FIGHTING VIRUSES WITHOUT ANTIBIOTICS

CHECKLIST FOR A HEALTHIER YOU

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HEALTH is published as a community service for the friends and patrons of ROCKY MOUNTAIN HEALTH PLANS, PO Box 10600, Grand Junction, CO 81502-5600, telephone 800-843-0719, www.rmhp.org. Information in ROCKY MOUNTAIN HEALTH comes from a wide range of medical experts. If you have any concerns or questions about specific content that may affect your health, please contact your health care provider. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

2020 © Coffey Communications, Inc. All rights reserved.

Patrick Gordon
Kevin R. Fitzgerald, MD
Leanne Hart
PRESIDENT AND CEO
CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER
MANAGING EDITOR
Preventive Care for Better Health

At RMHP, we know life can get busy for our Members with work, family, volunteering, friends, and so much more. Despite hectic schedules, we encourage you to see your doctor regularly — even if you’re feeling well — to make sure you receive the recommended preventive care and screenings to help you take steps toward better health.

There are some types of preventive services you should receive once a year:

- Flu shot.
- Wellness exam, including a blood pressure screening and height, weight, and body mass index (BMI).
- Dental exam.

An annual well-child exam is important for your child, too! This visit offers a chance to talk with your child’s doctor about normal growth and development, as well as how to keep your child healthy. A well-child exam includes a physical exam, BMI calculation, review and update of recommended immunizations, hearing and vision screenings, and more.

As an adult, you may need additional preventive care and screenings, too, including cancer (colon, breast, or cervical), diabetes, cholesterol, osteoporosis, immunizations, and more. Be sure to talk to your doctor about any preventive care and screenings that may be right for you, and review your RMHP plan documents to learn more about how RMHP covers these services.

Did you know? When health issues are found early through preventive screenings, they are most often easier to treat.

Want to learn more? Visit rmhp.org and log in to MyRMHP, your secure Member portal. MyRMHP now has a new look and more features: review benefits, check claims, print your ID card, explore helpful resources, view important updates from RMHP, and more!
How Tobacco Affects Your Body

If you’re a smoker, you may know you should quit. It’s a fact that smoking is bad for nearly every part of your body. Here are a few ways smoking hurts your health.

Airways. When you smoke, the tissues in your lungs are inflamed. This can lead to serious disorders, like chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Smoking can also lead to lung, throat, or mouth cancer.

Heart. Smoking harms the cells lining the blood vessels and heart. It can raise the risk of clots that cause heart attacks.

Other blood vessels. Damage to vessel linings can cause them to narrow. This means not enough blood flows to the kidneys; stomach; or arms, legs, and feet.

Brain. Blood clots that form in damaged arteries can travel to your brain. This can cause a stroke.

Bones and tendons. Smoking raises the risk for osteoporosis, or the weakening of your bones, in both men and women.

Immune system. Smokers have fewer cells that destroy germs compared to nonsmokers, and that can leave you more vulnerable to infections.

In addition, smoking can cause cancer of the:

- Pancreas.
- Kidneys.
- Cervix.
- Stomach.
- Blood (leukemia).

Turn your risks around

Why wait? If you quit now, your health risks start dropping now, too — and they keep going down, no matter how long you’ve smoked.

Sources: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons; American College of Radiology; American Heart Association; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Institutes of Health; National Kidney Foundation

Need support? A tobacco quitline can also help you quit for good. Call 800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669).
The beauty of Colorado is highlighted with white winter snow atop stunning scenery. Find new ways to explore Colorado by visiting rmhp.org/blog.

Reporting Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

Fraud affects all of us in many ways. The National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association estimates that the financial losses due to health care fraud are in the tens of billions of dollars each year.

RMHP is committed to preventing, detecting, investigating, and prosecuting health care and insurance fraud, and we need your help. If you think someone is doing something wrong or illegal regarding their RMHP insurance or health care, please contact us:

- **Telephone**
  - Fraud Hotline
  - 970-248-5101
  - 888-237-1179

- **Mail**
  - Rocky Mountain Health Plans
  - Attn: Fraud Investigator
  - PO Box 10600
  - Grand Junction, CO 81502-5600

- **E-mail**
  - Fraud.Auditor@rmhp.org
Feel Better Without Antibiotics

In the thick of winter, we can find ourselves facing illness far too often. Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria or viruses. Antibiotics are prescription medications used to fight bacterial infections; however, they do not fight infections caused by viruses, like colds, the flu, most sore throats, bronchitis, and many sinus or ear infections. If it’s a virus that’s making you sick, taking an antibiotic can actually do more harm than good. And, taking antibiotics too often or when not prescribed can cause the body to develop antibiotic resistance.

Have a viral infection? Try one of these alternatives to antibiotics instead:

- Reduce fever by applying a cool, damp cloth to forehead or neck.
- Take ibuprofen and acetaminophen as directed. Check with the doctor about dosing for children.
- Drink more clear fluids, including water, teas, soups, and ice chips.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Use a cool-mist vaporizer or humidifier to relieve congestion.
- Soothe a sore throat with sore throat sprays, gargle with warm salt water, or use lozenges (do not give lozenges to young children).
- Alleviate a cough with a teaspoon of honey for children over the age of one (do not give honey to children younger than one year).

The next time you get a prescription for an antibiotic, talk with your doctor about how this medication will help your symptoms, and ask any questions you may have.

Get Involved With Your Care

Looking to get more involved with your care and help improve the patient experience? Use your experience and voice your thoughts by participating in a Patient and Family Advisory Council (PFAC)! A PFAC is a group of interested patients, family members, or caregivers who use their firsthand knowledge and experience to work together with their primary care provider’s (PCP) office to help improve the patient experience. Your feedback can help your doctor’s office better understand the current patient experience and identify areas for improvement.

There are many PCPs across Colorado who are creating PFACs, so talk to your PCP to see if they offer one and how to become involved.
Checking Your List for a Healthier You

For many, a new year brings about a new time for change. Maybe you’re revisiting your current habits and looking to see if you can make healthier choices. Maybe you made a resolution to exercise more. Maybe you’d like to spend more time with friends and family. No matter your goals — whether physical, mental, financial, or something else — listing out your “to-do’s” can be helpful in keeping you on track. This checklist can help you live healthier in 2020.

☑ Get access to your personal health plan information by creating an account with MyRMHP! Visit rmhp.org to get started. For help with your MyRMHP account, please contact RMHP Customer Service.

☑ Make sure you received your new RMHP Member ID card. If you didn’t, don’t worry — you can download and print your Member ID card in MyRMHP.

☑ Review all of your medical, dental, and vision plans so you understand your benefits.

☑ Schedule your primary care and wellness visits, preventive screenings, dental cleanings, and eye exams.

☑ Set your personal goals that can help better your physical and mental health, whether it’s exercising more, meditating, spending time with friends and family, or setting financial goals.

☑ Visit the RMHP blog for inspiration on tasty and healthy recipes, fun workouts for all ages, and other health and wellness tips.

Did you know? At RMHP, our focus is on you and your overall health. We put you at the center of our entire RMHP team so you receive the coordinated, whole-person care that’s right for you. When you need our help — whether working with our Care Management team to coordinate your care after a hospital stay or speaking to our local, dedicated Customer Service team to better understand your benefits — we’re here for you.
RMHP Helpful Resources

Get the answers you’re looking for! Just visit rmhp.org/learning-center/helpful-resources to find information about:

- The Colorado Immunization Information System (CIIS).
- How we evaluate new technology.
- Advance directives and how they are used.

If you would like a written copy of this information or have additional questions, please call RMHP Customer Service at 888-282-8801. If you are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, dial 711 or Relay Colorado or use our Live Chat at rmhp.org. Para asistencia en español, llame al 888-282-8801. You can also send your request in writing to: Rocky Mountain Health Plans, 2775 Crossroads Blvd., Grand Junction, CO 81506.

Rocky Mountain Health Plans (RMHP) complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 800-346-4643 (TTY: 711).