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Med Central
PRO Valley
Medical
Providers

VITALITY

VITAL news to keep you healthy!

Staying healthy during the Fall and Winter months.

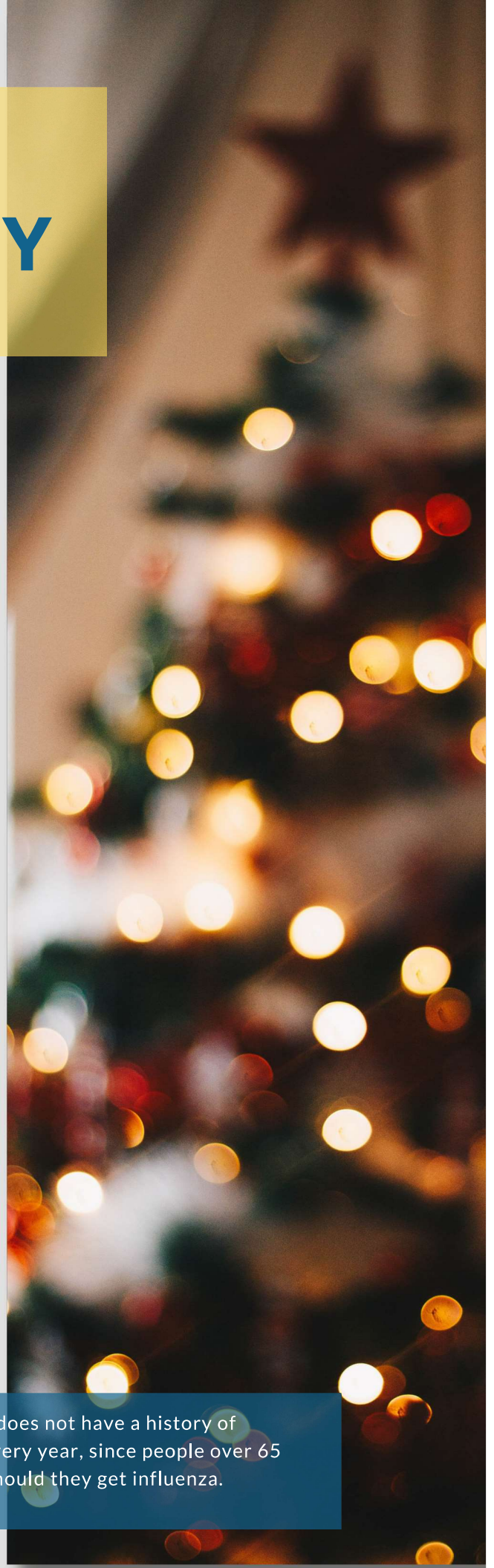
Fall and Winter brings many pleasant things – the holiday season, colors of the foliage, snow-capped Sierra mountains, and the ideal conditions for certain outdoor activities. However, it also brings many things that aren't so pleasant, like frigid weather, slippery sidewalks, and the dreaded flu season. No one looks forward to these parts of winter, but for seniors, they can be particularly troublesome. MedPRO loves their seniors, and wants to offer a few helpful tips to encourage seniors to deal with the more challenging parts of the winter months while staying as healthy as possible during the chilliest part of the year.

For seniors who live in apartments, condominiums, or retirement residences, the building management likely provides maintenance services. However, if your elderly loved one(s) still live in a house, it's important to make sure that their sidewalk is adequately cleaned throughout the winter in order to keep them safely on their feet. Here in the Central Valley, wet leaves from the trees that gather can also be slippery. Keeping these clear will help avoid any unnecessary falls. Studies have shown that seniors are 20% more likely to fall outside if freezing rain is falling, and we're cautioned that during these weather conditions, the best course of action may be to stay indoors. Falls can cause hip fractures, and during these winter months hip fractures increase by 12%.

Unfortunately, winter is often a season of sickness. Most of us know that winter means cold and flu season is upon us, but not everyone is aware that the winter weather can also affect our mental health. During the winter months, it's not only important to take precautions in order to prevent physical illness, but also to take measures to ward off mental illness and to commit to practicing healthy habits.

Here are a few other measures to keep you healthy during the winter months: Get plenty of natural light; eat balanced meals, and stay mentally and physically active.

Get a flu shot. As long as your elderly loved one does not have a history of adverse reactions, they should get the flu shot every year, since people over 65 are at greater risk of developing complications should they get influenza.





Now that Annual Enrollment is over...what's next?

Now that the Medicare Annual Enrollment Period is over, what if you want to make changes? There are certain times when you can make changes; the Open Enrollment Period for Medicare Advantage beneficiaries runs from January 1 through March 31 each year.

If you switch to original Medicare during this period, you will have until March 31 to enroll in a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan. This coverage is optional, but if you wait until a future date to add it, you could pay a penalty for late enrollment. Your coverage will begin the first day of the month after the plan gets your enrollment form.

If you have a Medicare plan, you can also switch to another Medicare plan during the Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period.

Medicare allows changes outside the standard enrollment periods in specific situations that are often out of the beneficiary's control, such as Medicare ending its contract with your plan, through Special Election Periods (SEPs). Other examples of these situations include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Moving out of your plan's service area.
- Receiving both Medicare and Medicaid benefits.
- Living in, moving to, or moving from an institution such as a long-term care hospital or skilled nursing facility.

For additional information, please refer to your Medicare Handbook.

*HAPPY
Holidays*

FROM ALL OF US AT MEDPRO - WWW.CVMEDPRO.COM OR CALL 877.216.4215

Holiday Favorite Recipes for the Entire Family



WASSAIL Non-Alcoholic Drink

- 1 pint apple cider
- 3 cups orange juice
- 1 ½ cups cranberry juice
- 1 teaspoon whole allspice
- 5 cinnamon sticks
- 4 pieces whole star anise (optional)
- ½ cup cranberries
- 1 orange, sliced
- 1 Apple, cored and sliced

Mix together in crock pot and serve warm.

Hot Spinach and Artichoke Dip

- 1 cup thawed frozen spinach
- 1 14 ounce can artichoke hearts
- 1 clove garlic crushed
- 6 oz cream cheese
- ¼ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- ⅔ cup grated parmesan cheese
- ½ cup grated mozzarella cheese
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- ¼ teaspoon salt

In mixing bowl stir together cream cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, garlic, parmesan and mozzarella and pepper. Stir in artichokes and spinach. Spread mixture into prepared baking dish. Bake in preheated oven (350 degrees) until heated through and melted. Approximately 20 minutes. Serve with tortilla chips or crackers.