

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN #06 – 762 WORDS – 03/12/09

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 CUT THE PRICE ON SOME DIABETIC SUPPLIES, AS ANNMARIE FELICIO REPORTS.

AFTER REVIEWING SEVERAL DIABETES GLUCOSE TEST STRIPS AND READERS, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE PHARMACY AND THERAPEUTIC TEAM CHOSE TO MAKE FOUR TEST STRIPS AVAILABLE TO BENEFICIARIES FOR A \$9 CO-PAY STARTING ON MARCH 18. THESE TEST STRIPS WERE MOVED TO TIER 2 ON THE UNIFORM FORMULARY: ACCU-CHECK AVIVA, ASCENSIA CONTOUR, FREESTYLE LITE AND PRECISION.

CRITERIA TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION INCLUDED ACCURACY, BLOOD SAMPLE SIZE, AVAILABILITY OF TEST STRIPS, RESULT TIME, MEMORY CAPACITY, SIZE AND EASE OF USE.

THE COMMITTEE'S REVIEW OF ALL THE AVAILABLE GLUCOSE STRIPS, AND A REVIEW OF THE CORRESPONDING READERS, ALLOWED THEM TO PICK SEVERAL STRIPS THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF TRICARE'S DIVERSE PATIENT POPULATION.

TRICARE ENCOURAGES BENEFICIARIES TO SWITCH TO THE PREFERRED TEST STRIPS, WHICH WILL SAVE MONEY FOR BENEFICIARIES AND THE DOD. SO BENEFICIARIES WHO CHOSE TO USE THE PREFERRED STRIPS CAN ORDER NEW READERS AT NO COST BY CALLING THEIR NEAREST MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY PHARMACY OR CLINIC. OTHER TEST STRIPS ON TIER 2 AND TIER 3 ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO BENEFICIARIES FOR THE \$22 CO-PAY.

FOR THE TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNMARIE FELICIO.

NEXT, THERE'S A NEW RESOURCE GUIDE FOR WOUNDED VETERANS.

THE WOUNDED WARRIOR HANDBOOK, THE RESULT OF A YEAR'S RESEARCH BY THE STAFF OF HOMELAND DEFENSE JOURNAL, INCLUDES SOURCES FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT, REHABILITATION, COUNSELING, SUPPORT AND TRANSITIONING BACK INTO EVERYDAY LIFE. THE HANDBOOK WAS REVIEWED BY THE DEPARTMENTS OF DEFENSE AND VETERANS AFFAIRS, AND SEVERAL WOUNDED WARRIOR ASSOCIATIONS.

ACCORDING TO THE HANDBOOK, THE TYPICAL WOUNDED SERVICE MEMBER MUST COMPLETE AND FILE 22 FORMS FOLLOWING AN ACTIVE-DUTY INJURY. TO MANY MILITARY MEMBERS AND THEIR FAMILIES COPING WITH THE SHOCK AND REALITY OF THE INJURIES, FIGURING OUT WHAT TO DO NEXT—EVEN COMPLETING TASKS AS SEEMINGLY EASY AS SUBMITTING PAPERWORK—CAN BE OVERWHELMING AND CONFUSING.

WRITTEN WITH THESE MEN AND WOMEN IN MIND, THE WOUNDED WARRIOR HANDBOOK PROVIDES OUR WOUNDED HEROES AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH QUICK, STRAIGHTFORWARD ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS THEY SUDDENLY FACE AND GUIDES THEM THROUGH THE DELUGE OF PROCESSES, PROCEDURES, AND POLICIES THEY MUST ADHERE TO IN ORDER TO RECEIVE THE CARE THEY DESERVE AND NEED.

THE COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK COMPILES INFORMATION REGARDING MEDICAL TREATMENT, REHABILITATION, COUNSELING, SUPPORT, AND TRANSITION, INCLUDING:

SYMPTOMS, TREATMENT OPTIONS, AND INFORMATION RESOURCES OF COMMON INJURIES; PROGRAMS TO HELP FAMILIES REACH AND CARE FOR THEIR INJURED SERVICE MEMBERS; DEFINITIONS OF THE SEVEN CLASSIFICATIONS OF "CASUALTY" AND THE NOTIFICATION PROCESS FOR NEXT OF KIN; DOCUMENTS FAMILY MEMBERS SHOULD CARRY WHEN TRAVELING TO SEE THEIR LOVED ONES; CHALLENGES OF REINTEGRATING INTO EVERYDAY LIFE, AND TIPS AND

RESOURCES FOR SUCCEEDING; GUIDANCE FOR FINDING A JOB THAT MATCHES AN INJURED WARRIOR'S PHYSICAL ABILITIES AND SKILLS; ORGANIZATIONS OFFERING ADVOCACY AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE; AND LOCATIONS OF VETERANS AFFAIRS HOSPITALS, MEDICAL CENTERS, AND CLINICS.

THE HANDBOOK MAY BE PURCHASED ON LINE AT
WWW.HOMELANDDEFENSEJOURNAL.NET.

A STUDY USING TRICARE BENEFICIARY HEALTH DATA SUGGESTS THAT A COMMON TREATMENT FOR INFLUENZA MAY SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASE THE RISK OF RECURRING CARDIOVASCULAR EVENTS IN PATIENTS WITH A HISTORY OF CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE. THE TREATMENT IS OSELTAMIVIR, MORE COMMONLY KNOWN AS TAMIFLU. NOT A FLU SHOT, THE MEDICATION IS USED TO HELP PREVENT THE FLU AFTER EXPOSURE, OR LESSEN SEVERITY OF SYMPTOMS.

THE STUDY FINDINGS ARE PUBLISHED IN THE MARCH ISSUE OF
“CIRCULATION: CARDIOVASCULAR QUALITY AND OUTCOMES.”

PREVENTIVE USE OF TAMIFLU HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH A
REDUCED RISK OF CARDIAC AND CEREBRAL VASCULAR
PROBLEMS, BUT LESS IS KNOWN ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION
BETWEEN THE **THERAPEUTIC** USE OF TAMIFLU AND RECURRING
CARDIOVASCULAR PROBLEMS AMONG INFLUENZA PATIENTS
WITH A HISTORY OF VASCULAR DISEASE.

LEAD AUTHOR, DR. S. WARD CASSCELLS, ASSISTANT SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE FOR HEALTH AFFAIRS, AND COLLEAGUES
INCLUDING ARMY MAJOR GENERAL ELDER GRANGER, DEPUTY
DIRECTOR OF TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, EXAMINED
THE ELECTRONIC HEALTHCARE AND PHARMACY RECORDS OF
OVER 37,000 TRICARE BENEFICIARIES. THEY FOUND A
SIGNIFICANT PROTECTIVE EFFECT ASSOCIATED WITH TAMIFLU
TREATMENT.

DR. CASSCELLS SAYS THE FINDINGS WARRANT FUTURE
CONTROLLED STUDIES TO CONFIRM THEIR RESULTS.

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

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