Nobody likes mold, but if you’re allergic to the stuff, it can hurt your health.

The American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine estimates about 10 percent of people in the U.S. are allergic to mold spores found in and outside the home. Mold can trigger sneezing, runny nose, scaling skin, asthma and other symptoms.

You can reduce mold exposure by following these tips:

- **Keep bathrooms clean and dry.** Ventilate steamy bathrooms with a fan or open window. Clean and disinfect bathroom surfaces regularly.
- **Clean garbage pails frequently.** This is another place mold likes to hide.
- **Fix leaks.** Leaks contribute to mold-friendly moisture. Fix problems right away.
- **Limit houseplants.** Indoor plants look nice, but mold can grow in their soil, too.
- **Use a central air conditioner with a HEPA air filter.** This helps trap mold spores before they enter your home.

Additional source: American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology
In the news

Making a difference in mental health

RMHP takes pride in our mission to provide access to quality health care for all Coloradans. As an example of our commitment to this mission, RMHP has implemented a program at Pediatric Partners of the Southwest in Durango in an effort to increase access to mental health care. The program employs two part-time behavioral health counselors who may see patients simultaneously with the physicians. The free services are funded by RMHP and are utilized to better identify mental health problems often addressed during short, routine checkups. The counselors may recommend coping strategies on-site and provider referrals to other counselors for ongoing therapy. Appointments are primarily geared for Medicaid patients, although non-Medicaid patients may also get help. RMHP is collecting data from this program to measure the impact the counselors have on long-term health outcomes.

Pets are partners in good health

Your furry friend of the family may be much more than a beloved companion and a source of laughter and joy—your pet may also be good for your health.

Spending time with dogs, cats and other pets can bring both physical and emotional health benefits, research shows. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, pets can help reduce:

• Blood pressure.
• Cholesterol.
• Triglycerides.

Each of these factors can play a role in heart health.

On the emotional health front, studies show that pets can help ease loneliness, anxiety and stress.

There’s more: Your dog could make for a great exercise buddy. Owning a pet brings more chances to get out and exercise, which burns calories and brings a host of health and fitness benefits. So get out there this spring, and take your four-legged pal for a brisk walk several times a week.

Additional source: Pet Partners

Medicare national coverage determinations

From time to time, Medicare makes decisions called Medicare national coverage determinations (NCDs). These decisions may add new covered services or change the coverage of items and services. Rocky Mountain Health Plans wants to ensure our Members have the most current information regarding NCDs. Visit www.rmhp.org/members/how-to-use/medicare-plans and scroll down the page to the “Medicare National Coverage Determinations” section.

Additions to the RMHP 2014–2015 Provider Directory

The following hospitals were inadvertently omitted from the “Listing of Hospitals and Rehabilitation Facilities” section of the 2014–2015 Medicare Provider Directory that was mailed to Members in December.

Denver
Denver Health & Hospitals
777 Bannock St., Denver, CO 80204
Phone: 303-436-6000
Fax: 303-436-5131

Grand Junction
Community Hospital
2021 N. 12th St., Grand Junction, CO 81501
Phone: 970-242-0920
Fax: 970-256-6523

Parachute
Battlement Mesa Medical Center
73 Sipprelle Drive, Suite K, Parachute, CO 81635
Phone: 970-285-7046
Strong foundations

A ny worthwhile project begins with a good foundation. When the project is a healthy body, the foundation is your bones.

Step up to strong bones

Bone is living tissue, and it breaks down and is replaced on a daily basis. This process, known as bone remodeling, keeps bones strong and resilient.

With age, the balance gradually shifts, and more bone is lost than replaced. Eventually this can lead to osteoporosis—brittle, porous bones that break easily.

According to the National Osteoporosis Foundation (NOF), 10 million people in the U.S. have osteoporosis. Many are older women, since the drop in estrogen after menopause leads to bone loss.

Although some bone loss is inevitable, everyone can take steps to keep their bones healthy for as long as possible.

Follow this advice from the NOF:

Get enough calcium and vitamin D. The building block of bones is calcium, but your body needs vitamin D to absorb it. Eating healthy foods is the best way to get the calcium you need for strong bones.

Vitamin D is in some foods, and sunlight on the skin triggers vitamin D production. Most people can’t get enough vitamin D from sunlight or food, so you likely will need to take a supplement to get the recommended amount for bone health.

Eat right. Studies show that a diet high in saturated fat and sodium can deplete bone minerals. Stick with a balanced diet that includes lean meats, low-fat or non-fat dairy products, and plenty of fruits and vegetables.

Stay active. Weight-bearing exercise, such as walking and jogging, is especially important.

Don’t smoke. Nicotine and other chemicals in tobacco smoke are toxic to bone cells.

Avoid alcohol. Alcohol can reduce bone formation.

Ask your doctor about having a bone density test for osteoporosis, which can tell you if you need to be concerned about your bone health and whether you’re at risk of breaking a bone.

Partner with your doctor. He or she can advise you about how much calcium and vitamin D you need and whether you should take a calcium supplement. Your doctor can also help you stay on track with other prevention and treatment strategies.

Take your medicine. If you need medicine for osteoporosis, be sure to stay with it.

RMHP in the community

• April 16: BeaconFest in Grand Junction
• April 18: Salute to Seniors in Denver
• April 25: March for Babies in Grand Junction and Denver
• May 15-16: Mike the Headless Chicken Festival in Fruita
• June: Bike to Work Month in Grand Junction
• June 12: St. Baldrick’s Head Shaving in Grand Junction

RMHP is proud to once again sponsor the Colorado Rapids. RMHP will be at several games this season, so be sure to stop by and say hi while you’re cheering on the Rapids! Check out the full game schedule at coloradorapids.com.

Do you have a friend interested in an RMHP Medicare Cost Plan?
Invite them to join us at an informative seminar. Visit rmhpMedicareMeeting.com for a full schedule.
Does it feel like you are always stressed out? We work hard all day trying to balance responsibilities and then toss and turn all night worrying about them.

At the risk of adding to your overall anxiety, here’s something else to consider: All of this stress can lead to serious health problems. However, we can learn how to deal with stress and be healthier for it.

Stress may be inevitable, but it doesn’t have to be unbeatable.

Understanding stress
Everybody feels stress at one time or another.

It can be physical stress, which can occur when you’re busy, tired or recovering from an illness; emotional stress, which may result from anxiety over money, work, or an overwhelming event, like the death of a loved one.

Any sort of change—even positive—can increase stress. A promotion at work, marriage or the birth of a child might boost stress. No matter the cause, too much stress can affect your health.

To combat stress, start with the basics: Eat right, get plenty of sleep and stay physically active.

More stress busters

Learn to say no. If you have too much on your plate at home or at work, let others know. Set realistic goals.

Be flexible. Try to avoid arguments. If there’s a disagreement, explain your position calmly and rationally.

Write it down. Keep a journal of your thoughts and concerns. It may help you identify specific stress triggers.

Reach out. Helping others can improve your self-esteem and build a stronger social network, which can help ease stress.

Open up. Try discussing the stresses in your life with family and friends.

RMHP’s cyber security and you

In light of the recent cyber attacks and scams on the insurance industry, RMHP wants our Members to know that we stay committed to protecting your personal information.

• RMHP limits access to your personal health information (PHI) to those who need it in order to help you get the products or services you need.

• RMHP will never send you an email requesting your personal information.

• RMHP will also never sell or distribute your email address.

• When Members have consented to the use of email communication, any necessary emails containing PHI will be sent in a confidential format.

If you receive an RMHP email that you consider suspicious, please do not open it, and call RMHP to validate that the email was sent by RMHP and is safe to open. We have established policies to protect your information, and we will continue to take diligent steps to ensure safeguards are in place to maintain your security.