

Montana Health Care Programs MESSENGER

New Ways to Receive Healthcare During the Virus Emergency

The Montana Healthcare Programs are working to keep needed services available to our members during the COVID-19 (Novel Corona Virus) state of emergency. Members and providers wish to protect themselves and others from infection spread while seeking and providing needed healthcare. Many services are now temporarily available through telehealth.

What is telehealth?

Telehealth is the use of digital information and communication technologies, such as computers and mobile devices, to access health care services remotely and manage your health care. These may be technologies you use from home or that your doctor uses to improve or support health care services. It allows for the provider to give care, advice, reminders, monitoring and education without close physical contact.

Did you know, any enrolled Montana Healthcare Programs provider can provide telehealth, if telehealth is allowed within their license and scope of practice? This includes many types of providers, even dentists! Using telehealth, the dental provider can give the patient needed advice before or after a dental visit is needed. Licensed counselors can hold counseling sessions by telehealth, dietitians can advise and educate by distance learning, physicians and public health workers can monitor and follow-up with patients – all from a safe distance.

The telehealth method of healthcare delivery is a great way for patients to receive some needed services while protecting themselves and others from possible person-to-person virus exposure. Face-to-face healthcare is sometimes needed. Telehealth is a safer option when face-to-face is unnecessary. As much as possible, providers must protect member's rights of confidentiality and security as they would for regular office visits.

Not all Montana Healthcare Programs providers offer telehealth, but many do. More providers do now that Montana Healthcare Programs has temporarily expanded the coverage options for telehealth services during the COVID-19 state of emergency. Your provider will alert you if telehealth is a good choice for your specific healthcare needs.



In This Issue

New Ways to Receive Healthcare During the Virus Emergency	1
Tips to Cope with the Summer Heat	1
DDP New Care Management System Coming Soon	2
Cowboy Caviar Recipe.....	2
The Benefits of Breast Feeding	2
Key Contacts	3

Tips to Cope with the Summer Heat

- 1) Use broad spectrum sunscreen that protects from both UVA and UVB rays.
- 2) Drink plenty of WATER
- 3) Avoid the sun between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm.
- 4) Know your limits. Headache, muscle aches, general tiredness are telling you to rest, drink water and cool off.
- 5) Cooling stations may be harder to find this summer as social distancing practices may limit public airconditioned options. Prepare for hot days. Use an electric fan to create a breeze while you soak your feet in cool water and dampen your face, neck, and arms with a cool, wet cloth and let yourself relax.



DDP New Care Management System Coming Soon

MedCompass is a new technology system coming this summer. It will replace several Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) systems. This includes the one used for the Developmental Disabilities Program (DDP). The new system will show information and benefits for individual members all in one place and improve services for members enrolled in DDP programs.

Why do we need a new system?

The Montana DDP serves about 7,300 members with different types of disabilities. Members live, work, and receive services and supports in many communities across the state. Members have different needs and many different services are available. Today, DDP case managers must look for member information in multiple technology systems that do not share information. Also, members and their guardians must look in more than one place to find all the information they need. DPHHS staff and contracted providers must perform many tasks manually, moving in and out of different systems to do their work. Our members, staff and providers all need a care management system that is easier to use.

With the new system, members and their guardians will be able to see their own information using the member self-service portal. This should improve understanding of what is happening with their care across programs. The new care management system will help DPHHS better assist DDP members to maximize opportunities for independence, well-being, and health. The new system will help DDP staff achieve our mission of effectively coordinating resources, supports, and services for people to have meaningful lives in their communities.

Cowboy Caviar Recipe

This healthy chip dip is cool, inexpensive, and easy to make. Here's how:

- 2 - Roma tomatoes
- 1 - ripe avocado
- 1/4 cup - chopped red onion
- 1 - green bell pepper

Dice all into bean sized chunks, stir together and add:

- 1 - 15 oz can black beans (rinsed & drained) or any beans you prefer
- 1 - 15 oz can sweet corn (drained)
- 1 - 4 oz can chopped green chilis
- ¼ cup - finely chopped cilantro

Stir together in a large bowl.

In a small bowl whisk:

- ¼ cup - olive oil (a little less)
- 1 tablespoon - lime juice
- 1 tablespoon - red wine vinegar or apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon - sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon each - of salt, pepper, and garlic powder.

Pour liquid mixture in small bowl over the contents of the large bowl and stir together. Serve as a dip with tortilla or pita chips.



The Benefits of Breast Feeding

August is National Breastfeeding Month

Breastfeeding is a very natural, yet *new* experience for both mother and child. It takes some practice, but there are many benefits: Besides bonding, breast milk provides nutrients to the baby *without* going to a store-bought formula. That's why it's key for new mothers to be healthy in order to breastfeed, so nothing harmful gets passed along to their kid.

If you're already a mom that eats healthy, exercises, and gets enough sleep, you're off to a great start! But you might be someone who needs more help getting healthier. Either way, take these tips along on your next doctor visit:

- **Talk to your doctor about your history, past and present.** *Don't* drink alcohol, *don't* do drugs, and *don't* smoke— *no* level is safe for the baby (or for you). Seek out a program that can help. List all meds, vitamins, herbal supplements that you take, even if they're over-the-counter (including for allergies or colds).
- **Eat and drink healthier.** That means plenty of fruits, veggies, and whole grains, plus lean proteins. Your doctor can tell you what high-mercury fish to limit or remove. (They can pose a risk to the baby's nervous system). Also, avoid *unpasteurized* (raw milk) cheeses, due to certain bacteria. Stick with water, milk, and juice (with *no* added sugar). Forget soda and other sugary drinks. Keep caffeine to no more than two to three cups of coffee or tea per day — or skip altogether, depending upon your doctor's orders.
- **Breast milk boosts the baby's immune system and is more digestible than formula.** Limiting formula feedings increases the baby's desire for breast milk. (Formula can support kids who require special food needs. Vitamin D can be added, as needed.) Breastfeeding for the first six months after the baby is born is ideal (or up through age one, along with solid foods).
- **Pump milk ahead of time.** The more a mother breastfeeds or pumps milk, the more milk will be produced. Plan out pumping times that work for you, so you can spend more time with the baby. Your local clinic or hospital, along with your doctor, can also find a breastfeeding coach, if needed.
- **Find a calm, peaceful, and private place to breastfeed.** Be patient with yourself *and* with your baby when it comes to latching on! Ask a friend or relative who has breastfed for support.

If you're concerned about breastfeeding and COVID-19, please visit the CDC's [COVID-19 website](#) for the most updated information on risks and safety while caring for your baby.

***** Please follow the latest CDC-advised precautions. *****

The Montana WIC Program, through the Montana Department of Health and Human Services, provides support to new, breastfeeding mothers. The WIC Program also offers nutritious foods, from dried beans and peanut butter, to milk and iron-fortified cereal, as well as formula (when

needed), plus breast pumps. The Montana Breastfeeding Coalition provides a list of "baby-friendly" Montana hospitals on their website (www.mtbreastfeedingcoalition.com).

Sources include: www.aap.org, www.cdc.gov, www.dphhs.mt.gov, www.mayoclinic.org



Key Contacts

Medicaid/HMK Plus Member Help Line

For questions regarding benefits copayments, or Passport to Health: **1-800-362-8312**

[MT Healthcare Programs](#)

Nurse First Advice Line

For questions when you are sick, hurt, or have health questions.

1-800-330-7847

[MT NurseFirst](#)

Montana Relay Service

For the deaf or hard of hearing.

1-800-253-4091 or 711

Montana Public Assistance Help Line

For eligibility questions.

1-888-706-1535

[MT Public Assistance](#)

Transportation Center

For questions regarding travel or approval. **Call before you travel, or you may not be reimbursed.** **1-800-292-7114.**