

The Doctor is in ...

Electronic Health Records and You

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Health professionals have long known the promise of electronic health records. For more than two decades, the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have been working together to apply the benefits of this fast evolving technology. The Departments already share more clinical health information than any

two health care systems in the world and, together, will comprise the largest integrated health network in the world, with more than 18 million total members worldwide.

The new DoD/VA Interagency Program Office (IPO), where I serve as Director, is responsible for implementing an integrated Electronic Health Record (iEHR) for the DoD and VA. When operational, the iEHR will follow you from the first day of your military career, throughout your lifetime. It will be the single source for service members, veterans and beneficiaries to access their medical history. Additionally, it will ensure the seamless transition of care when service members go from active duty to veteran status.

Your complete medical record will follow you when you move, switch medical providers or need emergency care while traveling. Your family medical history and medical allergies will be immediately available to every doctor or nurse who treats you within DoD and VA health systems. With the ability to view consistent and comprehensive patient data, medical providers will be able to give you better care.

Researchers will also be able to study trends, securely and privately, across the large population in the system. This can lead to new medical breakthroughs that benefit everyone. For example, we can develop a registry of diabetes patients to measure the outcomes of current treatments to improve treatment protocols and quality of care now and for generations to come. A diabetes patient registry could help us minimize the number of amputations or instances of blindness.

The iEHR is a key component of the President's Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record (VLER) initiative—a groundbreaking vision for the future of electronic data sharing among federal agencies and the private sector. If you receive private sector health care, VLER Health is a way to send those requests for care out to the private sector and, most importantly, to bring that data back. This ensures you have a complete medical record that captures all the information about all the care you receive.

We are committed to a fully operational iEHR no later than 2017, with clinical capabilities deployed in Hampton Roads, Va., and San Antonio by 2014—a significant challenge, but one that is critical for our nation's service members, veterans and beneficiaries.

For more information about the DoD/VA IPO, visit www.tricare.mil/tma/ipo. To learn more about the role of electronic health records in today's medicine, go to www.healthit.hhs.gov. ■

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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.

Stay Healthy for the Holidays

Throughout the holiday season and into the new year, you may face many choices that impact your overall health, from what you eat to how you exercise to whether you go to the doctor.

Food choices, physical activity, sleep, stress, tobacco use, alcohol use and behavioral health all impact your well-being. For instance, unhealthy eating and little exercise over the holidays can lead to higher blood pressure, cholesterol and blood glucose, plus weight gain. These are major risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

You can reduce your risk of serious health problems by making good decisions during the holiday season and throughout the year, including:

- **Eating a balanced diet.** Choosing healthy meals and snacks can help you maintain a healthy weight. Even when holiday treats are in great supply, don't skip your vegetables, fruits and healthy sources of protein, including poultry and fish. A well-balanced diet will give you the vitamins and nutrients you need to keep up your energy, immunity and overall health. Ask your doctor if you think you may need to change your diet by reducing salt intake, eating fewer calories, adding supplements or making other changes.
- **Enjoying holiday treats in moderation.** For most people, it is difficult to avoid the rich foods of the holiday season. You can help prevent overindulging by eating healthy snacks before holiday meals or parties. Watch your portion sizes—try using a small plate, or filling more than half of your plate with vegetables.

- **Exercising regularly.** Physical activity can help you maintain a healthy weight and help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends that adults get two hours and 30 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity (e.g., brisk walking) every week and do muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days a week.¹ You can make small changes to move more, including taking the stairs instead of the elevator or parking farther from your destination at the office or shopping mall.
- **Not using tobacco.** Cigarette smoking greatly increases your risk for heart disease, lung disease, cancer and other diseases. Smokeless tobacco use can also cause life-threatening problems including cancer.
- **Limiting alcohol consumption.** Alcohol use can cause high blood pressure and contribute to weight gain. Limit your intake of alcohol and any other high-sugar or high-calorie beverages. If you drink alcohol, do so responsibly and in moderation.
- **Managing stress.** Don't let the holiday season get the best of you. Stress contributes to health problems like high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. Make time for stress-relieving activities such as exercise, yoga or meditation.
- **Seeing your doctor regularly.** Your doctor can conduct tests to see if you need to change your diet or exercise, and may prescribe medications to help you control cholesterol, blood pressure or blood glucose.

Visit www.tricare.mil/healthyliving for healthy living tips. ■

1. <http://www.cdc.gov/physicalactivity/everyone/guidelines/adults.html>

Manage Your Weight with MyActiveHealth®

Need some help avoiding holiday temptations? Check out the Health Spotlight section of your MyActiveHealth home page to learn about weight management.

MyActiveHealth is a new service from Humana Military to help you manage your health. In addition to accessing your personal health record, assessing your health and checking your symptoms, this online resource hosts a wealth of tips and tools for weight management including this month's Health Spotlight feature.

The weight management feature offers a great overview about what a healthy weight means, what affects your weight and how you can change your lifestyle to reach a healthy weight. You will also find a variety of tools to help improve your healthy habits and inspiring stories about people who have made successful lifestyle changes.

To log on to the MyActiveHealth portal, go to Humana-Military.com, click "Beneficiary" and then click "Log In" under "Self Service." After you log in, click the "MyActiveHealth Portal" link at the bottom of the page. ■

Filling Prescriptions with TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery

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. Rarely, TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery may be unable to fill your prescription. There are steps you can take to avoid having your prescription returned:

- Ask your doctor to send prescriptions electronically to Express Scripts Mail Pharmacy. Electronic prescriptions are less likely to have missing or illegible information.
- If you do submit a prescription via mail, make sure your name, your sponsor's Social Security number or 11-digit Department of Defense Benefits Number, your date of birth and your address are clearly written on the back of the prescription.
- If you receive a message from Express Scripts, Inc. (Express Scripts) about your prescription, call back within

two business days to help fill your prescription quickly. The customer service department is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Your prescription may also be returned or denied if the medication is not covered. If you are prescribed a new medication and you are not sure whether it is covered, call Express Scripts at 1-877-363-1303 or check the formulary search tool online at http://pec.ha.osd.mil/formulary_search.php.

For more information, visit www.tricare.mil/homedelivery or Express Scripts at www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE. You can also call the Member Choice Center at 1-877-363-1433 or download the Express Rx mobile app for iPhone or Android to transfer your existing prescriptions to home delivery. ■

Fight the Flu: Get Vaccinated

As the flu season begins, TRICARE encourages you to get a flu vaccine. There are two forms of influenza vaccines distributed in the United States: a shot and a nasal spray. Both versions of the flu vaccine are available without copayments or cost-shares to all TRICARE beneficiaries.

While TRICARE recommends that all beneficiaries get vaccinated, it is important to remember that certain people are at a higher risk from the flu, including:

- Pregnant women
- People who live with or care for children younger than 6 months old
- Health care and emergency medical services personnel

- Everyone between the ages of 6 months and 24 years
- People ages 25–64 with chronic health disorders or compromised immune systems
- Older people with diabetes, cardiovascular disease, asthma or HIV

During flu season, avoid close contact with sick people and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based sanitizer.

For more information about military treatment facilities, providers and pharmacies that offer the flu vaccine, please visit www.tricare.mil/flu. ■

Humana Military Helps Make Moving Easier

Getting ready to move out of the TRICARE South Region? Active duty service members and their families can simplify an important part of the relocation process with a call to Humana Military. Call 1-800-444-5445 to transfer your TRICARE Prime enrollment.

Just provide your relocation information, including your expected date of arrival in the new region, and Humana Military will forward the information to your new regional contractor. Within a few days of your arrival, your new regional contractor will contact you to transfer your enrollment. Visit Humana-Military.com and search for “Relocating” to learn more. ■

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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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Understand Your Out-of-Pocket Costs

The new fiscal year began Oct. 1, 2012. That means, if your TRICARE program includes a catastrophic cap, it started over on this date. It may be a good time to revisit your out-of-pocket responsibilities for covered services and the catastrophic cap.

To learn more about copayments, cost-shares and deductibles, visit www.tricare.mil/smart or Humana-Military.com and

search for “TRICARE Choices” to review the *TRICARE Choices: At a Glance Brochure*. Note that the cost-share information for durable medical equipment and supplies also includes infusion drugs delivered in the home. To view your individual information, log in to the secure beneficiary portal at Humana-Military.com. ■

Streamline Premium Payments with Automatic Deductions

If you pay a fee for your TRICARE Prime enrollment, remember that recurring fee payments must be made either by credit card or by monthly automatic deductions. The only time enrollees can pay with a check is for the initial TRICARE Prime enrollment fee.

You can save time and set up your automatic monthly deduction with your very first enrollment fee payment. A monthly automatic deduction is the easiest way to make

sure your premiums are current, and it eliminates the need to remember to pay the annual or quarterly fee. And, if your fee amount changes, such as when you change health care plans or when there is an annual fee or premium change, Humana Military will adjust your automatic payments for you—no need to fill out another form. Sign up today. Go to Humana-Military.com and search for “Monthly Automatic Transfer” to download the payment form. ■

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