

# Montana Health Care Programs MESSENGER

## Did You Know Medicaid May Pay for Medical Transportation?

Travel assistance benefits are Medicaid funds that help Medicaid members with transportation costs. These funds help members get to and from medical appointments. When the member meets certain requirements they may get help with mileage, meals, and lodging.

Meals and lodging could be covered when the member must remain overnight. Transportation is covered to and from the member's appointment. The transportation is based on the member's medical needs. The member may use the following types of transportation:

- Personal transportation (privately owned vehicle)
- Specialized non-emergency transportation (wheelchair or stretcher van)
- Commercial transportation (taxi, bus, etc.)

Transportation assistance **must** be prior authorized **before** your trip, please call our Medicaid Transportation Center at 800-292-7114 to have your trip approved.

## Ways to Boost Your Mental Health this Summer

Summer is here! Montana students have finished a school year that was very different than other years and excited for summer break. But taking care of our mental health after school is out (and before it begins again) is just as important. Here are some tips for families and caregivers to have fun while boosting mental health for everyone.

1. **Get outside and enjoy Montana's great summer weather with plenty of sun and fresh air.** Sun light increases Vitamin D in our bodies which is a mood booster. Just be sure to use sunscreen.



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## We have a 24Hour Nurse Advice Line for You

Health concerns can happen at any time. That's why the Nurse First nurse advice line is available for Montana Medicaid, Healthy Montana Kids and Healthy Montana Kids *Plus* members to provide help right over the phone. Members can call the line 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Members also have access to an online health and wellness library where you can search for articles on over 4,000 health related topics.

### To reach the Nurse First advice line:

1. Call **1-800-330-7847**
2. Select "nurse" at the prompt

*IDEAS: Instead of playing video games inside, meet friends for outdoor games or go on a picnic.*

**2. Indoor Ideas for when you can't go outside.** Look for fun inside activities that relax and lead to time with family or friends. For example, reading has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression.

*IDEAS: Read, plan a family fun night with games or a movie, do crafts, check out activities at your local library and in your community.*

**3. Get Moving!** When we exercise, our brains release positive "feel good" hormones making our moods improve.

*IDEAS: Go on bike rides, participate in outdoor sports, go swimming, take walks/hikes, skateboard, go horseback riding.*

**4. Eat Healthy Foods.** Eating healthy foods not only helps young bodies grow, but it also feeds our brains and improves our mood.

*IDEAS: Select healthy foods together at your local farmers market, food store or food pantry, choose healthy snack alternatives like fruits and vegetables instead of junk food, drink lots of water, have children help cook meals or make snacks.*

**5. Spend time with family and friends.** You don't have to spend money to have a great time. Research shows that children and adults with positive social connections are happier, live longer and have better mental and physical health.

*IDEAS: Family game night, family dinners, check your local newspaper for fun, free community activities.*

**6. Plan summer activities.** Structured activities let children learn new skills and improve resiliency supporting mental health.

*IDEAS: Set routines or create a visual schedule for upcoming events like family vacations or activities you have planned.*

**7. Get enough sleep.** It may be easy to think because school is out, it's okay to stay up late. But studies show that lack of sleep, in children, can lead to depression, anxiety, and impulsive behavior. It is recommended that:

- Children ages 6 to 12 years old get 9-12 hours of sleep a night
- Teens ages 13 to 18 years old get 8-10 hours of sleep a night
- Adults should get a minimum of 7 hours of sleep a night

*IDEAS: Set a bedtime routine that might include a bath or shower and a bedtime story, turn off TV and electronic devices like video games, phones, and tablets two hours before bedtime.*

These ideas will help boost mental health but be sure to talk to your family doctor or therapist if your child is struggling with their mental health.

By [DPHHS Children's Mental Health Bureau](#)

## To search the health and wellness website:

1. [Nurse First](#)
2. Select the link toward the bottom of the page for "Additional Montana Health and Wellness Information"
3. Click on the search function or browse the library.

When you can't reach your doctor, the nurse advice line can help with things such as:

- Symptoms you can't or don't know how to manage
- Tips for home care
- Proper dosage of medications
- Questions about pregnancy

A team of medical professionals give helpful advice that is easy to follow. They can also help determine if you need to visit your doctor or an urgent care center.\*

Nurse advice staff speak English and Spanish. For additional languages, please ask for a translator when you are connected.

*\*If you, or a family member is having a life-threatening condition, immediately call 911 or go to the emergency room.*



# 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Conference on Aging Goes Virtual

**"Communities of Strength: Be the Connection"**

Come join us for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Governor's Conference on Aging on September 14<sup>th</sup>, from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. The conference will be held virtually to allow attendees across the state to join in. We are coordinating with 60+ senior centers across the state to stream the conference at their centers. This should help encourage a return to social gatherings for our Montana families. We hope Montanan's will come together, enjoy each other's company, break bread, and learn more about senior issues.

The theme this year is in celebration of our communities who've weathered the storm this last year. This one-day conference includes topics such as:

- Livable Communities: Enhancing a More Age Friendly Community Throughout the State;
- Suicide Prevention: What to Watch for in Our Family, Friends and Neighbors;
- Health and Wellness (such as Fall Prevention);
- Caregivers;
- Alzheimer's;
- SHIP/Medicare; and
- A panel discussion on Fraud, Scams and Elder abuse.

This year's one-day conference is free to all who wish to join. Please stream us in the comfort of your home or join your fellow Montanans in your participating community centers.

You may register online at [Governor's Conference on Aging](#) or register at a participating senior center. **Watch our Facebook page and conference link for more details on presenters, participating senior center locations and other topics.**

*Centenarians (those who have reached, or almost reached 100 years old): Since our conference is virtual this year, we will not have the traditional centenarian celebration. You may still submit your centenarian's name to receive a certificate. Simply complete the form online or contact Jackie Stoeckel at [jstoeckel@mt.gov](mailto:jstoeckel@mt.gov) or call 444-6061.*



## 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 NURSE FIRST**

### **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.**