

For Better Health

Spring 2023



 **MDwise**
MEDICARE

For Better Health is the member newsletter for MDwise Medicare members, collectively referred to as "members." It is published twice per year by MDwise Inc., who shall be referred to as MDwise throughout this newsletter.

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Member Service

888-358-2404 (TTY: 711)
Monday through Friday
8 a.m. to 8 p.m. April 1-Sept.30

Seven days a week

8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Oct. 1-March 31, except for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day

We want to answer your questions and help you get the care you deserve. Please call Member Services if you have questions about the content of this newsletter, need a printed copy of anything on our website or need verbal help with the provider directory. We have free interpretation and translation services available. Call 711 to access the TTY line if you are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech problems. Michigan Relay will assist you. This service is available 24 hours a day.

Online

www.MDwise.org/Medicare

Our website contains useful member information, such as our Privacy Notice, provider directories, Rights and Responsibilities statement, healthy reminders, services covered by McLaren Medicare, what to do when you need a medication, information about our quality programs, our Clinical Practice Guidelines and much more. Call Member Services if you want printed copies of anything on our website.

Pharmacy Help Desk

844-336-2678

24 hours a day, seven days a week

Call if you have questions about your pharmacy benefits.

Nurse Advice

833-327-0671 (TTY:711)

24 hours a day, seven days a week

Call if you have an urgent health care issue after hours and follow the prompts to speak with a nurse

Mail

MDwise Medicare

P.O. Box 44092

Indianapolis, IN 46244-0092

From Jessica Cromer

President and CEO MDwise Inc.

Hello and welcome to the first edition of For Better Health, the member newsletter for MDwise Medicare members. We are thrilled to have you as our member and want to help you make the most of your MDwise Medicare benefits.

Now that it's officially spring, I'm starting to get excited about being outside and enjoying all that our beautiful state has to offer. Outdoor activities such as walking, hiking, swimming and the hugely popular pickleball are all ways to help us stay active. Your good health is important to us. We want to make sure you go to the doctor when you need to and get necessary preventive services to help maintain your health.

Let us know if ...

... it's taking a long time to get a doctor appointment. Does it take more than six months to get in to see your primary doctor for an annual exam? Does it take more than six months to get an appointment with a specialist?

... you are satisfied with your health care providers. Do they listen and answer all of your questions? Do you feel like you understand next steps after you leave an appointment?

... MDwise Medicare provides great customer service. Our goal is to make sure you are completely satisfied. What can we do to be the best possible health plan and get you to say we're a "10"?

Please call our member services team at 833-358-2140 (TTY: 711) whenever you have any questions. Representatives are available Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. April 1-Sept. 30 and seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Oct. 1-March 31, except for Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

In good health,
Jessica



Take a Look: Helpful Programs and Services From MDwise Medicare

MDwise Medicare has many free programs and services to help you manage your health. Among them are programs for COPD, coronary artery disease, diabetes, PTSD, sickle cell disease, asthma, chronic kidney disease, congestive heart failure, depression and hypertension. Call Member Services if you would like information about any of these programs.

Routine Screenings Necessary For Good Health

Keeping up with routine health screening tests is an easy way to help take control of your health. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines a health screening as a test doctors use to check for conditions and diseases before any signs or symptoms occur. Routine health screening tests are typically simple, yearly tests you can get done at your PCP's office or local hospital. The type of screenings you need depend on age, sex and medical history.

Here are important screenings you may need::

- Mammogram. Women age 50 and over are eligible for a breast screening test or mammogram every two years to check for early signs of breast cancer. Early detection saves lives.
- Colorectal Cancer Screening. Everyone for 45 years of age and older should be screened for colon cancer. Early detection is key for the best chances of treatment saving your life.

Talk to your doctor about what screening test are best for you. MDwise Medicare covers many routine health screenings.

Why Is Diabetes Care So Important?

Did you know the CDC estimates more than 25% of the U.S. population age 65 and older live with diabetes?

Diabetes is a disease that occurs when your blood sugar (blood glucose) is too high. Having high blood sugar can cause serious health problems over time, including heart disease, kidney disease, eye problems and heart damage. About 1 in 4 people with diabetes don't even know they have it. That is why you should visit your doctor every year to get your blood sugar, eyes and kidneys checked. Nutrition and exercise play important roles in your life if you are managing diabetes. Simple lifestyle changes such as bring more active, drinking more water or eating fruits and vegaetables in place of fried or processed foods can go a long way toward lowering your blood sugar and improving your health.

MDWise Medicare has programs that can help. Call Member Services at 833-258-2104 (TTY:711) to find out more.

Help Available For Overactive Bladder

Bladder control issues can be embarrassing. They can cause you to avoid normal activities. But incontinence — or overactive bladder — can often be stopped or controlled. Sometimes muscles in and around the bladder don't work the way they should. Urine can leak, resulting in urinary incontinence.

Talk to your doctor if you have urinary incontinence or any signs of a bladder problem, such as:

- Needing to urinate more frequently or suddenly
- Cloudy urine
- Blood in the urine
- Pain while urinating
- Urinating eight or more times in one day
- Passing only small amounts of urine after strong urges to urinate
- Trouble starting or having a weak stream while urinating

While it can be uncomfortable to talk to your doctor about sensitive health care subjects, please know help is available. Go to www.nia.nih.gov/health/how-talk-your-doctor-about-sensitive-issues for tips on how to talk to your doctor about sensitive issues.

High Blood Pressure Getting You Down?

High blood pressure, or hypertension, is a major health problem that is common in older adults. Your blood vessels change with age. Arteries get stiffer, causing blood pressure to go up. This can happen even if you feel fine. In fact, high blood pressure is sometimes called the “silent killer” because it often doesn't cause signs of illness that you can see or feel. Even though high blood pressure affects nearly half of all adults, many may not be aware they have it.

You may be able to control high blood pressure by changing your day-to-day habits. Here are some lifestyle changes you can try:

- Aim for a healthy weight
- Exercise
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Cut down on salt
- Drink less alcohol
- Don't smoke
- Get a good night's sleep
- Manage stress

In addition to lifestyle changes, your doctor will likely prescribe medication to lower your blood pressure. If high blood pressure isn't controlled with lifestyle changes and medication, it can lead to serious health problems such as heart disease and stroke, vascular dementia, eye problems and kidney disease. The good news is high blood pressure can be controlled in most people.

New Suicide Prevention Hotline Available

When it comes to a mental health crisis, one call can save a life. Dial 988 to connect to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline when seeking mental health assistance. Remember 988 the same way you remember 911 and teach your family and friends this number. Knowing whom to call during an emergency ensures people in crisis will get the help they need, when they need it.

Here are some helpful resources to learn about warning signs and help raise awareness:

[World Suicide Prevention Month Toolkit](#)

[HelpSheet: Suicide Awareness](#)

Survey Time!

The Health Risk Assessment (HRA) is a survey you need to complete if you are enrolled in the MDwise Medicare Inspire Duals plan, also called a D-SNP. The HRA helps you and MDwise Medicare nurses identify your health care needs. The D-SNP HRA needs to be completed upon enrollment, annually thereafter and after transitions of care such as an inpatient stay or emergency department visit. Your nurse will contact you to complete this survey.

Every Year, Your Annual Wellness Visit Is On Us

Have you scheduled your annual wellness visit this year? Regular annual wellness visits are important even if you feel healthy. It's a great time to talk to your doctor about how to keep you healthy and treat health problems early on, and prevent issues down the road.

During your annual wellness visit, topics you might discuss with your doctor include:

- Personal medical or family health history
- Health problems
- Current medications
- Tests or shots needed
- A care plan so you can stay healthy and independent

We want to support you on your journey to living your best life, and having a yearly wellness visit is a great first step toward that journey. To get started, call your primary care doctor and schedule your visit. For members who enrolled in Medicare Part B less than a year ago, call and ask about your 'Welcome to Medicare' preventive visit. If you have been enrolled in Medicare Part B for over a year and it has been at least 12 months since you had your 'Welcome to Medicare' preventive visit, call and ask to schedule your annual wellness visit.

Whether you have your 'Welcome to Medicare' preventive visit or your annual wellness visit, the good news is that neither visit has a copay and will help you keep you on track for living your healthiest life.



What Vaccines Do You Need?

Here are the most important vaccinations seniors age 65 and older need:

Flu Vaccine

Getting the flu can be dangerous for people over age 65. The virus can cause complications that result in hospitalization, most often because the virus develops into pneumonia. The best time to get a flu shot is in September or October, but talk to your doctor about what's right for you.

Pneumococcal Vaccine

Pneumonia is a lung infection that makes it harder to breathe. As you age, your immune system doesn't work as well as it used to. You are more likely to have trouble fighting off a pneumonia infection. You can get a pneumonia vaccine any time of the year.

Shingles Vaccine

Shingles is a viral infection that causes a painful rash. If you've had chickenpox, you may develop shingles. Pain can persist even after the rash is gone. This is called post-herpetic neuralgia. You should get two doses of Shingrix, separated by two to six months.

Tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine

All adults who are not vaccinated or are not up to date with their vaccines are at risk for tetanus and diphtheria. You also are at risk for whooping cough even if you were vaccinated as a child because the protection wears off after time. Talk to your doctor about what you may need.



Covid-19 Vaccine

The risk of severe illness from COVID-19 increases with age. Getting the vaccine is an important step to help prevent getting sick from COVID-19. Even if you've already had COVID-19, you should get the vaccine. Reinfection can cause severe medical complications. Unvaccinated people who already had COVID-19 are more than twice as likely as fully vaccinated people to get reinfected with COVID-19.

Talk to your doctor about what vaccines you need. MDwise Medicare covers all of the above vaccines — and most Part D vaccines — with no cost share to you. Call MDwise Member Services at 833-358-2140 (TTY: 711) if you have questions about what is a covered benefit or where you can get a needed vaccine.

Medication Safety Tips For Older Adults

Whether you're in your 60s, 70s, 80s or beyond, be careful with medications. This includes over-the-counter and herbal supplements, along with prescription medications.

As you age, the more likely you are to use additional medicines, which can increase the chance of harmful side effects, including interactions. No matter how hard you fight it, your body changes over time. You tend to lose muscle and gain fat and this changes the way medicine works in your body.

So what can you do? Here are some important safety tips to keep in mind.

- 1. Take your medications as prescribed.** Talk to your doctor if you're having side effects. Don't skip a dose or stop taking prescribed medications without first consulting with your doctor.
- 2. Properly store your medications and check the expiration date.** Medicines that are not stored properly may not work as well or may cause harm, even if they are not expired. The bathroom isn't the best place to keep medicines due to the fluctuation of heat and humidity. Most medicines are best stored in a cool, dry place and where children can't reach them.
- 3. Be aware of drug interactions and side effects.** An herbal supplement can affect the action of another medicine. Alcohol can react with a medication, resulting in memory loss, sleepiness or falls. Even common foods and drinks can cause serious interactions. One example is grapefruit juice, which can affect how well some medications work or even cause dangerous side effects.
- 4. Keep a medication list.** Write down the name of all medications you take, the dosage and the strength. Take the list with you to every doctor appointment. It's a good idea to store your list in your cell phone using the electronic note function — you likely don't leave the house without your phone so you'll always have the list with you!

Remember, the best medicine in the world won't work unless you take it correctly. Talk to your doctor or pharmacist if you have any questions about the medications you take.



Help Prevent Fraud, Waste And Abuse

McLaren Health Plan works hard to prevent fraud, waste and abuse. We follow state and federal laws about fraud, waste and abuse. Examples of fraud, waste and abuse by a member include:

- Changing a prescription form
- Changing medical records
- Changing referral forms
- Letting someone else use his or her MHP ID card to get health care benefits
- Resale of prescriptions

Examples of fraud, waste and abuse by a doctor include:

- Falsifying his or her credentials
- Billing for care not given
- Billing more than once for the same service
- Performing services that are not needed
- Not ordering services that are medically necessary
- Prescribing medicine that is not needed

Call our fraud and Abuse line at 866-866-2135 if you think a doctor, other health care provider or member might be committing fraud, waste or abuse. You can email our Compliance department at MHPCompliance@McLaren.org.

You also can write to MHP at:

MDwise Medicare

Attn: Compliance

P.O. Box 1511

Flint, MI 48501-1511

Contact the State of Michigan if you think a member has committed fraud, waste or abuse.

Here's how:

- Fill out a fraud referral form at mdhhs.michigan.gov/Fraud OR
- Call the MDHHS office in the country where you think the fraud, waste or abuse took place OR
- Call the MDHHS office in the country where the member lives

Contact the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General if you think a doctor or other health care provider has committed fraud, waste or abuse. Here's how:

- Call them at 855-MI-FRAUD (855-643-7283) OR
- Send an email to MDHHS-OIG@michigan.gov OR
- Write to them at Office of Inspector General, P.O. Box 30062, Lansing, MI 48909

Help Protect Yourself From Fraud

You might be the target of a fraud scheme if you receive medical supplies that you or your doctor did not order.

Take action to protect your benefits:

- Refuse medical supplies you did not order.
- Return unordered medical supplies that are shipped to your home.
- Report companies that send you these items.

Identity theft can lead to higher health care costs and personal financial loss. Don't let anybody steal your identity.

Current fraud schemes to be on the lookout for include:

- People using your health plan number for reimbursement of services you never received
- People calling you to ask for your health plan numbers.
- People trying to bribe you to use a doctor you don't know to get services you may not need.

You are one of the first lines of defense against fraud. Do your part and report services or items that you have been billed for but did not receive.

- Review your plan Explanations of Benefits (EOBs) and bills from physicians
- Make sure you received the services or items billed

Your Private Data and How We Protect It

MDwise Medicare has policies that cover who can see and use private data about you. This includes your race or ethnicity and what language you speak.

1. This is how we protect your data:

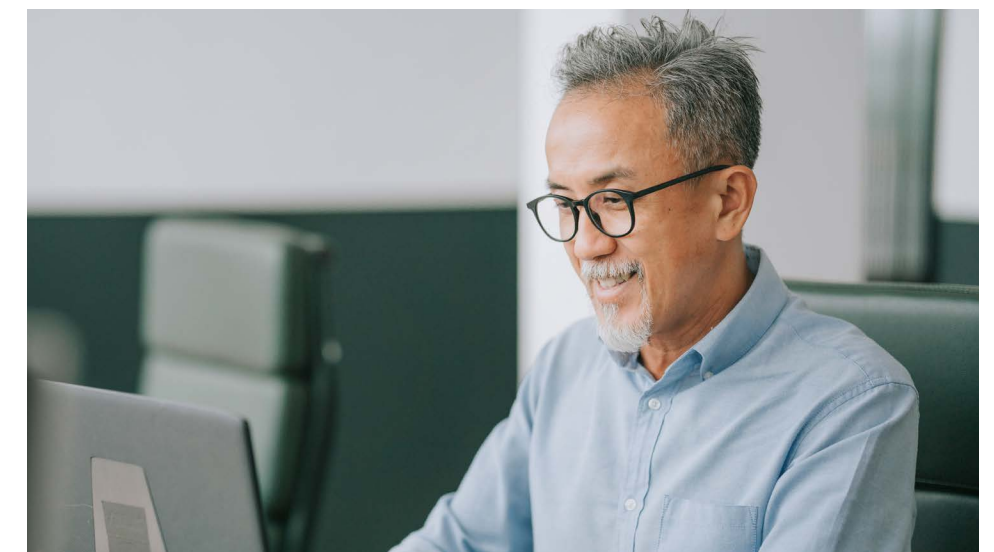
- We keep your paper documents in locked file cabinets.
- We keep electronic data on physically secure media.
- We keep electronic data in files with passwords.
- Only our staff who need to know this information will have it.

2. This is how we use your data:

- To help with health care disparities
- To create programs to improve your health.
- To create outreach materials.
- To tell your provider about your language, cultural, or other needs that have to do with your care.
- To tell your provider to help improve health outcomes.

3. We will not use your data:

- For underwriting, setting rates or benefit decisions
- To give to those who shouldn't have it.





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