends that you: ▶ Get lots of rest, especially while a fever is present. ▶ Drink plenty of fluids, such as water and clear soups. ▶ Gargle with warm salt water to relieve a sore throat, or use sprays and lozenges.

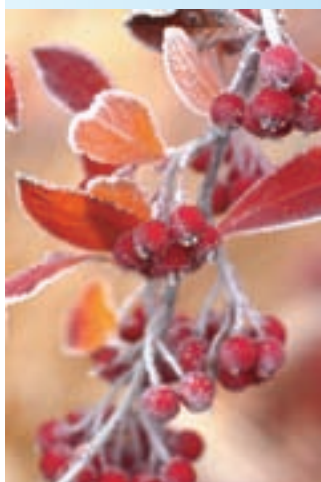
You also can try over-the-counter medicines for a headache, stuffy nose, cough, and other symptoms. However, kids and teens should not take aspirin because it may increase their risk for a serious disease called Reye’s syndrome, and nonprescription cold medicines may not be safe for younger children.

Also, you can ask your doctor about antiviral medicines to help you recover more quickly from the flu.

Most people recover from colds or the flu within a few days or a week. Seek a doctor’s advice for symptoms such as a high fever, illness that lasts for 10 days or any breathing problems.

Additional sources: American Lung Association; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**CLICK**  For more information, visit the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).



## GOOD HEALTH

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## HOW TO reach US



### HEALTH CARE BENEFITS QUESTIONS

Customer Service . . . . . 800-346-4643 or 970-243-7050

Para asistencia en español . . . . . 800-346-4643

TTY line for the hearing impaired . . . . . 800-704-6370  
 (special equipment required)



### CUSTOMER SERVICE HOURS

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE** . . . . . [www.rmhp.org](http://www.rmhp.org)

Employment . . . . . [www.rmhp.org](http://www.rmhp.org). Click on “About RMHP.”