

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – AUGUST 25, 2011 – 676 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 THE EXPANSION OF TRICARE'S RETAIL PHARMACY VACCINE PROGRAM.

TRICARE IS EXPANDING THE NUMBER OF PREVENTIVE VACCINES COVERED AT RETAIL NETWORK PHARMACIES. UNTIL NOW, THE MAJORITY OF VACCINES WERE ONLY COVERED WHEN OBTAINED THROUGH A PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE.

TRICARE COVERS AGE-APPROPRIATE VACCINES RECOMMENDED BY THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, INCLUDING THE HIGH-DEMAND SHINGLES VACCINE, ZOSTAVAX. SINCE LATE

2009, TRICARE HAS COVERED SEASONAL FLU, H1N1 FLU AND PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINES AT RETAIL PHARMACIES WITH NEARLY 300,000 VACCINES ADMINISTERED TO DATE.

THE EXPANDED PROGRAM COVERS IMMUNIZATIONS FOR MEASLES, MUMPS, SHINGLES AND MANY OTHER PREVENTABLE DISEASES. TO SEE THE EXPANDED LIST OF VACCINES AVAILABLE FROM AUTHORIZED TRICARE RETAIL PHARMACIES VISIT [TRICARE.MIL/VACCINES](http://TRICARE.MIL/VACCINES).

TRICARE OFFICIALS STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT BENEFICIARIES CHECK AHEAD BEFORE MAKING A TRIP TO THEIR PHARMACY TO MAKE SURE IT'S PART OF THE TRICARE NETWORK AND AUTHORIZED TO OFFER THE VACCINES. ENSURING THAT THE PHARMACY HAS THE NEEDED VACCINE IS ALSO ADVISED AS SOME, SUCH AS SHINGLES, MAY BE IN SHORT SUPPLY.

IN ADDITION, WHILE ALL 50 STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ALLOW PHARMACISTS TO ADMINISTER VACCINES, INDIVIDUAL STATE LAWS CAN RESTRICT WHICH VACCINES

PHARMACISTS MAY ADMINISTER, OR MAY RESTRICT BASED ON LICENSING OR BY AGE OF THE RECIPIENT.

BENEFICIARIES WHO OBTAIN VACCINES THROUGH THEIR REGULAR PHYSICIAN DO NOT PAY COPAYMENTS FOR PREVENTIVE CARE SUCH AS IMMUNIZATIONS AND RECOMMENDED SCREENINGS, BUT USUAL COST SHARES AND COPAYMENTS FOR OFFICE VISITS MAY APPLY.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

-----

EVERY YEAR MILLIONS OF AMERICANS SUFFER FROM ALLERGIES, WITH SYMPTOMS RANGING FROM IRRITATING TO LIFE-THREATENING. TRICARE BENEFICIARIES ARE ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE CARE FOR THE TESTING AND TREATMENT OF CONDITIONS RELATING TO ALLERGIES.

KNOWING WHAT SUBSTANCE CAUSES A REACTION CAN IMPROVE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR ALLERGY SUFFERERS AND AVOID UNPLEASANT SURPRISES DOWN THE ROAD. AN ALLERGY TO A

COMMON FOOD INGREDIENT LIKE WHEAT CAN CAUSE A VARIETY OF SEEMINGLY UNRELATED SYMPTOMS SUCH AS ITCHY RASHES, NASAL CONGESTION OR NAUSEA. AND A PARENT DOESN'T WANT TO DISCOVER THEIR CHILD IS ALLERGIC TO BEES ONLY AFTER THEY ARE STUNG.

TESTS ADMINISTERED BY ALLERGISTS CAN IDENTIFY MOST ALLERGIES. THE MOST COMMON ALLERGY TESTS ARE EITHER SKIN OR BLOOD TESTS. FOR SOME FOOD ALLERGIES, AN ALLERGIST WILL RECOMMEND AN ELIMINATION DIET TO LINK CERTAIN FOODS TO SPECIFIC SYMPTOMS.

ONCE AN ALLERGY IS DIAGNOSED, BENEFICIARIES CAN TREAT IT WITH OVER-THE-COUNTER OR PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS. ALLERGISTS SOMETIMES RECOMMEND ALLERGY SUFFERERS CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOR OR DIET TO AVOID AN ALLERGY CAUSING SUBSTANCE. AN ALLERGIST CAN ALSO PRESCRIBE A SERIES OF SHOTS CALLED IMMUNOTHERAPY, DESIGNED TO GRADUALLY DESENSITIZE THE IMMUNE SYSTEM TO A SPECIFIC ALLERGIC TRIGGER.

TRICARE COVERS PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION APPROVED BY THE FDA AND ALLERGY TREATMENTS ADMINISTERED BY ALLERGISTS. HOWEVER, BENEFICIARIES ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COST OF MOST OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS. AT-HOME ALLERGY TESTING PRODUCTS PURCHASED OVER-THE-COUNTER ARE NOT COVERED BY TRICARE.

BENEFICIARIES CAN GET MORE INFORMATION ON THE ALLERGY SERVICES TRICARE OFFERS AND HOW TO ARRANGE CARE BY VISITING TRICARE'S WEBSITE AT [TRICARE.MIL/MYBENEFIT/ALLERGY](http://TRICARE.MIL/MYBENEFIT/ALLERGY).

-----

FINALLY: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON THE SELECTION OF TRICARE'S NEXT DEPUTY DIRECTOR.

BRIGADIER GENERAL W. BRYAN GAMBLE HAS BEEN SELECTED AS THE NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE TRICARE MANAGEMENT

ACTIVITY. GAMBLE, WHO IS CURRENTLY THE COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER ARMY MEDICAL CENTER AT FORT GORDON, GEORGIA, AND DEPUTY COMMANDER OF THE SOUTHERN REGIONAL MEDICAL COMMAND, FORT SAM HOUSTON, TEXAS, WILL ASSUME HIS POST AT TMA IN MID-SEPTEMBER.

GAMBLE BEGAN HIS MILITARY CAREER IN 1978 AFTER GRADUATING FROM PENN STATE UNIVERSITY WITH DEGREES IN FOOD SCIENCE AND PRE-MEDICINE. HE ENTERED THE ARMY THROUGH THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, EARNING HIS MEDICAL DEGREE IN 1982 FROM JEFFERSON MEDICAL COLLEGE, PHILADELPHIA, PA. HE COMPLETED HIS FIVE-YEAR RESIDENCY IN GENERAL SURGERY AT SAINT ELIZABETH'S HOSPITAL OF BOSTON IN 1987 AND TRAINED IN PLASTIC SURGERY AT WALTER REED ARMY MEDICAL CENTER.

HIS FIRST ASSIGNMENT IN THE ARMY WAS AS A GENERAL SURGEON AT BASSETT ARMY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL AT FORT WAINWRIGHT, ALASKA. BEFORE TAKING COMMAND AT EISENHOWER, HE WAS

COMMAND SURGEON WITH THE U.S. CENTRAL COMMAND AT  
MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE IN FLORIDA. HE HAS ALSO SERVED  
DURING PREVIOUS TOURS WITH TMA, THE NATIONAL DEFENSE  
UNIVERSITY, AND THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY FOR  
MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS.

GAMBLE IS SUCCEEDING REAR ADM. CHRISTINE HUNTER, WHO HAS  
SERVED AS THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF TMA SINCE MAY 2009.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

-----

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

TAIL MUSIC (:03)