



HEALTH MATTERS

A PUBLICATION FOR TRICARE® BENEFICIARIES

Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine

The wait is nearly over. COVID-19 vaccines are more widely available.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID-19 vaccination is an important tool to help us get back to normal life. If you or your family members still need to get a vaccine, TRICARE is here to help you navigate your options.

Can I get the COVID-19 vaccine at a military hospital or clinic?

You can get the COVID-19 vaccine at any overseas military hospital or clinic that offers it. You aren't required to get the vaccine at the same military hospital or clinic where you get your routine care. To find where the vaccine is offered, visit www.tricare.mil/vaccineappointments and click "Overseas." You may also be able to use the new DHA Appointing Portal (www.tricare.mil/dap) to find and schedule a COVID-19 vaccine appointment at your military hospital or clinic. (See article, "Schedule Your Vaccine at a Military Hospital or Clinic," page 4.)

What are my options to get the vaccine outside of a military hospital?

If you're an active duty service member, you can get the vaccine at a military hospital or clinic. You can get the vaccine through a U.S. Embassy Health Unit if you're assigned to the embassy. For other TRICARE beneficiaries, your other options may include:

- Local health department COVID-19 vaccination sites in U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands)
- Pharmacies in certain U.S. territories participating in the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program (network and non-network)
- Your overseas civilian provider
- A vaccination program offered by your host country

Note that certain COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use by foreign governments and offered by your overseas civilian provider or a host country's vaccination program may be approved by a certifying body that's not the U.S.-based Food and Drug Administration. If you have questions about your vaccination options, call your TRICARE Overseas Program Regional Call Center.

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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 hospital and clinic guidelines and policies may be different than those outlined in this publication.** For the most recent information, contact the TRICARE Overseas Program contractor, your TRICARE Service Center, or your local military hospital or clinic.



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Is the COVID-19 vaccine free overseas?

Yes. However, there may be a cost based on your health plan for an office visit with a provider or if you need follow-on care.

As you do your part to slow the spread of COVID-19, continue to protect yourself and others by taking precautions and following CDC recommendations once you've been fully vaccinated. You can learn more about those recommendations and COVID-19 vaccines by going to www.cdc.gov/covid-19.

You can learn more about COVID-19, including vaccines, testing, and getting care, on the TRICARE COVID-19 page at www.tricare.mil/coronavirus. ★

Don't Be a No-Show

Did you know that missing a medical appointment without canceling—also known as a “no-show”—prevents others from using that time slot? If you have a civilian provider, you could be charged a fee if you miss an appointment—which isn't covered by TRICARE.

If you need to miss an appointment, be sure to call to cancel or reschedule at least 24 hours in advance or in accordance with your provider's specific policy. But make every effort not to miss your medical appointments and only cancel with your provider if you must. ★



Take the Publications Survey

Take the brief publications survey by using the QR code to the left or by clicking on “Publications Satisfaction Survey” at www.tricare.mil/publications.

Getting a COVID-19 Test

TRICARE covers COVID-19 tests when they're medically necessary and appropriate. This means your TRICARE-authorized provider will use their clinical judgement to decide if you need one. Your test must also be performed at a TRICARE-authorized lab or facility. If you got an approved COVID-19 test and paid a copayment, you can file a claim for reimbursement.

Do you have questions about COVID-19 and your TRICARE benefits? Be sure to contact your TRICARE Overseas Program Regional Call Center. You can find additional details on testing overseas at www.tricare.mil/covid19testing.

Remember, if you're on active duty, you should get a COVID-19 test at a military hospital or clinic when it's possible. Once you get tested, make sure the results are documented in your medical records.

You can learn more about COVID-19 and TRICARE at www.tricare.mil/coronavirus. ★

It's Time to Catch Up on Your Routine Care

Did you miss some medical appointments last year? If you've put off routine appointments for yourself or your family due to COVID-19, it's time to schedule them. Getting caught up with your routine doctor visits is important, and your TRICARE benefit covers several preventive health exams. Learn more at www.tricare.mil/preventive.

Preventive Care and Immunizations

Preventive health screening tests are covered when provided during a covered Health Promotion and Disease Prevention exam (www.tricare.mil/hpdp). This includes blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, and more. In addition to the COVID-19 vaccine, stay on top of other immunizations, including children's scheduled vaccinations. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful or deadly diseases. Adults need immunizations and booster shots, as well. TRICARE covers CDC-recommended, age-appropriate vaccines and immunizations (www.tricare.mil/immunizations).

Wellness Exams

TRICARE covers Health Promotion and Disease Prevention exams (www.tricare.mil/hpdp). TRICARE also covers well-woman exams for women under age 65 (www.tricare.mil/wellwoman). They may include breast

exams, mammography (including 3D mammography), pelvic exams, Pap tests, and more.

Routine checkups for your child include health exams starting at birth. TRICARE covers well-child exams for children under age 6 (from birth through age 5). When required for school enrollment, TRICARE covers physicals. This doesn't include sports physicals. Learn more at www.tricare.mil/wellchildcare.

Dental and Vision Care

Don't forget about your oral health, a key to overall wellness. TRICARE offers dental coverage to active duty family members through the TRICARE Dental Program (www.tricare.mil/coveredservices/isitcovered/dental).

Keep your vision healthy by checking in for an eye exam. Your vision benefits, including eye exams, depend on your sponsor status, your TRICARE health plan, and age (www.tricare.mil/coveredservices/isitcovered/vision). You may need a referral or pre-authorization for some vision care services. If you have vision coverage through the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program, follow the rules of that plan (www.benefeds.com).

Stay healthy by taking preventive steps and schedule your appointments today. Learn more about these preventive services and others at www.tricare.mil/preventive. ★

Get Plugged In: Visit the TRICARE Newsroom

Have you visited the new TRICARE Newsroom? Doing so is a great way to learn about what's happening at the Defense Health Agency and across the Military Health System (MHS). From the home page, you can also find downloadable TRICARE publications, like fact sheets, brochures, newsletters, and more. You can:

- Read about enhancements to your TRICARE coverage.
- Watch videos like the "Got Your 6" series.
- Spot announcements for webinars or TRICARE Facebook Live events that help you learn about your TRICARE benefits, and more.

You can bookmark and visit <https://newsroom.tricare.mil> often. The TRICARE Newsroom will help you stay in the know. ★

Schedule Your Vaccine at a Military Hospital or Clinic

When you schedule your COVID-19 vaccine, you may be able to book an appointment using the Defense Health Agency Appointing Portal (DAP) at your nearby military hospital, clinic, or vaccination site.

“DAP is a simple online tool to help you schedule your COVID-19 vaccine appointment at your closest military hospital or clinic,” said Air Force Lt. Col. Regina Tow, project manager, DHA COVID-19 Vaccine Information Technology Planning. “It’s accessible from outside the Department of Defense network on any computer, tablet, or smartphone.”

Participating military hospitals and clinics provide COVID-19 vaccination scheduling information through DAP (www.tricare.mil/dap). Not all military hospitals or clinics are using DAP. Some may use other portals for vaccination scheduling, like TRICARE Online (TOL) or MHS GENESIS. Go to www.tricare.mil/patientportal to learn more.

If you don’t see your local facility on DAP, visit www.tricare.mil/vaccineappointments to check other locations.

For a link to your military hospital or clinic’s scheduling site, visit www.tricare.mil/dap. ★



3 Reasons Why You Should Schedule Your COVID-19 Vaccine

There are plenty of reasons why you may decide to get a vaccine. Here are three benefits of getting a COVID-19 vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

1

Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself, your loved ones, and the most vulnerable in the community. Vaccination is an effective way to lower your risk of contracting COVID-19. It will also help keep you from getting seriously ill if you do catch the virus. Getting vaccinated can also protect the health of the people around you, including those at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

2

COVID-19 vaccination is a safe way to build immunity. Although getting COVID-19 may offer some natural immunity, according to the CDC, “the risk or severe illness and death from COVID-19 far outweighs any benefits of natural immunity.” The vaccines will help your body develop immunity to the virus that causes COVID-19 without you having to get sick. And you can’t get sick with COVID-19 from a COVID-19 vaccine. If you have medical concerns about vaccines, consult with your doctor.

3

A COVID-19 vaccine is an important tool in helping to stop the pandemic. Vaccines will work with your immune system so it will be ready to fight the virus if you’re exposed. According to the CDC, your best protection from COVID-19 is a combination of getting vaccinated and continuing to follow CDC’s recommendations to protect yourself and others. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/covid-19. ★

Real-Time Language Assistance Service Helps You Connect

International SOS provides real-time language assistance services in more than 200 languages. If you use TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP) Prime and TOP Prime Remote, make sure you take advantage. This assistance helps you at the time of your medical appointment to improve your experience.

If you'd like to receive language assistance services over the phone at your next medical appointment, contact your

TOP Regional Call Center and choose option 1. Make sure you provide your full name, your Social Security number or Department of Defense Benefits Number, and date of birth. For toll-free country-specific contact numbers, visit www.tricare-overseas.com/contactus. ★

Follow TRICARE Guidance if You Use Midwife Services Overseas

Did you know that TRICARE covers midwife services overseas? To be reimbursed, the services must be provided by a certified nurse midwife (CNM) who is:

- Certified by the American Midwifery Certification Board
- Licensed (when required) by the local licensing agency for the jurisdiction in which the care is provided

A CNM, who meets these qualifications, may provide covered care independent of physician referral and supervision. In some cases, you may be able to get midwife services from a registered nurse, who isn't a CNM. In that case, you need a licensed physician's referral and continuing supervision that's documented in the claims submission. You must meet this requirement to be eligible for reimbursement.

TRICARE doesn't cover midwife services by a lay midwife, certified professional midwife, or certified midwife.

Contact the TRICARE Overseas Program Regional Call Center for assistance with referrals and authorizations and to confirm midwife qualifications. Download the *TRICARE Maternity Care Brochure* at www.tricare.mil/publications or visit www.tricare.mil/coveredservices to learn more. ★





HEALTH MATTERS



Does TRICARE cover 3D mammography?

Yes. TRICARE covers annual 3D mammograms, which is an X-ray of the breast. If you're a woman age 40 years old or older—or age 30 with a 15% or greater lifetime risk of breast cancer—you should get a mammogram every year. Getting your annual mammogram can help your doctor find changes before you feel signs or symptoms. So, make it a priority each year. For more on 3D mammography and other TRICARE covered breast exams, visit www.tricare.mil/mammograms or www.tricare.mil/breastexams.

I'm moving this summer. Will I be able to change TRICARE plans?

It depends on what plan options are available where you're moving to and which plans you're eligible for. Whenever you or an eligible family member experience a Qualifying Life Event (QLE), like moving away to college, your plan options may change. If you're eligible for TRICARE, a QLE gives you 90 days to enroll in a new plan or make changes to your existing TRICARE plan, depending on your location and sponsor status. You can learn more about QLEs and your coverage options at www.tricare.mil/lifeevents.

Where can I find publications that explain my plan and costs?

Download the *TRICARE Costs and Fees Sheet* for a look at premiums, copayments, and other costs associated with your plan or visit www.tricare.mil/costs. If you're looking for more information about how your health plan works, check out the *TRICARE Plans Overview* or visit www.tricare.mil/plans. You can find these downloads and other helpful resources by going to www.tricare.mil/publications. Take the "Publications Satisfaction Survey" while you're there. ★

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TRICARE OVERSEAS PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

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www.tricare-overseas.com

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QUALITY ASSURANCE, GRIEVANCES, APPEALS AND COMPLIMENTS/COMMENDATIONS

www.tricare-overseas.com/Beneficiaries_Grievances_Appeals.htm

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1. For toll-free contact information, visit www.tricare-overseas.com. Only call Medical Assistance numbers to coordinate overseas emergency care.