

TRICARE BENEFICIARY BULLETIN – MAY 13, 2010 – 733

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: LORRAINE CWIEKA REPORTS ON TRICARE'S DEDUCTIBLE-FREE HOSPICE BENEFIT

THE FINAL STAGES OF LIFE CAN BE DIFFICULT FOR PATIENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. TO MAKE THESE LAST DAYS EASIER, TRICARE'S HOSPICE CARE BENEFIT PROVIDES PATIENTS WITH THE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES THEY NEED NEAR THE END OF LIFE.

HOSPICE CARE IS A ZERO-DEDUCTIBLE BENEFIT AND GIVES TRICARE BENEFICIARIES ACCESS TO PERSONAL CARE AND HOME HEALTH AIDE ASSISTANCE. IT INITIALLY PROVIDES TWO

90-DAY PERIODS OF CARE, FOLLOWED BY AN UNLIMITED NUMBER OF 60-DAY PERIODS. EACH PERIOD REQUIRES PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FROM THE REGIONAL HEALTH CARE CONTRACTOR.

HOWEVER, NOT ALL CARE IS COVERED BY THE HOSPICE BENEFIT. INDIVIDUAL HOSPICES MAY CHARGE FOR SOME ITEMS, SUCH AS OUTPATIENT MEDICATIONS OR INPATIENT RESPITE CARE. CHARGES FOR MEDICAL CARE NOT RELATED TO THE TERMINAL ILLNESS FALL UNDER THE BENEFICIARY'S BASIC TRICARE BENEFIT. OTHER ITEMS NOT COVERED INCLUDE ROOM AND BOARD FOR HOSPICE CARE RECEIVED AT HOME; ROOM AND BOARD RELATED TO CUSTODIAL CARE; AND ANY TREATMENTS TO CURE THE TERMINAL ILLNESS.

BEFORE HOSPICE CAN BEGIN, FOUR REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET. FIRST, THE PATIENT'S THE ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION MUST BE CURRENT. THE PATIENT ALSO NEEDS TO OBTAIN A REFERRAL FOR HOSPICE FROM THEIR PRIMARY CARE MANAGER AND GET PRIOR AUTHORIZATION FROM THEIR REGIONAL

HEALTH CARE CONTRACTOR. FINALLY, A CERTIFICATION OF TERMINAL ILLNESS MUST BE OBTAINED.

THERE ARE FOUR LEVELS OF HOSPICE CARE TO MEET THE VARYING NEEDS OF EACH PATIENT: ROUTINE HOME CARE, CONTINUOUS HOME CARE, INPATIENT RESPITE CARE, AND GENERAL HOSPICE. IF NECESSARY, PATIENTS CAN SWITCH BETWEEN THE FOUR LEVELS OF CARE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE HOSPICE BENEFIT, VISIT TRICARE.MIL.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M LORRAINE CWIEKA.

NEXT, ANNMARIE FELICIO REPORTS ON KEEPING BONES HEALTHY FOR LIFE

CHILDREN ARE OFTEN ENCOURAGED TO DRINK MILK TO BUILD STRONG BONES, BUT WHAT ABOUT ADULTS? MAY IS NATIONAL OSTEOPOROSIS AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH. NOW IS

A GREAT TIME TO FOCUS ON PROPER NUTRITION AND EXERCISE TO KEEP BONES HEALTHY AND PREVENT OSTEOPOROSIS.

OSTEOPOROSIS IS THE THINNING OF BONE TISSUE AND LOSS OF BONE DENSITY. THE CONDITION LEAVES BONES WEAK AND MORE LIKELY TO BREAK. ANYONE CAN DEVELOP OSTEOPOROSIS, BUT WOMEN, ESPECIALLY POST-MENOPAUSAL WOMEN, ARE AT A HIGHER RISK BECAUSE OF ESTROGEN DEFICIENCY. OTHER RISK FACTORS INCLUDE: FAMILY HISTORY, VERTEBRAL ABNORMALITIES, HYPERPARATHYROIDISM AND LONG-TERM STEROID THERAPY.

OSTEOPOROSIS CAN EASILY BE DIAGNOSED BY A BONE DENSITY TEST. THIS IS A NON-INVASIVE TEST THAT USES X-RAYS TO MEASURE BONE MASS. TRICARE COVERS THIS PROCEDURE FOR BENEFICIARIES WHO ARE SHOWING SYMPTOMS OF OSTEOPOROSIS OR WHO ARE AT HIGH-RISK OF DEVELOPING THE DISEASE. HIGH-RISK FACTORS FOR OSTEOPOROSIS INCLUDE BEING POST-MENOPAUSAL, A FAMILY HISTORY OF OSTEOPOROSIS, VERTEBRAL ABNORMALITIES,

HYPERPARATHYROIDISM AND RECEIVING LONG-TERM STEROID THERAPY.

BENEFICIARIES SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THAT IT IS POSSIBLE TO PREVENT OSTEOPOROSIS WITH SIMPLE ADDITIONS TO LIFESTYLE. CALCIUM AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN BONE HEALTH – IN EARLY LIFE AND LATE LIFE. ADULTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO HAVE AT LEAST 1,000 MILLIGRAMS OF CALCIUM EACH DAY TO MAINTAIN HEALTHY BONES. ACTIVITIES SUCH AS WALKING, JOGGING, CLIMBING STAIRS OR WEIGHT TRAINING CAN HELP STRENGTHEN BONES AND IMPROVE OVERALL HEALTH.

LEARN MORE ABOUT BUILDING HEALTHY BONES FOR LIFE AT THE NATIONAL OSTEOPOROSIS FOUNDATION WEBSITE NOF.ORG.

FOR TRICARE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY, I'M ANNMARIE FELICIO.

FINALLY, IT'S OKAY FOR SERVICE MEMBERS TO GET HELP

THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF WANTS SERVICE MEMBERS TO KNOW IT IS OKAY TO GET HELP FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH-RELATED CONDITIONS. IN A NEW VIDEO SPOTLIGHTING TRICARE'S BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE BENEFITS, ADMIRAL MIKE MULLEN SENDS A STRONG MESSAGE TO SERVICE MEMBERS STRUGGLING WITH FEELINGS OF STRESS, ANXIETY, OR DEPRESSION.

IN THE FOUR-MINUTE VIDEO, MULLEN URGES TROOPS TO TELL SOMEONE IN THEIR CHAIN OF COMMAND IF THEY HAVING DIFFICULTIES WORKING THROUGH STRESS FROM DEPLOYMENTS OR THE DEMANDS OF MILITARY LIFE. THESE ARE ISSUES ALL SERVICE MEMBERS MAY HAVE AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER AND BY IGNORING THEM THEY CAN HURT NOT JUST THEMSELVES, BUT THEIR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND FELLOW SERVICE MEMBERS.

TRICARE'S MENTAL HEALTH OPTIONS ALLOW BENEFICIARIES TO SEEK HELP IN A MORE PRIVATE MANNER. THE TRICARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BRINGS SHORT-TERM PROFESSIONAL

COUNSELING ASSISTANCE STRAIGHT INTO THE HOME.
BENEFICIARIES WITH A COMPUTER, WEB CAM AND THE
ASSOCIATED SOFTWARE CAN SPEAK “FACE-TO-FACE” WITH A
LICENSED COUNSELOR OVER THE INTERNET AT ANY TIME OF
THE DAY OR NIGHT.

THE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IS AVAILABLE IN THE UNITED
STATES TO ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE MEMBERS, THOSE ELIGIBLE
FOR THE TRANSITION ASSISTANCE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
AND NATIONAL GUARD AND RESERVE MEMBERS ENROLLED IN
TRICARE RESERVE SELECT. IT IS ALSO AVAILABLE TO THEIR
SPOUSES OF ANY AGE, AND TO OTHER ELIGIBLE FAMILY
MEMBERS 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER.

VISIT TRICARE.MIL/MENTALHEALTH TO SEE THE CHAIRMAN’S
MESSAGE AND LEARN ABOUT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE
OPTIONS AVAILABLE THROUGH TRICARE.

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

TAIL MUSIC (:03)