Healthy change
4 tips for the new-you revolution

Is this the year—or the month—or even the day—you’ll take your first steps toward a healthier life? If so, then you’ve resolved to evolve!

These four strategies can help you turn your health resolutions into a health revolution:

1. Pursue one goal at a time. It’s tough to make several changes at once. Start with one goal, like eating healthy or getting more exercise.

2. Identify mini-goals. Make a list of small, simple steps you can take right away. For example, mini-goals might be:
   - Swapping out your sugary drinks for water, or
   - Taking a 10-minute walk, or even a stroll.

3. Add to the mix. As each new behavior becomes a habit, add a new mini-goal. It will keep you moving forward—and may prevent boredom.

4. Give yourself credit. Evolving toward better health can be challenging. Pat yourself on the back each time you meet a mini-goal. When you have setbacks, don’t give up. After all, every single tomorrow is another great day for change.

Sources: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; American Psychological Association; Mental Health America

Healthy change starts with small steps.
Is gloomy weather making you sick? As many as 500,000 Americans struggle each year with a wintertime mood disorder known appropriately as SAD. SAD stands for seasonal affective disorder. It’s marked by depression in the winter that lifts in the spring and summer. Signs may include anxiety, mood changes, sleep problems, fatigue, overeating, sexual problems, and social withdrawal.

How light affects mood
Mental health experts say SAD appears to be linked to a chemical imbalance in the brain brought on by the reduction in sunlight during winter’s shorter days. When it’s dark, the body releases more of the sleep-related hormone melatonin, which also may be tied to depression. SAD is more likely among women, and it often starts in people between 18 and 30 years old.

Coping with SAD
Medicine and counseling are sometimes prescribed for people with SAD; however, your doctor may recommend that you try light therapy first. Daily exposure to very bright light helps to block the brain’s output of melatonin. It’s effective in 50 to 80 percent of SAD cases, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness. People with SAD are exposed to light that’s up to 10 times the intensity of normal indoor lighting. Treatments often last 30 to 90 minutes a day throughout the winter. People with less severe symptoms may find relief by simply increasing the brightness of the lights around them. Others may want to try spending more time outdoors in the winter.

If light therapy doesn’t help, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional about other options.
Fight cancer with food

You can give your cancer risk the old one-two punch when you step into the ring with colorful, delicious fruits and vegetables in your corner.

No single food can protect you against cancer. However, eating a combination of healthy foods in a plant-based diet may help, according to the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR).

To lower your risk for developing cancer, the AICR recommends that two-thirds of your plate be filled with vegetables, fruits, whole grains and beans.

Research shows that chemicals called phytonutrients in plant foods—along with minerals and vitamins—interact to provide cancer protection.

February is National Cancer Prevention Month.

Scientists are still trying to learn how and why these foods may prevent or stop tumors from developing.

These low-fat and low-calorie plant-based foods can also help you maintain a healthy body weight. Overweight and obesity can be risk factors for certain types of cancer.

Nutrition champs

Fill your plate with these foods:
- Dark, leafy greens, such as spinach and kale.
- Cruciferous vegetables, such as broccoli and Brussels sprouts.
- Onions and garlic.
- Fruits, especially berries.
- Green tea and grapes.
- Whole-grain bread, pasta, cereal, and brown rice.

Get the care, anywhere

Announcing MyDigitalMD

Do you need an answer to a simple medical question? Are you unsure if your condition warrants a trip to the ER?

Get the answers and treatment you need from local, Colorado doctors in the comfort of your home, at work, on the go—or just about anywhere.

RMHP is excited to launch MyDigitalMD, a free service that allows you to talk to doctors 365 days a year via secure messaging or a scheduled video chat.

Visit MyDigitalMD.com for more information.

### RECOMMENDED IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE

#### Vaccines children need

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*Needed in some cases
** Also booster at age 16

### Protect your child with immunizations

Did you know that your child should have 10 or more well-child visits by the time he or she is two years old and once every year after that? Did you also know there are 14 childhood diseases that can be prevented with immunizations?

To ensure your child is up-to-date on vaccines, be sure to take his or her vaccination record with you to each well-child visit. This small action can decrease the risk of potential outbreaks and keep both you and your child safe from these preventable diseases.
Your primary care doctor and you

A relationship for better health

Since good health is one of your primary goals, it’s a good idea to find a primary care doctor.

Did you know that research has shown that people who have primary care doctors enjoy better health? Not only that, they spend less on their health care.

A primary care doctor acts as your partner in pursuing that healthy life. These doctors are specially trained to oversee your physical, mental, and emotional health. They can treat nearly every illness but also focus on prevention. Your primary care doctor is the one who will make sure you’re getting all the screening tests and vaccinations you need.

Best of all, your primary care doctor knows you. It’s part of the job of primary care doctors to form strong relationships with their patients. The doctor asks about your work and life situations. He or she knows your family history and may even treat other members of your family.

All that knowledge puts the primary care doctor in a good position to help you make the best decisions about your health care—and leads to your better health.

In the mail

All Members should have received their new 2015 Member ID cards. Be sure to present your new ID card at your next appointment or at the pharmacy to ensure accuracy in all processing. Haven’t received your card yet? Call us and we’ll make sure you get what you need.

Our new online provider directory

With one of the largest provider networks in Colorado, we had to make it easy for you to find the doctors, hospitals, and other providers near you. Rocky Mountain Health Plans is excited to launch our new provider directory on rmhp.org. The new directory is simple and easy to use and includes smart search and easy filtering features to help you find the providers you need, when you need them.