

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – SEPTEMBER 14, 2012 – 618 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 AN OVERVIEW OF THE TRICARE PRIME OPTION.

TRICARE PRIME IS A MANAGED CARE OPTION OFFERING THE MOST AFFORDABLE AND COMPREHENSIVE COVERAGE. YOU HAVE AN ASSIGNED PRIMARY CARE MANAGER, EITHER AT A MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY OR FROM THE TRICARE NETWORK, WHO PROVIDES MOST OF YOUR CARE.

ACTIVE DUTY FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE THE OPTION TO ENROLL IN TRICARE PRIME OR, IN DESIGNATED REMOTE AREAS, IN TRICARE PRIME REMOTE FOR ACTIVE DUTY FAMILY MEMBERS. RETIRED SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS MAY ALSO BE ABLE TO ENROLL IN TRICARE PRIME IF THEY QUALIFY AND RESIDE IN A PRIME SERVICE AREA.

TO ENROLL IN TRICARE PRIME, VISIT A TRICARE SERVICE CENTER OR MAIL AN ENROLLMENT FORM TO YOUR REGIONAL CONTRACTOR. YOU MAY ALSO ENROLL ONLINE THROUGH THE BENEFICIARY WEB ENROLLMENT WEBSITE AT TRICARE.MIL/BWE.

ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS AND ADFMS DO NOT HAVE TO PAY ANNUAL FEES FOR TRICARE PRIME. ALL OTHERS ARE REQUIRED TO PAY ENROLLMENT FEES. TRICARE PRIME ENROLLMENT FEES FOR MOST RETIREES INCREASE ANNUALLY BASED ON THE COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT. AN EXCEPTION TO ANNUAL FEE INCREASES APPLIES TO SURVIVORS OF ACTIVE DUTY DECEASED SPONSORS AND MEDICALLY RETIRED UNIFORMED SERVICE MEMBERS AND THEIR DEPENDENTS

TRICARE PRIME ENROLLMENT IS EFFECTIVE BASED ON THE 20TH-OF-THE-MONTH RULE. APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY YOUR REGIONAL CONTRACTOR BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH WILL BE EFFECTIVE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FOLLOWING MONTH. IF YOUR APPLICATION IS RECEIVED AFTER THE 20TH OF THE MONTH, YOUR COVERAGE WILL BECOME EFFECTIVE THE FIRST DAY OF THE MONTH FOLLOWING THE NEXT MONTH. FOR EXAMPLE, AN ENROLLMENT RECEIVED ON DEC. 27 WOULD BECOME EFFECTIVE FEB. 1. YOU WILL RECEIVE A TRICARE PRIME ENROLLMENT CARD AND A LETTER IDENTIFYING YOUR PCM.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TRICARE PRIME, VISIT TRICARE.MIL/PRIME.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNEMARIE FELICIO.

IF YOU CURRENTLY FILL PRESCRIPTIONS FOR MAINTENANCE MEDICATIONS AT RETAIL PHARMACIES, YOU CAN REDUCE YOUR OUT-OF-POCKET COSTS BY SWITCHING TO TRICARE PHARMACY HOME DELIVERY. TRICARE PHARMACY HOME DELIVERY IS YOUR LEAST EXPENSIVE OPTION WHEN NOT USING A MILITARY TREATMENT FACILITY PHARMACY. THERE IS NO COST FOR HOME DELIVERY FOR ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS, AND FOR ALL OTHER BENEFICIARIES, THERE IS NO COST TO RECEIVE UP TO A 90-DAY SUPPLY OF GENERIC MEDICATIONS. COPAYMENTS APPLY FOR BRAND-NAME AND NON-FORMULARY MEDICATIONS. PRESCRIPTIONS ARE DELIVERED TO YOU WITH FREE STANDARD SHIPPING, AND REFILLS CAN BE EASILY ORDERED ONLINE, BY PHONE OR BY MAIL. TRICARE PHARMACY HOME DELIVERY ALSO PROVIDES YOU WITH CONVENIENT NOTIFICATIONS ABOUT YOUR ORDER STATUS, REFILL REMINDERS AND ASSISTANCE WITH RENEWING EXPIRED PRESCRIPTIONS.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT TRICARE.MIL/HOMEDELIVERY OR EXPRESS SCRIPTS AT EXPRESS-SCRIPTS.COM/TRICARE. YOU CAN ALSO CALL THE MEMBER CHOICE CENTER OR DOWNLOAD THE EXPRESS RX MOBILE APP FOR IPHONE OR ANDROID TO TRANSFER YOUR EXISTING PRESCRIPTIONS TO HOME DELIVERY.

FINALLY: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON PREPARING FOR THIS YEAR'S FLU SEASON.

SEASONAL FLU IS A CONTAGIOUS RESPIRATORY ILLNESS CAUSED BY FLU VIRUSES THAT AFFECT MILLIONS EACH YEAR. FOR THAT REASON, THE CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION RECOMMENDS VACCINATIONS AS SOON AS THE SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE BECOMES AVAILABLE, TYPICALLY IN EARLY AUTUMN.

THE SEASONAL FLU VACCINE HELPS PROTECT AGAINST THREE INFLUENZA VIRUSES THAT RESEARCH INDICATES WILL BE MOST COMMON DURING THIS SEASON. THREE VIRUSES COMMONLY CIRCULATE AMONG PEOPLE TODAY: INFLUENZA B VIRUSES, INFLUENZA A (H1N1) VIRUSES, AND INFLUENZA A (H3N2) VIRUSES. EACH YEAR, ONE FLU VIRUS OF EACH KIND IS USED TO PRODUCE SEASONAL INFLUENZA VACCINE.

THOUGH THE ANNUAL INOCULATION PROVIDES THE BEST PROTECTION AGAINST INFLUENZA, FLU.GOV SUGGESTS ADDITIONAL STEPS THAT MAY BE TAKEN FOR ADDED PROTECTION INCLUDING:

- WASHING HANDS OFTEN WITH SOAP AND WATER OR AN ALCOHOL-BASED HAND RUB;
- AVOIDING TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE OR MOUTH;
- AVOIDING CLOSE CONTACT WITH PEOPLE EXHIBITING FLU-LIKE SYMPTOMS; AND
- COVERING YOUR NOSE AND MOUTH WITH A TISSUE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING.

THESE STEPS, ALONG WITH AN ANNUAL VACCINATION CONTRIBUTE TO OVERALL HEALTH AND WELLNESS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT TRICARE'S FLU RESOURCES PAGE AT TRICARE.MIL/FLU.

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)