

*The Doctor is in ...*

## Make Nutrition Work for You

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**M**ost people have heard the consistent drum beat about how to lose weight and be healthy: Eat a balanced diet focused on fruits and vegetables but minimize sodium, sugars and fat. However, it can be hard to apply that basic knowledge to gain a better understanding of the food you eat and apply it to your diet and lifestyle.

The first chapter in many weight-loss stories is to take stock of your current health and set medically appropriate and achievable goals. Losing weight too quickly is neither healthy nor sustainable. Consult your primary care physician before starting your weight-loss program to understand your body mass index and create a plan to achieve your healthy weight. Your doctor can also help you set incremental goals, creating a sense of achievement by meeting interim steps as you progress.

Next, you need to make sure you eat healthy foods. In our marketplace, many foods branded “healthy” include little nutritional value or high levels of unhealthy ingredients, like sodium. It’s hard to go wrong choosing fresh fruits and vegetables. When selecting packaged foods, use the nutrition-facts label to find out how healthy they really are. Start with the serving size. This can help you regulate portion size, an important part of a healthy diet. The label also includes things whose intake you should limit, like calories from fat, cholesterol and sodium, as well as nutrients you need to stay healthy, like fiber and vitamins.

Study the label at the supermarket, and only stock up on healthy foods to make your decisions on what to eat at home much easier. Learn more about interpreting nutrition labels from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration website at <http://go.usa.gov/b935>.

A balanced diet rich in fruits and vegetables is your best bet to lose weight in a healthy way. Many popular fad or designer diets may be successful in shedding pounds, but are hard to maintain and may not provide the complete nutrition your body needs. An example of a balanced diet

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## Social Security Number Removal and Claims Filing

**T**he Department of Defense (DoD) is removing Social Security numbers (SSNs) from uniformed services identification (ID) cards, including the Common Access Card (CAC), as part of the continued effort to protect the privacy and security of TRICARE’s 9.6 million beneficiaries. SSNs are being replaced with 10-digit DoD ID numbers. If you have DoD benefits, (e.g., health care, commissary, exchange privileges), an 11-digit DoD Benefits Number (DBN) is also printed on the card. The DBN is a unique number that ensures your records are clearly aligned with your treatments. The DBN is located above the bar code on the back of your uniformed services ID card or CAC.

When submitting health, pharmacy and dental claims, be sure to include either the sponsor’s SSN or the DBN listed on the back of the ID card (eligible former spouses should use their own SSN or DBN, not the sponsor’s). **Note:** The DoD ID number that appears on the front of the ID card should **not** be used when filing claims.

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**An Important Note About TRICARE Program Information:** At the time of publication, 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.

## Social Security Number Removal and Claims Filing

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The SSN removal process is expected to last several years until all current DoD ID cards are replaced as they come up for renewal. Until all cards are updated, SSNs and DBNs can be used to submit claims and verify eligibility.

**Note:** You do not need to make a special trip to update your ID card until it is 30 days from expiration. Your health care providers and pharmacists will be able to access your benefit information using either your SSN or DBN. For more information, visit [www.tricare.mil/ssn](http://www.tricare.mil/ssn). ■

## Urgent or Emergency Care: When in Doubt, Phone First

**W**hen unexpected medical care is needed, especially after hours or on weekends, it can be difficult to know what type of care you need and where to go. Your primary care manager (PCM) is your best resource for deciding where and when to get care. If you seek care outside of a military treatment facility and your PCM is not available, call Health Net Federal Services, LLC (Health Net) at 1-877-TRICARE (1-877-874-2273) for help.

For nonemergencies, such as sprains, earaches, fevers or sore throats, call your PCM first. In most cases, you can receive urgent care from your PCM by making a same-day appointment. Your PCM may also coordinate a referral to an urgent care center or convenient care clinic. If your PCM is not available, contact Health Net for assistance with a referral. If you do not coordinate urgent care with your PCM or Health Net, the care will be covered under the point-of-service (POS) option,<sup>1</sup> resulting in higher out-of-pocket costs. For cost details, visit [www.tricare.mil/costs](http://www.tricare.mil/costs).

For emergency care, defined as a serious medical condition that the average person would consider to be a threat to life, limb, sight or safety, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. Emergency care does not require prior authorization. However, in all emergencies, you must notify your PCM within 24 hours or on the next business day following admission to coordinate ongoing care and to ensure you receive proper authorization. **Note:** Active duty service members enrolled in TRICARE Prime Remote should contact their service point of contact as soon as possible after receiving emergency care. Knowing the steps to take before an injury, illness or emergency occurs can help you get the care you need while keeping your out-of-pocket costs low. Visit [www.hnfs.com](http://www.hnfs.com) for more details. ■

*1. The POS option does not apply to active duty service members, children for the first 60 days following their birth or adoption, emergency care, clinical preventive care received from a network provider, the first eight behavioral health outpatient visits to a network provider for a medically diagnosed and covered condition per fiscal year (Oct. 1–Sept. 30) or beneficiaries with other health insurance.*

## Keep Up with Well-Child Visits

**W**hen kids have a fever or a broken bone, parents know to take them to a doctor, but it is just as important for parents to take kids in for routine well-child visits.

From the time your child is born until he or she starts school, there are a number of visits your child should have with the doctor. Scheduled visits can usually be planned around the ages at which different vaccines should be given.

During routine visits, the doctor will track and monitor your child's health and development. If your child has a developmental delay, your provider will help you coordinate the necessary care and treatment.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in the United States, about 13 percent of children ages 3–17 have a developmental or behavioral disability

(e.g., autism, intellectual disability, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder). Additionally, many children have delays in language or other areas that can affect their readiness for school. The CDC cites that fewer than half of children with developmental delays are identified as needing help before they start school. At that point, children may have missed out on earlier opportunities to get help or treatment.<sup>1</sup>

Ask your child's doctor for a schedule of necessary visits and keep all appointments. If you have concerns about your child's development, share them with the doctor right away.

For age recommendations, risk guidelines and benefit information, talk to your child's doctor or visit [www.tricare.mil/coveredservices](http://www.tricare.mil/coveredservices). For a current vaccine schedule, refer to [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines). ■

*1. [www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/childdevelopment/screening.html)*

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to consider is the Mediterranean diet. A growing body of scientific evidence suggests it helps prevent heart disease. Visit [www.tricare.mil/livewell/hlarticles.aspx](http://www.tricare.mil/livewell/hlarticles.aspx) and select “New Diet can be Path to Heart Health” for more information.

A few simple tips can also make a big difference. Instead of drastically changing your diet, try replacing a few things every day with fruits or vegetables. Instead of a high-calorie snack in the afternoon, have an apple or an orange. Replace a baked potato with a sweet potato, or switch to a low-sodium version of your favorite treat. Try carrots and hummus instead of chips and salsa. Change your behavior at mealtime, like eating slower or leaving food on your plate. Little changes like this can become habits that contribute to better health.

Another useful tip is to plan your meals in advance. If you have a week’s worth of healthy options for dinner, you’re less likely to resort to unhealthy, last-minute options. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has more tips on its website at <http://go.usa.gov/2Unz>.

A balanced diet is something you can share with your whole family. Getting your children to love fruits and vegetables at an early age offers a lifetime of benefits, from a reduced risk of high blood pressure and heart disease to improved mood and behavior. Read more about the benefits of a healthy diet for young people from the CDC at <http://go.usa.gov/2UQR>.

Obesity is a dangerous epidemic, and while the military community is healthier than Americans in general, we can all take steps to ensure we have a healthy diet. When healthy, you will feel better physically and mentally and pass healthy habits on to your children. Visit [www.tricare.mil/livewell](http://www.tricare.mil/livewell) for monthly tips on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. ■

## Help Prevent Tick Bites during Summer Months

**W**armer days and more time spent outside can lead to higher exposure to ticks, especially in grassy, bushy areas and forests. Ticks are the most active in warmer months and they are found in many parts of the United States, including the Northeast. There are simple steps you can take to limit your exposure to ticks and reduce your risk of tick-related illnesses:

- Avoid direct contact by staying out of wooded areas where grasses are high.
- Walk in the center of a nature trail.
- For adults, apply a repellent with 20 percent or more DEET on clothing and exposed skin. For children age two months or older, parents should only apply products containing no more than 30 percent DEET and always take special care to avoid eyes, mouths and hands.
- If you are going to be in a wooded area, wear a light colored long-sleeved shirt tucked into long pants. Tuck your pant legs into your socks and wear a hat to protect your head. Check yourself and others frequently.
- Note that ticks can be found on wood products in parks and campgrounds, so check picnic benches before using them.
- Take a shower within two hours after leaving an area where there are ticks. Check for ticks on your body, paying special attention to underarms, hairlines and groin areas. Continue tick checks for several days.

- Wash and dry clothes in a hot dryer for an hour to kill ticks. Check pets daily as they can bring ticks into the house.
- Keep the yard clean by mowing lawns frequently, removing leaf litter, keeping playground equipment and lawn furniture away from yard edges and trees and discouraging animals such as deer, raccoons and stray dogs from visiting.
- If you find a tick, carefully remove it with tweezers and wash the affected area with soap and water.

If you are bitten by a tick and have the following symptoms, see your health care provider for an evaluation. You may be experiencing symptoms of Lyme disease. Early recognition and treatment decreases the risk of more serious complications of Lyme disease. Watch for these possible symptoms<sup>1</sup>:

- Fever and chills
- Joint pain
- Body/muscle aches
- Fatigue
- Headaches
- Swollen lymph nodes
- Red, expanding rash which might resemble a “bull’s-eye”

Visit [www.cdc.gov/features/stopticks](http://www.cdc.gov/features/stopticks) for more information. ■

1. [www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs\\_symptoms/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/signs_symptoms/index.html)

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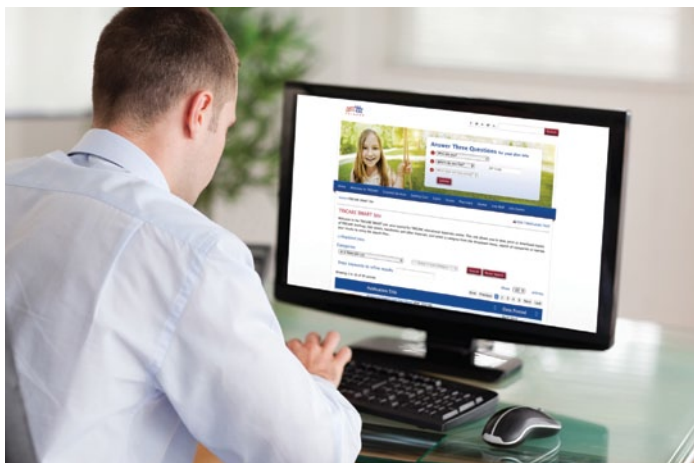
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## Receive TRICARE Communications and Newsletters via E-mail

On the TRICARE website, you have access to a variety of resources that offer the latest benefit information from TRICARE. There are several ways to stay up to date:

- The TRICARE SMART Site is your source for TRICARE educational materials online. This site allows you to view, print or download copies of TRICARE fact sheets, handbooks and other materials. To learn more visit the online publications page at [www.tricare.mil/smart](http://www.tricare.mil/smart).
- Get TRICARE news and information delivered to your e-mail inbox. Active duty service members, National Guard and Reserve members, retirees and family members can all sign up to receive e-mail updates about health, dental and pharmacy benefit changes; *TRICARE Health Matters* newsletters; health and disaster alerts; updates from regional contractors; and news about healthy-living tools such as smoking-cessation resources. Sign up at [www.tricare.mil/subscriptions](http://www.tricare.mil/subscriptions) by providing your e-mail address and then selecting the topics that interest you.



- MilConnect is a website of the Defense Manpower Data Center that enables sponsors, spouses and their children (age 18 and older) to access their health care information, program eligibility, personnel records and other information from a centralized location. Sign up to receive TRICARE benefits correspondence by e-mail instead of postal mail by visiting <http://milconnect.dmdc.mil>. ■

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