

**TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN #04 – 765 WORDS – 02/26/09**

LEAD MUSIC (:03)

THIS IS THE TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN, AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST NEWS TO HELP YOU MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR TRICARE BENEFIT. I'M AUSTIN CAMACHO (:10)

FIRST UP: TRICARE HAS STANDARDIZED PROCESSES IN THE PHILIPPINES, AS ANNEMARIE FELICIO REPORTS.

TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY RECENTLY IMPLEMENTED SEVERAL NEW POLICIES TO STREAMLINE THE CLAIMS PAYMENT PROCESS IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS. ONE MAJOR CHANGE ADDRESSES THE CLAIMS PROCESS FOR NEW PROVIDERS IN THE PHILIPPINES. TRICARE NOW GIVES PROVIDERS MORE TIME TO PROVIDE NECESSARY CREDENTIALING INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTATION BEFORE THEIR CLAIMS ARE DENIED. TO FACILITATE THIS PROCESS, CLAIMS ARE NOW HELD FOR 90 DAYS AS OPPOSED TO THE PREVIOUS 35 DAYS.

PROVIDER CERTIFICATION IS CRITICAL BECAUSE TRICARE WILL ONLY PAY CLAIMS IN THE PHILIPPINES IF BENEFICIARIES USE TRICARE CERTIFIED PROVIDERS.

OTHER CHANGES INCLUDE THE USE OF FAXES TO OVERCOME OVERSEAS MAIL DELAYS, AND NEW PROCEDURES DESIGNED TO REDUCE DATA ENTRY ERRORS. TRICARE WILL ALSO ESTABLISH A SATELLITE OFFICE IN THE PHILIPPINES TO HELP BENEFICIARIES AND PROVIDERS IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

THESE CHANGES ACCOMPANY THE NEW PHILIPPINES FEE SCHEDULE THAT WENT INTO EFFECT LAST NOVEMBER. TRICARE IMPLEMENTED THE NEW REIMBURSEMENT RATES AS A COST CONTROL MEASURE, USING A COUNTRY-SPECIFIC INDEX FACTOR TO ACCOUNT FOR VARIATIONS IN THE COST OF LIVING AND EXCHANGE RATES FOR DIFFERENT COUNTRIES.

THESE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE REIMBURSEMENT RATES AND INPATIENT PER DIEM RATES ARE ALL AVAILABLE ON LINE AT [WWW.TRICARE.MIL/TMA/FOREIGNFEE](http://WWW.TRICARE.MIL/TMA/FOREIGNFEE).

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

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NEXT, ROB FOX TELLS US WHY WE NEED STRONG BONES FOR GOOD HEALTH.

PREVENTION OF BONE DISEASE BEGINS AT BIRTH AND IS A LIFELONG CHALLENGE. WEAK BONES MAY DEVELOP OSTEOPOROSIS, WHICH INCREASES FRACTURES IN PARTS OF THE BODY SUCH AS THE HIPS, WRIST AND SPINE. ACCORDING TO THE U. S. SURGEON GENERAL, EACH YEAR ABOUT 1.5 MILLION PEOPLE SUFFER FRACTURES DUE TO OSTEOPOROSIS. BONE HEALTH IS IMPORTANT FOR OVERALL HEALTH AND QUALITY OF LIFE. FRACTURES ARE DIFFICULT TO MANAGE, ESPECIALLY FOR THE ELDERLY, SINCE THEY CAN CAUSE LOSS OF INDEPENDENCE AND LACK OF MOBILITY AND FUNCTION. TRICARE ENCOURAGES BENEFICIARIES TO INCORPORATE A FEW THINGS INTO THEIR LIVES TO HELP DEVELOP STRONG AND HEALTHY BONES.

YOU CAN DEVELOP STRONG BONES BY FOLLOWING A BONE-HEALTHY DIET, PARTICIPATING IN REGULAR WEIGHT-BEARING EXERCISE AND AVOIDING TOBACCO. PRIMARY CARE MANAGERS CAN GUIDE BENEFICIARIES IN MAKING CHOICES THAT PROMOTE BONE HEALTH.

CALCIUM IS A MINERAL YOUR BODY NEEDS FOR HEALTHY BONES, TEETH, AND PROPER FUNCTION OF THE HEART, MUSCLES, AND NERVES. GOOD SOURCES OF CALCIUM INCLUDE: GREEN LEAFY VEGETABLES, SUCH AS BROCCOLI AND KALE; DAIRY PRODUCTS, SUCH AS LOW-FAT OR NON-FAT MILK, CHEESE AND YOGURT; CALCIUM-FORTIFIED FOODS, SUCH AS ORANGE JUICE, SOY BEVERAGES AND CEREAL; AND NUTS, SUCH AS ALMONDS AND SESAME SEEDS. YOU CAN VISIT **[WWW.MYPYRAMIDTRACKER.GOV](http://WWW.MYPYRAMIDTRACKER.GOV)** TO CALCULATE THE AMOUNT OF CALCIUM IN MOST FOODS.

EXERCISE HAS MANY FAR-REACHING BENEFITS, INCLUDING STRENGTHENING BONES. REGULAR WEIGHT-BEARING EXERCISES HELP YOU REACH AND MAINTAIN PEAK BONE MASS, THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF BONE DENSITY. A PERSON WITH HIGH BONE MASS AS A YOUNG ADULT WILL BE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE A HIGHER BONE MASS LATER IN LIFE. BUT IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO DEVELOP HEALTHY BONES. MAKING HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES LATER IN LIFE CAN STILL HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT. EFFECTIVE WEIGHT-BEARING EXERCISES INCLUDE

WALKING, JOGGING OR RUNNING, WEIGHT LIFTING AND STAIR CLIMBING.

SIXTY-FIVE IS THE RECOMMENDED AGE FOR WOMEN TO GET A BONE TEST TO MEASURE THE RISK OF OSTEOPOROSIS; HOWEVER, BENEFICIARIES SHOULD TALK WITH THEIR DOCTORS ABOUT GETTING TESTED EARLIER IF THERE IS A FAMILY HISTORY. TRICARE COVERS BONE DENSITY STUDIES FOR NUMEROUS REASONS, SUCH AS THE DIAGNOSIS AND MONITORING OF OSTEOPOROSIS.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ROB FOX.

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AND FINALLY, TRICARE WANTS TO REMIND BENEFICIARIES THAT THERE ARE MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF PROVIDERS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS WHO MAY BE AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS UNDER TRICARE INCLUDE PSYCHIATRISTS, CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGISTS, CERTIFIED

PSYCHIATRIC NURSE SPECIALISTS, CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKERS,  
CERTIFIED MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPISTS WITH A  
TRICARE PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT AND A VARIETY OF  
OTHER KINDS OF COUNSELORS.

IF YOU THINK YOU MAY NEED THE HELP OF ONE OF THESE  
SPECIALISTS BUT YOU'RE NOT SURE WHICH TYPE OF PROVIDER  
WOULD BEST MEET YOUR NEEDS, CONTACT YOUR REGIONAL  
CONTRACTOR FOR ASSISTANCE.

YOU CAN ALSO MAKE USE OF THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH  
PROVIDER LOCATOR AND APPOINTMENT ASSISTANCE SERVICE.  
JUST GO TO TRICARE.MIL, ENTER THE BENEFITS INFORMATION  
PORTAL, CLICK THE MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR TAB AND  
CLICK ON "GETTING CARE."

AND THAT'S TODAY'S TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN. WE'LL  
HAVE MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE NEXT WEEK. (:03)

TAIL MUSIC (:03)