

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – JUNE 23, 2011 – 728 WORDS

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: ANNEMARIE FELICIO REPORTS ON LEARNING ABOUT TRICARE BENEFITS THROUGH TRICARE UNIVERSITY.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TRICARE OPTIONS? WHAT DISTINGUISHES TRICARE RESERVE SELECT FROM TRICARE RETIRED RESERVE? IS IT NECESSARY TO PURCHASE MEDICARE PART B TO QUALIFY FOR TRICARE FOR LIFE? THE ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS AND MORE ARE FOUND IN THE FREE ONLINE COURSES OFFERED BY TRICARE UNIVERSITY.

THE COURSES ARE A REVIEW OF TRICARE BENEFITS DESIGNED TO

HELP BENEFICIARIES, HEALTH CARE STAFF AND ANYONE ELSE WHO WANTS TO KNOW MORE ABOUT TRICARE. COVERED TOPICS INCLUDE TRICARE HISTORY, ELIGIBILITY, PROGRAMS, PLANS AND ONLINE RESOURCES.

TRICARE UNIVERSITY OFFERS TWO BASIC ONLINE COURSES —THE TRICARE FUNDAMENTALS PUBLIC COURSE AND THE TRICARE RESERVE SELECT AND TRICARE RETIRED RESERVE COURSE.

TRICARE UNIVERSITY ALSO OFFERS CERTIFICATION VERSIONS OF THE ONLINE COURSES. THESE COURSES ARE DESIGNED FOR THOSE WHO PROVIDE COUNSELING AND ASSISTANCE TO TRICARE BENEFICIARIES, GOING INTO GREATER DETAIL THAN THE PUBLIC COURSES.

ANOTHER HELPFUL RESOURCE FROM TRICARE UNIVERSITY IS THE TRICARE FUNDAMENTALS COURSE PARTICIPANT GUIDE. THIS GUIDE OFFERS IN-DEPTH INFORMATION ABOUT TRICARE BENEFITS IN FAR GREATER DETAIL THAN THE ONLINE COURSES. THERE IS ALSO A GUIDE DESIGNED FOR TRICARE OVERSEAS PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS.

THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF TRICARE BENEFITS CAN BE  
CONFUSING UNDER THE BEST OF CIRCUMSTANCES. THE BETTER  
BENEFICIARIES UNDERSTAND THEIR COVERAGE, THE EASIER IT IS TO  
GET THEIR FAMILY THE HEALTH CARE THEY NEED.

TO TAKE ANY OF THE OFFERED COURSES OR USE THE PARTICIPANTS  
GUIDES, GO TO [WWW.TRICARE.MIL/TRICAREU](http://WWW.TRICARE.MIL/TRICAREU).

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

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WHEN BENEFICIARIES RETIRE FROM ACTIVE DUTY, THEY MAY HAVE  
BIG PLANS FOR HOW THEY ARE GOING TO SPEND THEIR TIME.  
ALONG WITH CHOICES ABOUT WHERE TO LIVE THEY MUST MAKE  
CHOICES ABOUT THEIR HEALTH CARE.

IF SPACE IS AVAILABLE, RETIREES CAN CONTINUE CARE IN A  
MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY WITH A PRIMARY CARE MANAGER,  
THROUGH TRICARE PRIME. IF BENEFICIARIES CHOOSE THIS OPTION,

THEY WILL RECEIVE CARE BASED ON THE SAME ACCESS-TO-CARE STANDARDS AS ALL OTHER PRIME BENEFICIARIES.

TRICARE STANDARD OR EXTRA MAY BE THE BEST OPTION IF A RETIREE MOVES TO A LOCATION THAT IS NOT NEAR A MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY OR WHERE PRIME IS NOT OFFERED. TRICARE STANDARD IS A FLEXIBLE, AFFORDABLE PLAN THAT GIVES RETIREES AND THEIR ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS A GREATER CHOICE OF PROVIDERS, NO ENROLLMENT FEES, WAIVER OF COST SHARES FOR MOST PREVENTIVE HEALTH CARE SERVICES AND THE SAME LOW CATASTROPHIC CAP AS TRICARE PRIME.

TRICARE EXTRA OFFERS EVEN LOWER OUT-OF-POCKET EXPENSE IF RETIREES USE NETWORK PROVIDERS. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO ENROLLMENT FEE FOR TRICARE STANDARD AND EXTRA, A DEDUCTIBLE MUST BE MET BEFORE COST-SHARING BEGINS.

THE TRICARE OVERSEAS PROGRAM STANDARD OPTION IS AVAILABLE TO RETIREES PLANNING TO LIVE OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES. THEY AND THEIR FAMILY MUST MEET A DEDUCTIBLE

BEFORE COST-SHARING BEGINS AND GENERALLY FILE THEIR OWN CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT FOR COVERED HEALTH SERVICES. TRICARE ALSO HAS ADDITIONAL COUNTRY-SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS FOR CARE RECEIVED IN THE PHILIPPINES.

TRICARE BENEFICIARIES CAN LEARN MORE ABOUT RETIREE HEALTH CARE OPTIONS AT THEIR LOCAL TRICARE SERVICE CENTER. OTHER TRICARE CONTACT INFORMATION AND BENEFICIARY ASSISTANCE LOCATIONS CAN BE FOUND AT [TRICARE.MIL/CONTACTUS](http://TRICARE.MIL/CONTACTUS).

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FINALLY: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR SUMMER MONTHS.

WHETHER PLANNING A SUMMER COOKOUT WITH FRIENDS OR A FAMILY CAMPING TRIP, TRICARE BENEFICIARIES SHOULD FOLLOW FOOD SAFETY PRECAUTIONS TO HELP PROTECT THEMSELVES AND THEIR GUESTS FROM FOODBORNE ILLNESS.

FOODBORNE ILLNESSES TEND TO INCREASE DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS FOR TWO REASONS. ONE REASON IS THAT BACTERIA TEND TO MULTIPLY FASTER WHEN IT'S WARM. ANOTHER REASON IS THAT PEOPLE ARE COOKING OUTSIDE MORE, AWAY FROM THE REFRIGERATORS, THERMOMETERS AND WASHING FACILITIES OF A KITCHEN.

THE AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT OFFERS SEVERAL SIMPLE GUIDELINES FOR COOKING OUTDOORS AND GRILLING FOOD SAFELY.

- PURCHASE COLD FOOD LIKE MEAT AND POULTRY LAST;
- THAW MEAT AND POULTRY BEFORE GRILLING;
- MARINATE FOOD IN THE REFRIGERATOR, NOT ON THE COUNTER;
- KEEP FOOD COLD WHEN CARRYING IT TO ANOTHER LOCATION;
- KEEP EVERYTHING CLEAN AND BRING WATER FOR PREPARATION AND CLEANING;
- PRECOOK FOOD PARTIALLY IN THE MICROWAVE, OVEN OR STOVE TO REDUCE GRILLING TIME;
- COOK FOOD TO A SAFE MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURE TO DESTROY HARMFUL BACTERIA;

- AND REFRIGERATE ANY LEFTOVERS PROMPTLY IN SHALLOW CONTAINERS.

EVEN WITH PROPER ATTENTION TO FOOD PREPARATION, FOODBORNE ILLNESSES CAN STILL OCCUR. SOME COMMON SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS FROM EATING CONTAMINATED FOOD INCLUDE: UPSET STOMACH, ABDOMINAL CRAMPS, NAUSEA AND VOMITING, DIARRHEA, FEVER AND SYMPTOMS OF DEHYDRATION, LIKE LIGHTHEADEDNESS OR DIZZINESS.

IN MOST CASES, FOODBORNE ILLNESSES ARE MILD AND CAN BE TREATED BY INCREASING FLUID AND ELECTROLYTE INTAKE. OVER-THE-COUNTER PRODUCTS FOR DISCOMFORT MAY ALSO WORK. FOR MORE INFORMATION ON FOOD SAFETY, GO TO [FOODSAFETY.GOV/INDEX.HTML](http://FOODSAFETY.GOV/INDEX.HTML).

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

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

TAIL MUSIC (:03)