



In Case You Missed it

TRICARE® West Region e-Updates

February 2022

- 1. Your COVID-19 testing options.** TRICARE continues to cover **medically necessary COVID-19 tests** when ordered by a TRICARE-authorized provider and performed at a TRICARE-authorized lab or facility. Test types include diagnostic, tests for management of COVID-19, and serology/antibody tests. FDA-approved at-home antigen rapid diagnostic tests may be covered with a physician's order. In some cases, military hospitals and clinic personnel may provide at-home tests to patients. Check with your local military clinic or hospital for availability of free at-home test kits. There are no copayments or cost-shares for covered tests. *Keep in mind, the mandate for insurance companies to cover FDA-approved at-home COVID-19 tests without a physician's order does not apply to TRICARE.* Read more at www.tricare.mil/coronavirus.
- 2. Understanding qualifying life events (QLEs).** A QLE is a certain change in your life that makes you eligible to enroll or change your TRICARE health plan outside of Open Season. TRICARE QLEs include marriage, birth of a child and change in military status. Find the full list at www.tricare.mil/lifevents. Following a QLE, you have 90 days to make plan changes.
- 3. Urgent care using your TRICARE benefit.** If you need health care urgently, but not so much so that you need to go to the emergency room, that's where your **urgent care** benefit comes into play. Most TRICARE beneficiaries can get urgent care without a referral, whether you go to an in-person center or have a **telehealth** visit. You can check out plan guidelines at www.tricare.mil/urgentcare. As always, if you think you or a loved one is experiencing a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
- 4. Keep your vaccines current.** As COVID-19 variants continue to spread, staying current on vaccines remains key in keeping you and your loved ones protected. Get the latest on COVID-19 vaccines, including boosters, at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus.
- 5. Learning TRICARE basics.** Want to learn more about TRICARE? Check out **TRICARE 101** for resources that can help. Whether you are a new enrollee or have been enrolled in TRICARE for many years, it's always good to take a quick refresh to make sure you understand your plan and what it covers. Take a moment to **review the basics** today!
- 6. Changing your primary care manager (PCM).** Looking for a new primary doctor? Our **network provider directory** can help you locate a PCM that best meets your and your family's needs. We also offer provider locator services 24/7 through our customer service line. PCM changes can be made at any time. Learn more on our **PCM Changes** page.
- 7. Get health care answers 24/7 with the MHS Nurse Advice Line.** With flu season in full swing and COVID-19 infections still on the rise, you may not want to visit your doctor's office for minor health questions. The MHS Nurse Advice Line can help. Nurses are available via phone, web chat or video chat so you can receive health advice and get all your questions answered. As always, if you or your loved ones need immediate assistance, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
- 8. Telehealth options are just a click away.** We know access to virtual health care appointments is important. You have options to get the care you need from the comfort of your home. Start by using the telemedicine filter in our network directory. Or connect with one of our telehealth partners. Visit our **network directory page to get started**.
- 9. Take care of your heart.** February is American Heart Health Month, and small changes can make a big difference in your health. View our recorded **Heart Healthy Living** class to learn how to reduce risk factors for heart disease and get tips on improving your heart health. Did you know having diabetes is a risk factor for developing heart disease? View our **Essentials of Diabetes Management** recorded class to learn how to manage your diabetes. If you have symptoms of heart disease such as chest pain, shortness of breath, irregular heart beats, or heart palpitations, or if you are at high risk for heart disease, see your doctor. Visit **Choosing Wisely®** for more information.
- 10. Make long-term healthy changes!** Do you ever get distracted from your health goals? Whenever you get off track, the skills learned in our online class can help you be successful at making and maintaining healthy changes. Register for our next **Making Healthy Changes for Life** webinar on March 1 at 5:00 p.m. PST. If classes aren't for you, try our **Assessing Your Readiness for Healthy Change** self-guided program to determine your level of readiness for change.



An exploration of the many benefits available to you through your TRICARE health plan.

February's topic:
What We Know About COVID-19 Today