

The Doctor is in ...

Make Nutrition Work for You

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Most 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

The 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

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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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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.

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. ■

Register Online for Benefit Tools and Wellness Resources

The UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans Web portal is designed to serve the 2.9 million TRICARE West Region beneficiaries. All of the content, tools and resources at www.uhcmilitarywest.com are tailored to your individual needs.

Registered beneficiaries can:

- Check eligibility
- View referrals
- View claims and deductibles
- View other health insurance information
- Make payments

Health and Wellness Resources at Your Fingertips

The Web portal also provides open access to a multitude of behavioral health, disease management and healthy living programs through the Live and Work Well health and wellness portal.

Live and Work Well is customized for service members and their families. The portal can be accessed by visiting www.uhcmilitarywest.com/beneficiary and clicking on “Behavioral Health Programs,” then clicking “Live and Work Well” at the bottom of the page.

You may also search for behavioral health providers and facilities for substance use disorders from the Live and Work Well portal. To search click on “Search for Clinician” under the “Quick Links” section. ■

Keep Your DEERS Information Up To Date

The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is a computerized database of uniformed service members (active duty and retired) worldwide, their family members and others who are eligible for military benefits, including TRICARE. Proper and current registration in DEERS is key to receiving timely, effective TRICARE benefits including doctors’ appointments, prescriptions, payment of health care expenses, authorization letters and explanations of benefits. It is important to keep all information for you and your family current in DEERS to ensure TRICARE eligibility. The TRICARE sponsor must register family members in DEERS; once registered, family members age 18 and older may update their own contact information.

When You Should Update DEERS

Review your information in DEERS regularly to ensure it is current and plan to update DEERS whenever you experience any of the following life events:

- Change in sponsor status: retiring or separating from active duty, a National Guard or Reserve member activation or deactivation or a change in service status (e.g., enlisted to officer, branch change)
- Getting married or divorced
- Having a baby or adopting a child
- Moving to a new location for any reason
- Becoming eligible for Medicare
- Death of a sponsor or family member ■

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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 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 for monthly tips on how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. ■

Stay Safe by the Water

If you plan to spend time at the pool, at the beach or on a boat with family and friends, it’s important to put safety first. Drowning ranks fifth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the United States.¹ Whether you are planning a weekend at the beach or having a backyard barbeque by the pool, being aware of the risks and taking safety precautions can help everyone stay safe by the water.

Choose a swimming area with on-duty lifeguards whenever possible and have a responsible adult, preferably one who is certified in CPR, observe swimmers in and around the water. If lifeguards are not available, always swim with a buddy and pay attention to posted danger signs and beach warning flags.

In 2010, U.S. Coast Guard reports indicated that most boating deaths were caused by drowning, and in most cases the victims were not wearing life jackets.¹ Remember that life jackets should be Coast Guard approved, in good and serviceable condition and the appropriate size for the intended user (adult-size life jackets will not work for children).²



To learn basic swimming skills or improve your confidence in the water, consider taking formal lessons. Contact your local community or military recreation center for details about classes. For more information on water-safety tips, visit www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety. ■

1. www.cdc.gov/homeandrecreationalafety/water-safety/waterinjuries-factsheet.html
2. www.uscgboating.org/safety/life_jacket_wear_wearing_your_life_jacket.aspx

TRICARE HealthMatters

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Minneapolis, MN 55433
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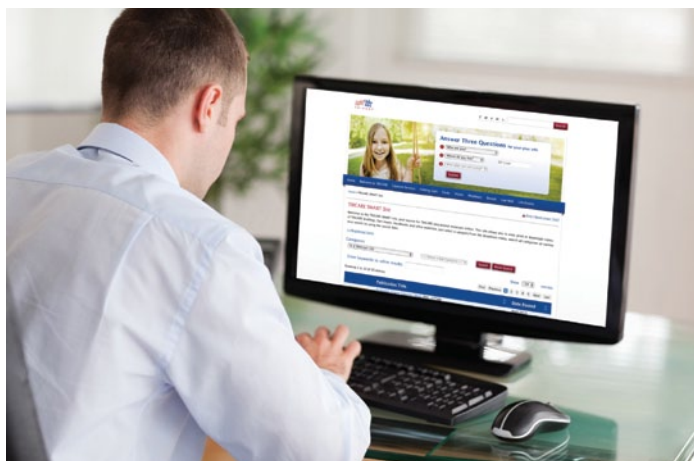


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Receive TRICARE Communications and Newsletters via E-mail

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.
- 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 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>. ■