We all know Thanksgiving dinner is a reason for gathering together, giving thanks, and eating good food. Here are three helpful preparation tips you may not know:

1. **Thawing your turkey on the kitchen counter may lead to bacteria growth.** Instead, thaw it in your refrigerator for 24 hours for each four to five pounds. If that’s not possible, defrost the turkey in your microwave oven using the manufacturer’s instructions. You can also place the turkey in its original packaging under cold running water or in cold water that’s changed every 30 minutes. Expect two to 12 hours to thaw the bird—depending on your turkey’s size—according to the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

2. **It’s safest to cook stuffing separately from your turkey.** Food must reach an internal temperature of 165 degrees to ensure bacteria are destroyed. That may not happen with stuffing tucked inside a turkey. If you do stuff the bird, do so loosely. Roast your turkey immediately after stuffing it, and use a food thermometer to verify when the center of the stuffing has reached 165 degrees.

3. **You can cut calories and fat in your favorite dishes without sacrificing flavor.** The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics recommends using simple substitutions like reduced-fat cheeses in salads, low-sodium chicken broth instead of butter, or nonfat whipped topping for desserts to make a dish healthier.
No life is more precious than your child’s. Making sure your child is properly secured in vehicles can help prevent him or her from being one of the thousands of children who die or are hurt each year in traffic accidents.

Practice these important safety seat tips from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA):

1. **Infants** should be secured in the back seat in rear-facing child safety seats. This should be practiced until they reach the height or weight limit of the seat—at a minimum, until they’re 1 year old.

2. **Toddlers** should ride in the back seat in forward-facing child safety seats after outgrowing rear-facing seats. They should use these seats until they reach the upper weight or height limit of the seat (usually at about 4 years old).

3. **Children** who outgrow forward-facing seats should ride in booster seats in the back seat. Kids should use boosters until the vehicle seat belt fits properly. The lap belt lies across the upper thighs and the shoulder belt fits across the chest (usually 8 to 12 years old).

   Remember: All children younger than 13 should ride in the back seat.

   **Be sure: Get checked**

   According to the NHTSA, 3 out of 4 kids are not as safe as they could be because their car seats are not being used correctly. Have your child’s safety seat inspected by a certified technician.

RMHP in the community

Do you ever find yourself shopping on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)? If so, there’s a great way to help support local communities through the RMHP Foundation. Visit [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and search “Rocky Mountain Health Plans Foundation.” Simply select the Foundation and begin shopping. Your purchases will help support the RMHP Foundation, which sponsors a variety of health-related causes across Colorado, including We Can! Mesa County; Baby & Me, Tobacco Free; and Sustaining Integrated Care (SHAPE), which tests a global budget model for the integration of medical, mental, and behavioral health care.

Learn your Member rights and responsibilities

Your Member handbook has information about how your health plan works and explains your rights and responsibilities. You can get a new Medicaid Prime handbook or CHP+ Benefits booklet each year or any time you want it—just ask RMHP to mail it to you or look online.

To see the handbooks online, go to rmhp.org. Click on the “Already a Member?” tab and select “Using Your Plan.” Select the “Medicaid Plans” link or the “CHP+ Plans” link at the left of the page. This connects you to information about your plan, including links to your handbook or benefits booklet.

You can also ask RMHP for a copy to be mailed to you at any time. For Medicaid Prime, call 888-282-8801. For CHP+, call 855-830-1563.

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RMHP has a Chronic Disease Management program that focuses on diabetes and heart disease. Our nurse can provide you with education and assist you with health care needs. You can reach the RMHP Chronic Disease Management Educator at 970-248-8746 or shelly.lambert@rmhp.org.

**Your right to appeal**

If you are unhappy with a decision made by RMHP, you have the right to ask us to look at our decision again. This is called an appeal. Your request for an appeal can be sent to us in writing, by email, or by calling our Customer Service department.

There are two types of appeals, internal and external, that may lead to multiple levels of review.

Decisions of appeals are made in the following time frames per type of appeal and level of review:

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<th>Medicaid/CHP+ internal review by RMHP</th>
<th>Medical issue: Reviewed by the same type of medical specialist as the medical condition being appealed.</th>
<th>Benefit issue: Reviewed by a Member Appeals Coordinator.</th>
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This description of the appeals process is meant to serve as a brief summary only and does not replace the terms and conditions of the Member handbook or the CHP+ booklet.

The external review process is explained in more detail in the appeal section of your Member handbook.

November is **Diabetic Eye Disease Month**

The most common diabetic eye problem is retinopathy, a disorder that causes vision changes and sometimes blindness. Yearly eye exams, controlling your blood sugar and blood pressure, and eating a healthy diet can help keep your eyes healthy.

The retina is a thin layer of cells at the back of your eyeball that helps you see clearly. When blood sugar or blood pressure gets too high, it can cause delicate blood vessels in the retina to tear or burst. High blood sugar can also cause blood vessels in the eye to swell and change the shape of the lens, which will return to normal after getting blood sugars under control.

Yearly dilated eye tests are important and can help find problems early, when they are most treatable. In many cases, eye problems that are found early can be corrected before any warning signs start to appear. Good diabetic care like the following can keep your eyes healthy:

- Have a yearly blood test to check your A1C, which should be below seven percent.
- Have a yearly eye checkup.
- Have a yearly lipid panel check.
- Control your blood pressure.
- Be tested yearly for kidney disease.

Call your doctor if you notice any vision changes, such as seeing floaters, blurry vision, changes in your field of vision, and problems seeing at night.

If your doctor tells you that you have retinopathy, remember that it can be treated.

Source: diabeticconnect.com
Announcing an RMHP pharmacy change

On occasion, RMHP must make changes to ensure our Members are receiving the best savings possible. RMHP will soon be taking advantage of MedImpact’s High Performance pharmacy network for a more efficient, cost-savings approach to our Members’ prescription claims.

This change to our pharmacy network will begin on Jan. 1, 2016, and means Members will:

- Have access to over 750 pharmacies in the RMHP pharmacy network.
- Receive new savings on many of your prescriptions.
- Get 90-day prescriptions for a discounted copay at any network retail and mail-order pharmacy (does not apply to coinsurance claims).
- No longer use Walgreens as a network pharmacy.

Current prescriptions may easily be transferred from Walgreens to any of our network pharmacies, so it will not be necessary to obtain a new prescription. Beginning Jan. 1, 2016, prescriptions filled at Walgreens will not be covered by RMHP.

The pharmacy network or provider network may change at any time. You will receive notice when necessary.

For questions or help finding a pharmacy, please contact RMHP’s Customer Service team at 800-346-4643 or 970-243-7050 (TTY: 711) or customer_service@rmhp.org, or use our online pharmacy locator.