

Retiree Update 28 August 2015

**In a crisis? The VA is there for you.
Call 1-800-273-8255 and Press 1.
#VeteransCrisisLine**

As we get older, we develop a higher risk for certain diseases like high blood pressure, prostate or breast cancer. There are **additional screenings** available for these types of illnesses. Your TRICARE plan determines how you are covered for these screens. Certain screenings are exempt from cost-shares and others are covered only when received in conjunction with an immunization or vaccine. You can [see what's covered](#) on the TRICARE website.

Don't forget about **dental care** as part of TRICARE's preventive services. Although dental coverage is separate from medical coverage, they are equally important. TRICARE has three dental plans available and the plan you get depends on your [eligibility](#).

Vaccines to consider:

- **Influenza (flu)**: People who are 6 months and older should get the flu vaccine (flu shot or nasal spray). Get the vaccine each year because flu virus can change from one year to the next.
- **Pneumococcal**: Older people and those with certain medical conditions are most susceptible to pneumonia. People under 65 will need a booster shot when they reach 65 if more than five years have passed since the initial dose. Learn about pneumococcal pneumonia and vaccines.
- **Hepatitis A**: Recommended for those who travel to other countries or live in a U.S. community with high rates of hepatitis A; or who have chronic liver disease, engage in male-to-male sex, or inject drugs. Learn more about the

- hepatitis A vaccine.
- **Hepatitis B:** More contagious than HIV, hepatitis B is the type of hepatitis most often spread through sexual contact. It can also be passed from an infected mother to newborn, the sharing of needles or personal items with an infected person, and other contact involving bodily fluids. The hepatitis B vaccine can prevent the disease.
 - **Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR):** People born after 1956 and all women of childbearing age who have not had these diseases or been vaccinated against them need to get the shots to be protected.
 - **Chickenpox (varicella):** Protection is necessary for those born in the U.S. after 1966 and have not had this disease and have not been vaccinated. Adults are at a far greater risk of complications.
 - **Shingles (herpes zoster):** Shingles is caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. People who are over the age of 60 may receive a single dose of the shingles vaccine. Consult with your physician first.
 - **Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis:** Booster doses of tetanus-diphtheria (Td) are needed at 10-year intervals. In place of the Td booster, people age 19-64 and those 65 and older who are in contact with infants should get a one-time dose of tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap) to also protect against whooping cough. - See more at:
<http://www.publichealth.va.gov/vaccines.asp#sthash.lmpHeAHT.dpuf>

Military Times is publishing its annual Benefits Guide, a one-stop resource on the dizzying array of pay and benefits programs offered to active-duty and reserve component service members, retirees, veterans and their families. It has everything they need to know to get the most out of their government benefits. The guide is a living document, updated each year with changes made by the Pentagon, the Veterans Affairs Department and Congress. You

need to be a subscriber to Navy Times to get it on line, but the information is worth it.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME) is any equipment for beneficiary use that helps them live a better quality of life. DME, covered by most health insurances, is also covered by TRICARE when ordered by a TRICARE-authorized provider. To be considered DME, the equipment must be medically necessary and reusable. TRICARE covers the cost of medical supplies when related directly to a covered medical condition and when those supplies are obtained from a medical supply company, a pharmacy, or an authorized provider. DME can be rented or purchased, but your regional contractor will determine which is most appropriate for your situation. The contractor will consider your prescription, your current medical condition, and the amount of time you will need the DME. TRICARE will pay for the replacement of a medically required DME that you own if your medical condition changes or equipment malfunction because of reasonable wear and usage. If you accidentally damage a DME that you have purchased and the manufacturer's warranty has expired, TRICARE will also cover the cost of repairs or replacement costs. Two popular examples of prescribed DME are walkers and continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machines.

#ExploreVA lets you easily know all about your benefits. <http://explore.va.gov>

The Base New Orleans Retiree Council website has been migrated to the Coast Guard server but you can still reach it through

BaseNOLRetiree.org

Past newsletters and updates are also located on the site.