

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – SEPTEMBER 8, 2011 – 700 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 PROTECTING YOUR PRIVACY.

TRICARE IS COMMITTED TO SAFEGUARDING YOUR PRIVACY AND PROTECTED HEALTH INFORMATION OR PHI. THE HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996 PRIVACY RULE REQUIRES TRICARE, MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITIES, PROVIDERS, REGIONAL CONTRACTORS, SUBCONTRACTORS AND OTHERS TO SECURE, PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD YOUR PHI.

THE HIPAA PRIVACY RULE PERMITS MEDICAL STAFF TO USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PHI FOR THE PURPOSES OF TREATMENT, PAYMENT AND HEALTH CARE OPERATIONS WITHOUT WRITTEN AUTHORIZATION. HOWEVER, YOUR PERMISSION IS REQUIRED FOR MOST OTHER USES AND DISCLOSURES.

ADDITIONALLY, ALL MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITIES HAVE A DESIGNATED PRIVACY OFFICER WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THE PRIVACY OF PATIENTS' HEALTH CARE INFORMATION. ALL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ARE REQUIRED TO CONDUCT PERIODIC RECORD AUDITS AND ENFORCE PROCEDURES THAT ENSURE THE SAFETY AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF PATIENT RECORDS. TRICARE ALSO REQUIRES TECHNICAL SAFEGUARDS TO INCLUDE AUTHENTICATION PROCESSES, ENCRYPTION STANDARDS AND SYSTEM PASSWORDS THAT SECURE THE TRANSMISSION AND STORAGE OF ELECTRONIC HEALTH INFORMATION.

IF YOU SUSPECT YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION PRIVACY RIGHTS HAVE BEEN VIOLATED, YOU ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTACT YOUR MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY PRIVACY OFFICER, THE TRICARE

MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY PRIVACY OFFICER OR THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES. NO RETALIATION WILL OCCUR AGAINST ANYONE FILING A COMPLAINT.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING PRIVACY RIGHTS, INCLUDING CONTACT INFORMATION, VISIT TRICARE.MIL/TMAPRIVACY.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

NEXT: LORRAINE CWIEKA REMINDS BENEFICIARIES TO SCHEDULE THEIR CHILD'S DENTAL CHECKUP TODAY!

THE BEGINNING OF A NEW SCHOOL YEAR CAN BE AN EXCITING TIME FOR CHILDREN, AND MAKING SURE THEY ARE PREPARED FOR THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR IS AN IMPORTANT TASK. ONE IMPORTANT BACK TO SCHOOL TASK PARENTS SHOULDN'T OVERLOOK IS SCHEDULING THEIR CHILD'S DENTAL CHECKUP.

BOTH THE TRICARE DENTAL PROGRAM AND TRICARE RETIREE DENTAL PROGRAM RECOMMENDS THAT ALL ENROLLEES VISIT THEIR DENTIST AT LEAST TWICE PER YEAR FOR AN EXAM AND CLEANING. TRICARE COVERAGE ALLOWS FOR TWO ORAL EVALUATIONS, OR CHECKUPS, DURING ONE CONSECUTIVE 12-MONTH PERIOD. DIAGNOSTIC TESTS, FLUORIDE TREATMENTS AND X-RAYS ARE SOME OF THE SERVICES COVERED UNDER THIS BENEFIT.

REGULAR CHECKUPS CAN HELP UNCOVER PROBLEMS THAT CAN BE TREATED IN THE EARLY STAGES, MINIMIZING DISCOMFORT FOR THE CHILD AND SAVING MONEY. CHILDREN'S TEETH ARE CHANGING AND REGULAR CHECKUPS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF PREVENTIVE CARE.

A ROUTINE DENTAL CHECKUP WILL INCLUDE AN EXAM BY THE DENTIST TO INSPECT TEETH AND A CLEANING. A CLEANING USUALLY INVOLVES A THOROUGH CLEANSING OF THE MOUTH TO REMOVE EXCESS PLAQUE AND BUILDUP, AS WELL AS A FLUORIDE TREATMENT TO HELP PROTECT TEETH. THE DENTIST MAY ALSO REQUIRE X-RAYS TO FURTHER EXAMINE TEETH, AND DETERMINE

WHETHER ANY ADDITIONAL TREATMENT IS NECESSARY. PARENTS CAN DISCUSS THEIR CHILD'S EATING AND BRUSHING HABITS, AS WELL AS THE DAMAGE SUGARY FOODS AND CANDY CAN HAVE ON THEIR YOUNG TEETH. DENTISTS CAN ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS AND TEACH CHILDREN THE PROPER WAYS TO CARE FOR THEIR TEETH AND MOUTH.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT DENTAL BENEFITS OR TO FIND A PARTICIPATING DENTIST, VISIT TRICAREDEDENTALPROGRAM.COM OR TRDP.ORG.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

THOUGH MOST SURGERIES ARE SUCCESSFUL, THEY ARE NOT DEVOID OF RISKS. SURGICAL SITE INFECTION IS ONE RISK THAT CAN DELAY RECOVERY. BENEFICIARIES SHOULD TALK TO THEIR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS ABOUT SAFETY MEASURES THAT WILL HELP PROTECT THEM FROM INFECTIONS DURING SURGERY.

SURGICAL SITE INFECTIONS CAN OCCUR DURING OR AFTER AN OPERATION IN THE PART OF THE BODY WHERE THE PROCEDURE TOOK PLACE. IN SOME CASES, THESE INFECTIONS ONLY AFFECT THE SKIN. MORE SERIOUS INFECTIONS CAN IMPACT OTHER TISSUE, ORGANS AND IMPLANTED MATERIALS.

PRIOR TO SURGERY, HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS WILL TAKE SEVERAL MEASURES TO HELP PATIENTS AVOID INFECTIONS, INCLUDING CLEANING THEIR HANDS AND ARMS UP TO THEIR ELBOWS WITH ANTISEPTIC AGENTS, WEARING MASKS AND GLOVES, CLEANING THE PATIENT'S SKIN WITH ANTIBACTERIAL SOAP, AND GIVING THE PATIENT ANTIBIOTICS WHEN NECESSARY. PATIENTS SHOULD DISCUSS THESE AND OTHER OPTIONS WITH THEIR DOCTORS BEFORE SURGERY TO MAKE SURE THE PROPER GUIDELINES WILL BE FOLLOWED.

PATIENTS SHOULD ALSO TELL THEIR DOCTOR ABOUT ANY HEALTH-RELATED ISSUES THAT MAY AFFECT THEIR SURGERY AND TREATMENT, SUCH AS DIABETES, PREEXISTING INFECTIONS AND

CIGARETTE OR STEROID USE. PATIENTS MUST AVOID SMOKING BEFORE SURGERY, AS IT CAN INCREASE THE CHANCES OF GETTING AN INFECTION.

FOLLOWING SURGERY, PATIENTS SHOULD ALSO:

- REMIND HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS TO THOROUGHLY CLEAN THEIR HANDS BEFORE EXAMINING THE WOUND;
- TELL FAMILY AND FRIENDS NOT TO TOUCH THE WOUND; AND
- FOLLOW THE WOUND CARE INSTRUCTIONS THE HEALTH CARE PROVIDER GIVES.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT SURGICAL SITE INFECTIONS, VISIT CDC.GOV/FEATURES/SAFESURGERY.

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

TAIL MUSIC (:03)