



HEALTH MATTERS

A PUBLICATION FOR TRICARE® BENEFICIARIES

Get Your COVID-19 Vaccine

The wait is over. Multiple COVID-19 vaccines are available to all Americans.

“This is great news for our service members and their families,” said Acting Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs Dr. Terry Adirim. “They’ve been patiently waiting for their opportunity to get vaccinated. When they do, they’ll help play a huge role in slowing the spread of the virus.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the current vaccines have proven highly effective at preventing COVID-19. 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?

If you’re eligible for TRICARE, you can get the COVID-19 vaccine at any 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. For a complete list of the facilities offering the vaccine, visit www.tricare.mil/vaccinelocations. Or schedule your shot using the new DHA Appointing Portal at www.tricare.mil/dap. (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?

You’re encouraged to get the first vaccine that’s available to you. Your other options may include:

- Local or state health department COVID-19 vaccination sites
- Your civilian provider
- Pharmacies participating in the Federal Retail Pharmacy Program

Participating pharmacies may include TRICARE network pharmacies and non-network pharmacies, and vary by state and territory. Check to see if your local pharmacy is part of the program by going to www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/retail-pharmacy-program. You can also use the CDC’s Vaccine Finder at www.vaccinefinder.org to find a COVID-19 vaccination site near you.

What does the vaccine cost?

The vaccine is free to all TRICARE beneficiaries. However, there may be a cost based on your health plan for an office visit with a provider or if you need follow-up care.

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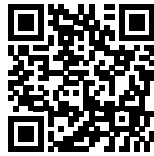
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An Important Note About TRICARE Program Information: At the time of publication, this information is current. It is important to remember that TRICARE policies and benefits are governed by public law and federal regulations. Changes to TRICARE programs 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 your TRICARE regional contractor or local military hospital or clinic. Most TRICARE plans meet the Affordable Care Act requirement for minimum essential coverage.

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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. ★



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.

Highlighting Automated Self-Service Telephone Options

Health Net Federal Services, LLC offers a variety of self-service tools to help you easily access your TRICARE information. While many tools are available online, don't forget there are several things you can do using our automated self-service telephone system at any time, 24/7.

Simply call **1-844-866-WEST (9378)** to get started. Through the automated self-service telephone system, you can hear about:

- Plan types
- Eligibility
- Deductible and catastrophic cap information
- Authorization or referral status
- Claim status

You can also make an enrollment fee payment by credit card over the phone. And if you need information or to perform a task not available through our telephone system, visit www.tricare-west.com to view your web-based self-service options. ★



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. Visit www.tricare.mil/preventive and read on to learn more.

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 age-appropriate vaccines and immunizations as recommended by the CDC (www.tricare.mil/immunizations).

Wellness Exams

TRICARE covers Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Exams (www.tricare.mil/coveredservices/isitcovered/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. Visit 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 scheduling 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 award-winning "MHS Minute"
- Spot announcements for webinars or TRICARE Facebook Live events that help you learn about your TRICARE benefits, and more.

Bookmark <https://newsroom.tricare.mil> and visit 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 Department of Defense 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/vaccinelocations to check 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.** All approved COVID-19 vaccines currently available in the U.S. have been deemed safe and effective at preventing COVID-19 based on clinical testing. 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. ★

TRICARE Select Group A Retirees: You May Be Eligible to Reinstate Coverage by June 30

On Jan. 1, 2021, TRICARE Select Group A beneficiaries began paying enrollment fees. If you didn't set up a monthly enrollment fee payment before Jan. 1, 2021, you were disenrolled on Feb. 1. Call Health Net Federal Services, LLC at **1-844-866-9378** by June 30 to request to be reinstated.

Group A includes those retirees whose initial enlistment or appointment, or that of their sponsor's, occurred before Jan. 1, 2018. There was no change for TRICARE Select Group B beneficiaries, as they currently pay enrollment fees.

If you're a Group A retiree who is now disenrolled, you can only get care at a military hospital or clinic if space is available. To get your TRICARE Select

coverage reinstated, you must take action by June 30. Call volumes are low now, but expected to increase as the deadline nears. Don't wait until the last minute.

If you use TRICARE For Life, TRICARE Prime, TRICARE Reserve Select, TRICARE Retired Reserve, or TRICARE Young Adult, this change didn't affect you. You don't need to take any action.

If you no longer wish to have TRICARE Select Group A coverage, call and let us know so we'll no longer contact you. View payment eligibility options, related dates, and any steps you may need to take at www.tricare.mil/selectenrollmentfees to learn more about this change. ★



Tobacco Smoke Can Worsen Your Asthma

Living with a chronic lung disease like asthma means the lungs are more sensitive than if you don't have asthma. Long-term exposure to smoke can severely impact lung function and is one of the primary triggers for asthma attacks. If you have asthma and smoke, you're even more likely than a nonsmoker to need to visit the emergency room.

Secondhand smoke is also a common trigger for asthma sufferers. Smoke irritates the airways and can provoke an attack. Whether you smoke or you're frequently exposed to secondhand smoke, it's important to know how to manage your smoke triggers.

Visit the Health Net Federal Services, LLC Learning Center at www.tricare-west.com/go/learningcenter to locate convenient online programs and recorded classes that will help you manage asthma and quit tobacco. You can also self-nominate for one-on-one coaching for asthma management on the "Disease Management Program Information and Nomination" page at www.tricare-west/go/dmfaq. For details about TRICARE and tobacco cessation, download the *TRICARE Tobacco Cessation Program Fact Sheet* at www.tricare.mil/publications. ★



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, a QLE gives you 90 days to enroll in a new plan or make changes to your existing TRICARE plan. Keep in mind, for your move to count as a QLE, you must be relocating to a new city, region, ZIP +4 code, or country. 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. ★

TRICARE WEST REGION CONTACT INFORMATION

HEALTH NET FEDERAL SERVICES, LLC

1-844-866-WEST (1-844-866-9378)
www.tricare-west.com

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

MILITARY HEALTH SYSTEM NURSE ADVICE LINE

Nurse Advice Line (Stateside)
1-800-TRICARE (1-800-874-2273), option 1
www.mhsnurseadvice.com

DEFENSE ENROLLMENT ELIGIBILITY REPORTING SYSTEM (DEERS)

1-800-538-9552
www.tricare.mil/deers

MILCONNECT (UPDATE DEERS, GET ECORRESPONDENCE)

<https://milconnect.dmdc.osd.mil>

TRICARE NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

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