



# TRICARE® Autism Care Demonstration

## Coverage of applied behavior analysis for beneficiaries with autism spectrum disorder

TRICARE covers medical and behavior modification services for beneficiaries diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). ASD affects essential human behaviors such as social interaction, the ability to communicate ideas and feelings, imagination and relationship formation. Services covered under your TRICARE benefit include occupational therapy, physical therapy, health care provider services, psychological services, psychological testing, prescription drugs and speech therapy.

Applied behavior analysis (ABA) is another covered benefit. ABA uses a set of techniques based on behavior modification principles, such as positive reinforcement, to increase or decrease targeted behaviors. ABA can help develop skills, such as speech, self-help and social interaction. It can also help to decrease certain behaviors, such as aggression or self-injury. ABA is covered under the TRICARE Comprehensive Autism Care Demonstration, separate from the TRICARE medical benefit that provides coverage of the medical services listed above.

### AUTISM CARE DEMONSTRATION ELIGIBILITY

ABA services are covered under the Autism Care Demonstration for all qualifying dependents of active duty service members (ADSMs), retirees and certain National Guard and Reserve members. To qualify for covered ABA services under the Autism Care Demonstration, your dependent, or child, must also:

- Have been diagnosed with ASD by a TRICARE-authorized approved ASD-diagnosing provider.
- If the sponsor is an ADSM, your child with ASD must be signed up for the Exceptional Family Member Program (EFMP) and registered in the Extended Care Health Option (ECHO) (unless waived in specific situations).

### Going to see a new ABA provider?

#### **Call your regional contractor**

*Remember, your contractor must authorize all ABA services and can help you find providers.*

### HOW DO I GET STARTED?

To qualify for ABA services under the Autism Care Demonstration, your child must be diagnosed with ASD by an approved ASD-diagnosing provider. Once your child is diagnosed by an approved ASD-diagnosing provider:

- The provider must send a referral to your regional contractor with the ASD diagnosis and supporting documentation.
- Your regional contractor will issue prior authorization for an ABA assessment from an authorized ABA provider. If completed, the regional contractor will then issue prior authorization for six months of ABA under the Autism Care Demonstration.
  - The prior authorization for ABA services will include the name of an authorized ABA supervisor who is accepting new patients. However, you are free to choose any network ABA provider who is accepting new patients. To request a provider other than the one listed on your prior authorization or if you are not offered care within the 28-day specialty care access standard, contact your regional contractor.
  - To check the status of the prior authorization for ABA services, contact your regional contractor. For contact information, see the *Looking For More Information?* section of this fact sheet.

## STEPS TO GETTING ABA SERVICES UNDER THE AUTISM CARE DEMONSTRATION

### 1 Get an ASD diagnosis from an approved ASD-diagnosing provider

The approved ASD-diagnosing provider will send a referral for ABA with the supporting documentation to your TRICARE regional contractor.

**Note:** Either Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule, Second Edition (ADOS-2) testing or an evaluation by a specialized ASD-diagnosing provider is required within one year to confirm an ASD diagnosis made by a primary care health care provider.

### 2

Get prior authorization for an assessment from an authorized ABA supervisor from your regional contractor, which will include the name of an authorized ABA supervisor who is accepting new patients.

You will need to make an appointment with the authorized ABA supervisor listed on your prior authorization or contact your regional contractor to request another authorized ABA supervisor.

### 3

Initial ABA assessment conducted, then prior authorization for six months of ABA issued by regional contractor

### 4

Initial treatment plan created by an authorized ABA supervisor

### 5

One-on-one ABA services provided as indicated in treatment plan

### 6

Progress evaluated with a reassessment

### 7

Treatment plan updated; help for parents and caregivers learning ABA techniques provided

## APPROVED ASD-DIAGNOSING PROVIDERS

**Primary care health care providers** with the following specialties:

- Family practice
- Internal medicine
- Pediatrics

**Note:** Either testing (using ADOS-2) or a diagnostic evaluation by a specialized ASD-diagnosing provider is required within one year to confirm the ASD diagnosis.

**Specialized ASD-diagnosing providers** in:

- Developmental behavioral pediatrics
- Neurodevelopmental pediatrics
- Child neurology
- Adult or child psychiatry
- Licensed clinical psychology, doctoral level

**Note:** No testing is required to confirm the ASD diagnosis.

## CARE RECEIVED UNDER THE AUTISM CARE DEMONSTRATION

Your child's authorized ABA supervisor will:

- Complete an initial ABA assessment of your child
- Develop an individual treatment plan dictating the types of services and number of hours of ABA recommended\*
- Work one-on-one with your child or supervise an assistant behavior analyst or behavior technician to provide the ABA services one-on-one to your child
- Help you, other parents and other caregivers of your child practice ABA independently with your child
- Reevaluate your child every six months to determine progress and update the treatment plan

\* *The individual treatment plan developed by your authorized ABA supervisor will dictate how much ABA is recommended each week. The hours may change during reevaluation.*

### What is in an ABA treatment plan?

Your child's authorized ABA supervisor will develop a treatment plan under which all ABA services are provided. This treatment plan will be modified as progress toward objectives and goals are reviewed. It will include such information as:

- The number of hours per week of ABA services recommended for your child by your authorized ABA supervisor
- Personalized ABA objectives and goals
- Description of skills and behaviors that can help address problems, including the areas of social interaction, communication and behavior
- Objectives and goals for parents and/or caregivers to help in day-to-day ABA interventions



## Definitions

**Applied behavior analysis (ABA)**—The design, implementation and evaluation of planned changes to an individual's environment that will help foster improvements in behavior. ABA services are used to help address behavioral challenges for those with autism spectrum disorder.

**Autism spectrum disorder (ASD)**—

A neurodevelopmental disorder that impairs a child's ability to communicate and interact with others. It also includes restricted repetitive behaviors, interests and activities, such as doing the same action over and over again, insisting on a certain routine or ritual or obsessing on a topic. These issues can cause significant impairment in social, occupational and other areas of functioning. The word "spectrum" in ASD refers to the wide range of symptoms and severity.

**Authorized ABA supervisor**—A master's degree level or higher certified behavior analyst or other TRICARE-authorized ABA provider practicing within the scope of his or her state licensure or state certification. The Autism Care Demonstration covers all ABA services given by an authorized ABA supervisor, such as ABA assessment, treatment plan development and updates and direct one-on-one ABA services.

**Assistant behavior analyst**—A supervised bachelor's degree level behavior specialist who provides ABA services under the supervision of an authorized ABA supervisor. The Autism Care Demonstration covers certain services provided by the assistant behavior analyst, such as duties delegated by an authorized ABA supervisor. Assistant behavior analysts can't practice independently.

**Behavior technician**—A supervised ABA team member who meets specified training requirements and can provide one-on-one ABA services under the supervision of an authorized ABA supervisor. Behavior technicians must be certified by Dec. 31, 2016. Behavior technicians were previously known as "ABA tutors."

## PAYING FOR ABA UNDER THE AUTISM CARE DEMONSTRATION

You pay the copayment or cost-share for your TRICARE program (for example, TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Standard) for all ABA services:

- Active duty family members (ADFM) with TRICARE Prime: \$0
- ADFMs with TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra, as well as TRICARE Reserve Select members:
  - 15 percent with a network provider (after the yearly deductible is met)
  - 20 percent with a non-network provider (after the yearly deductible is met)
- Retired family members with TRICARE Prime: \$12
- Retired family members with TRICARE Standard and TRICARE Extra, as well as TRICARE Retired Reserve members:
  - 20 percent with a network provider (after the yearly deductible is met)
  - 25 percent with a non-network provider (after the yearly deductible is met)

These amounts apply to your fiscal year (Oct. 1–Sept. 30) catastrophic cap.

There are no yearly or lifetime caps on the amount of ABA TRICARE covers—this means your child won’t have to stop ABA services at any point in the year due to having reached a benefit maximum. Visit [www.tricare.mil/costs](http://www.tricare.mil/costs) for more information.

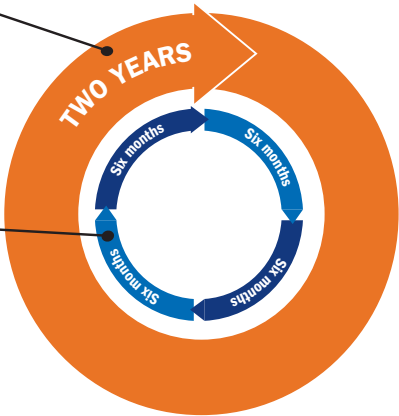
## ADSMS MUST ENROLL IN EFMP AND REGISTER IN ECHO

ADSMs who are seeking ABA services for family members with ASD must be enrolled in their service’s EFMP and registered in ECHO unless waived in specific situations within 180 days. EFMP works to help military families with special needs during the duty assignment process and after families have arrived at their new installation. Each service branch has its own EFMP and enrollment process. For more information, contact your service branch or visit [www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp). ECHO provides supplemental services to ADFMs with qualifying psychological or physical disabilities. For more information, visit [www.tricare.mil/echo](http://www.tricare.mil/echo).

## ONGOING ABA REQUIREMENTS (TWO-YEAR CYCLE)

**Every two years:**  
 Periodic ABA program review to see if ABA is helping your child and, if not, to determine how to best help your child

**Every six months:**  
 Reassessment and treatment plan update  
 Before the end of the six-month authorization period, you will need a new referral and reauthorization for the next six months of ABA. You can ask your authorized ABA supervisor to request reauthorization from your regional contractor



**Throughout this two-year cycle and beyond:**  
 Your child will get ABA at the frequency approved in his or her individual treatment plan. There are no yearly or lifetime caps on the amount of ABA TRICARE covers.

## ABA SERVICES FOR TRICARE OVERSEAS PROGRAM BENEFICIARIES

Overseas, in very limited locations and circumstances, your child may be able to get ABA services from master's level and above board-certified behavior analysts who are certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. This means that ABA services are only authorized in countries that have providers with these certifications.

The ABA benefit isn't available in overseas countries where there are no board-certified behavior analysts within the TRICARE specialty care access standards. Tiered model services (assistant behavior analysts and behavior technicians) aren't covered overseas.

For more information on getting ABA services overseas, contact the TOP contractor. For contact information, see the *Looking For More Information?* section below.

## LOOKING FOR More Information?

GO TO [www.tricare.mil/contactus](http://www.tricare.mil/contactus)

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### TRICARE North Region

Health Net Federal Services, LLC  
1-877-TRICARE (1-877-874-2273)  
[www.hnfs.com](http://www.hnfs.com)

O

### TRICARE Overseas Program (TOP)

International SOS  
Government Services, Inc.  
[www.tricare-overseas.com](http://www.tricare-overseas.com)

For toll-free contact information, visit this website.

### Exceptional Family Member Program

[www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp](http://www.militaryonesource.mil/efmp)

### Extended Care Health Option

[www.tricare.mil/echo](http://www.tricare.mil/echo)

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### TRICARE South Region

Humana Military  
1-800-444-5445  
[HumanaMilitary.com](http://HumanaMilitary.com)

### TOP Regional Call Centers

*Eurasia-Africa*  
+44-20-8762-8384 (overseas)  
1-877-678-1207 (stateside)  
[tricarelon@internationalsos.com](mailto:tricarelon@internationalsos.com)

*Latin America and Canada*  
+1-215-942-8393 (overseas)  
1-877-451-8659 (stateside)  
[tricarephl@internationalsos.com](mailto:tricarephl@internationalsos.com)

### TRICARE Pharmacy Program

1-877-363-1303  
[www.tricare.mil/pharmacy](http://www.tricare.mil/pharmacy)  
[www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE](http://www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE)

### milConnect Website—Update DEERS Information

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

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### TRICARE West Region

UnitedHealthcare  
Military & Veterans  
1-877-988-WEST (1-877-988-9378)  
[www.uhcmilitarywest.com](http://www.uhcmilitarywest.com)

*Pacific (Singapore)*  
+65-6339-2676 (overseas)  
1-877-678-1208 (stateside)  
[sin.tricare@internationalsos.com](mailto:sin.tricare@internationalsos.com)

*Pacific (Sydney)*  
+61-2-9273-2710 (overseas)  
1-877-678-1209 (stateside)  
[sydricare@internationalsos.com](mailto:sydricare@internationalsos.com)

### 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. The TRICARE program meets the minimum essential coverage requirement under the Affordable Care Act.

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