



HEALTH MATTERS

A PUBLICATION FOR TRICARE® BENEFICIARIES

Healthy Living ...

Make This Year's Resolutions Next Year's Achievements



Every January, millions of people make New Year's resolutions. Many resolutions are to get healthier: lose weight, drink less alcohol, quit using tobacco or exercise more. Unfortunately, many people drop their resolutions before spring. The most common reason for giving up on resolutions is trying to change too much, too fast. Lasting change doesn't happen overnight. New habits have to be built over time.

Consider choosing one of these healthy goals:

Eat Healthier

A good diet can improve your health and help you maintain a healthy weight. The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services issues guidelines on healthy eating.

These *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020* recommend eating less:

- Sodium
- Cholesterol
- Saturated fats
- Sugar
- Refined grains

Instead, you should eat more:

- Fruits and vegetables in a variety of colors
- Whole grains
- Fat-free or low-fat dairy
- Protein from a variety of sources like seafood, lean meat, eggs, beans, soy, nuts and seeds

Remember, you don't have to change everything at once. Making simple substitutions can help you keep your resolution to eat healthier. Instead of canned fruit with added sugars, reach for a piece of fresh fruit. Swap white bread for whole wheat. Drink water in place of soda. To learn more about making a healthy eating plan for the new year, go to www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines.

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Introducing: A New and Improved Website

www.uhcmilitarywest.com

UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans is ringing in 2017 with a new and improved website at www.uhcmilitarywest.com. To make managing your health care online even easier, the website has some exciting new features:

- A new look
- Easier navigation
- Improved compatibility with mobile devices
- Enhancements to the "Find a Provider" search tool

Take advantage of the improved website. Log in or register today for a personalized account on www.uhcmilitarywest.com. Once registered, you will be signed up to receive email alerts when important TRICARE documents are available to view online. If you already have an account, you don't need to create a new one.

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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Exercise More

Regular physical activity can keep you healthier at any age. It helps you maintain a healthy weight and reduces your risk for certain ailments like diabetes and heart disease.

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recommends that children and teenagers get one hour of physical activity every day. Adults should try to get:

Two hours and 30 minutes of moderate aerobic activity weekly	OR	One hour and 15 minutes of vigorous aerobic activity weekly
AND		
Muscle strengthening workouts at least twice a week		

Remember, any activity is better than no activity, so start small. For example, add a walk or bike ride to your daily routine. Go to www.health.gov/paguidelines for more information on national exercise guidelines.

Improve Mental Health

Taking care of your emotional well-being is just as important as taking care of your body. Do you feel anxious, depressed or stressed for days in a row or for no clear reason? Visit www.tricare.mil/mentalhealth for information on TRICARE-covered mental health services and for resources like resilience training and crisis intervention.

Kick the Tobacco Habit

Are you ready to stop using tobacco? The Department of Defense has many resources to help you quit. Go to www.ucequit2.org for tools that can help you get and stay tobacco-free. TRICARE covers quit counseling and tobacco-cessation products when prescribed by your health care provider. For more information and resources, including 24/7 tobacco quitlines, go to www.tricare.mil/healthwellness/tobacco.

New Year, New You

No matter what your health resolution, TRICARE wants to help you succeed. Go to www.tricare.mil for more information on health topics and your TRICARE benefit. ★

Your 2016 Affordable Care Act Tax Form

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires most Americans to maintain basic health care coverage, called minimum essential coverage. TRICARE meets the minimum essential coverage requirement under the ACA. The Department of Defense will report your 2016 TRICARE coverage to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). You will get an IRS Form 1095 listing your TRICARE coverage status for each month in 2016. The pay center that services your military, annuity or pension pay will provide you with your IRS Form 1095. If your military pay is serviced by the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, you can find more information at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>. If your military pay is serviced by the U.S. Coast Guard Pay and Personnel Center, visit www.uscg.mil/ppc. For information about the IRS tax forms, visit www.irs.gov. ★

Prevent and Detect Cervical Cancer Early

Every year, about 12,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 4,000 women die from it, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). This January, which is Cervical Health Awareness Month, is a good time to get screened.

The CDC reports about half of women diagnosed with cervical cancer have never or rarely been screened for the disease. You can prevent cervical cancer or detect it early when it is most treatable by getting screened. A regular Pap test can detect abnormal or unhealthy cells before they turn into cervical cancer. The Pap test can tell if you have an infection, abnormal cervical cells or cervical cancer.

Under TRICARE, routine Pap tests are covered yearly for women starting at age 21. The frequency is at patient and provider discretion (though not less than every three years). Human papillomavirus (HPV) DNA testing is covered as a cervical cancer screening when performed with a Pap test for women age 30 and older.

It is important to note a yearly/routine exam is not always covered. One health promotion and disease prevention exam is covered yearly for TRICARE Prime beneficiaries older than age 6. One well-woman yearly exam, which may include cervical cancer screening and breast cancer screening, is covered for female beneficiaries under age 65.

Some cervical cancer is caused by HPV, but there are vaccines to protect you from the most dangerous strains of HPV. TRICARE covers HPV vaccines for beneficiaries who haven't already been vaccinated or completed the HPV vaccine series and fall into one of the following categories:

- Females: The HPV vaccine is covered for females ages 11–26. The series of injections must be completed before reaching age 27 for coverage under TRICARE.
- Males: The HPV vaccine is covered for all males ages 11–21 and is covered for males ages 22–26 who meet certain criteria.

Visit www.tricare.mil/coveredservices for more information. ★





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UnitedHealthcare Military & Veterans
9687 East River Road
Minneapolis, MN 55433
Attn: TRICARE Return Mail

Update DEERS for Life Events

The Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) is the database for all active duty, National Guard and Reserve and retired service members and their families who are eligible for military benefits. Keeping your DEERS information up to date helps make sure you can use your TRICARE benefit. It's especially important to update DEERS when you experience a life change like moving, getting married or divorced or having a child. For more information, visit www.tricare.mil/deers.

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Five Ways to Improve Your Heart Health

The best way to avoid health problems is to think about your health regularly—even when you're well. Whether you already have a condition like high blood pressure, or are in great shape, keep your heart health on your radar. The following tips can help you keep your heart in the best possible condition.

1. Start early.

Many heart diseases and complications are preventable when addressed early. Some heart problems are not always noticeable until they require treatment, so make heart health goals while your heart is still healthy or while minor issues are still manageable.

2. Learn your risks.

Your health care provider can review your risks with you. Ask about health issues such as blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar and body weight. Also ask about lifestyle choices, such as physical activity, diet and alcohol or tobacco use.

3. Choose an area for improvement.

You can't change some heart risks, like those due to age or genetics. So, focus on what you can change, like managing stress, quitting tobacco or aiming for a healthy weight.

4. Take the first step.

If you have high blood pressure, your first step may be to review your medications with your provider or check your blood pressure regularly at home. Talk to your

family about the support you'll need from them. If you want to increase your physical activity, your first step may be to add a short walk to your daily routine.

5. Recognize your progress.

Give yourself credit for getting started. Every week, reflect on your progress. Keep up the good work by making a plan for the next week.

Be sure to talk to your provider about how you are doing and the steps you are taking to improve your heart health. Finally, read about your health, your health risks and what you can do to make positive changes. For more information, visit www.health.mil and search "Heart Health." ★