

The Doctor is in ...
The Value of TRICARE

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I am a soldier, a husband, a father and, like you, a TRICARE beneficiary. As a beneficiary, and as the TRICARE Management Activity’s deputy director, the value you and my family receive from TRICARE is my priority both personally and professionally.

TRICARE is more than just seeing the doctor when you or your family is sick or hurt. TRICARE provides free and low-cost preventive services such as cancer screenings, well-baby checkups and immunizations. In just the past year we’ve added to and enhanced many of our benefits to better meet your needs. We’ve focused our efforts on readiness for both military and family members by improving health—not just health care. We continue to work to enhance your experience as a patient and to responsibly manage costs to preserve the value of your TRICARE benefit.

One of the many initiatives to enhance patient experience while managing both your costs and those of the Defense Department is the TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery program. Home delivery of your maintenance prescriptions is easy, safe and affordable—some prescriptions are even free! I applaud the many TRICARE beneficiaries who are taking advantage of this outstanding program and encourage others to learn more about it—and how easy it is to use—by checking it out on the TRICARE website at www.tricare.mil/homedelivery.

Another enhancement in the TRICARE program to help improve patient health is our immunization program. In 2011, TRICARE made getting immunizations for a wide range of diseases more convenient and affordable than ever. Before 2011, most vaccines were only covered when you got them at your doctor’s office. Now, you can get your vaccines at any one of the more than 45,000 participating TRICARE network pharmacies with no out-of-pocket expense.

Recognizing the key role of the National Guard and Reserve in our national defense, in recent years we expanded the TRICARE benefit to better serve them and their families. TRICARE Reserve Select is now available for current Guard and Reserve members and families, while TRICARE Retired Reserve provides health benefits for “gray-area” retired members and their families.

We also are fully compliant with the requirements of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. For example, just last year, we added the premium-based TRICARE Young Adult program for dependents up to age 26 who don’t have access to other health plans.

Premium-based health plans like TRICARE Reserve Select, TRICARE Retired Reserve and the TRICARE Dental Program provide access to covered services from TRICARE-authorized health care providers worldwide. Visit www.tricare.mil for more information on them.

Bringing TRICARE beneficiaries around the world the best possible health care at the best possible value is not only our mission, but our commitment. As a leader in the TRICARE program as well as a TRICARE beneficiary, I look forward to coming into work every day to make this a reality for each and every one of the 9.7 million TRICARE beneficiaries we serve. ■

Inside This Issue ...

- [Log on to milConnect for eCorrespondence](#)
- [Is Your Thyroid Off-Balance?](#)
- [Mobile Support Delivered](#)



An Important Note about TRICARE Program Information: At the time of printing, this information is current. It is important to remember that TRICARE policies and benefits are governed by public law and federal regulations. Changes to TRICARE programs are continually made as public law and/or federal regulations are amended. **Military treatment facility guidelines and policies may be different than those outlined in this publication.** For the most recent information, contact your TRICARE regional contractor, TRICARE Service Center, or local military treatment facility.

Log on to milConnect for eCorrespondence

MilConnect, located at <http://milconnect.dmdc.mil>, is the Defense Manpower Data Center's (DMDC's) online portal that gives you access to your information in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). You can log on to milConnect's secure site by using a Common Access Card (CAC), Defense Finance and Accounting Services (DFAS) user name and password or Department of Defense (DoD) Self-Service Logon (DS Logon).

Your sponsor may request a DS Logon for you by using his or her CAC, or you may visit a TRICARE Service Center or a Veterans Affairs Regional Office to complete the required in-person proofing process. Non-CAC holders who need a new uniformed services identification (ID) card can also visit an ID card-issuing facility and request a DS Logon at the same time. Visit www.dmdc.osd.mil/dsaccess and click on "Frequently Asked Questions" for more details on these options.

The milConnect portal allows you to:

- Receive alerts when a change in your benefit occurs
- Access health care information about enrollments, primary care manager (PCM) assignments, other health insurance, claims, catastrophic caps, deductibles and fees
- Print proof of insurance/eligibility letter
- Manage your TRICARE enrollment
- Review and update (where applicable) personnel information
- Update your display name for the DoD Global Address List
- Transfer your education benefits
- Update contact information in DEERS instantly
- Find answers to frequently asked questions
- Review Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) information

eCorrespondence Now Available

With the recent rollout of milConnect's eCorrespondence initiative, active duty service members (ADSMs) and National Guard and Reserve members on early alert or active duty are now receiving e-mail notifications in place of mailed letters. E-mail notifications are sent when a new or replacement enrollment card is available, when a dependent child is near age 21 or 23 or when a PCM change has been reported. Future eCorrespondence enhancements include replacing

additional mailed letters with e-mail notifications as well as the expansion of e-mail notifications to non-active duty populations and family members regarding benefit changes.

This "green" electronic correspondence allows for quick and convenient access to benefit changes and offers better security than mailed letters.

If you receive eCorrespondence today, these notifications are sent to your CAC-registered osd.pentagon.mil e-mail address. These notifications will link you to the milConnect self-service portal, where you can view your current benefit information and view, print and save available correspondence about your benefit. Future enhancements will allow you to choose to receive e-mail notifications using a personal e-mail address instead of your CAC e-mail address.

Sign Up Now for Future eCorrespondence Initiatives

While expansion of eCorrespondence to non-active duty populations and family members is a future initiative, you can grant permission now to receive e-mail notifications as soon as this capability is available. To update your personal e-mail address and permissions, log on to milConnect and choose "Update Address" under the "My Profile Information" menu item. Then select the "Personal Information" tab and scroll down to the "E-mail Addresses" section.

If you are an ADSM or National Guard or Reserve member on early alert or active duty, you are also encouraged to update your e-mail preferences if you wish to receive e-mail notifications at your personal e-mail address when this capability becomes available. To do so, you must first opt out of receiving e-mail notifications at your osd.pentagon.mil e-mail, then opt in to receive them at your personal e-mail address. Click "Update Address" under the "My Profile Information" menu item. Then select the "Military (MIL)" tab and scroll down to the "Personnel E-mail Address" section, and change your preference to "No." Next, choose the "Personal Information" tab and scroll down to the "E-mail Addresses" section, add your primary e-mail address and select "yes" to receive e-mail notifications.

Visit the milConnect website at <http://milconnect.dmdc.mil> for more information. ■

Is Your Thyroid Off-Balance?

Did you know that unusual weight gain, depression and fatigue can be symptoms of a medical condition? If you experience these symptoms, you may have a thyroid condition.

The thyroid, a butterfly-shaped gland in your neck just above your collarbone, is one of the glands that makes hormones. If your thyroid is either overactive or underactive, you could experience side effects that can affect your whole life. If you notice any of the symptoms listed below, talk to your doctor. A simple blood test may be able to determine if you are having problems with your thyroid.

Hypothyroidism: Underactive Thyroid

If your thyroid is not active enough, you have hypothyroidism. This is the most common thyroid disorder. Some of the symptoms include:

- Depression
- Gaining weight (more than normal)
- Trouble losing weight with proper diet and exercise
- Constipation
- Always feeling cold
- Feeling tired
- Sudden mood swings

Hyperthyroidism: Overactive Thyroid

When your thyroid is too active, you have hyperthyroidism. Some of the symptoms include:

- Eye problems such as extreme bulging, dryness, pain, redness or puffiness
- Appetite changes and weight loss
- Diarrhea



- Always feeling hot
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Feeling tired
- Sudden mood swings, irrational anger
- Insomnia

Millions of people in the United States have thyroid problems, according to the National Institutes of Health. Women are much more likely to be affected than men.¹

Many treatments are available to help correct your thyroid condition. Talk to your doctor about your options. For more tips on healthy living, visit TriWest Healthcare Alliance's Healthy Living Portal at www.triwest.com/healthyliving. ■

1. <http://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2009/February/feature2.htm>

TRICARE HealthMatters

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TRICARE

An Excellent Value

- Generous coverage
- Superior health care
- Decisions are health driven, not insurance driven
- High satisfaction with care
- Low out-of-pocket costs
- Easy access



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Mobile Support Delivered

Are you among the 48 percent of American cell phone owners who have researched health information online? Ever wish you could manage your military health information and benefits on your cell phone or tablet? Good news—you can!

- In the West Region, you can use TriWest Healthcare Alliance's (TriWest's) mobile site and text QuickAlerts to bring smart tools directly to your smartphone (and other mobile devices). Register for your secure www.triwest.com account today to access your account from your phone or from your tablet—anywhere with an Internet connection, whenever you need. Get started at m.triwest.com.
- Need to find a TRICARE provider or have questions about your TRICARE benefit when you are away from your computer? With TriWest's mobile app, available for iPhone/iPad and Android devices, you can search for providers and find information about accessing medical care while you are on the go. Visit www.triwest.com/gomobile for links and more information.
- Manage your TRICARE prescriptions on the go using any mobile device with Internet access through Express

Scripts, Inc.'s (Express Scripts') mobile website (m.esrx.com). Log in with your Express Scripts account information. Express Scripts also has mobile apps available for iPhone and Android devices.

- The National Center for Telehealth and Technology (T2), a component center of the Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury, has developed mobile apps specifically designed for troops and health care providers. These apps address topics such as behavioral health and traumatic brain injury. Check your app store or go to www.t2health.org/mobile-apps.
- Manage your military benefit online—including changing your contact information in DEERS, printing a TRICARE enrollment card or viewing personnel information—at <http://milconnect.dmdc.mil>. Use milConnect to find answers to your military benefit questions, locate local identification card-issuing facilities and more.

Learn more about the TriWest mobile tools and register for a secure account at www.triwest.com/gomobile today. Want information sent directly to your phone? Text "MOBILE" to 80565 (supported carriers only, message rates may apply). ■