STAYING WELL AFTER A HOSPITAL STAY

When you’re well enough to go home from the hospital, the last thing you want is to be readmitted. These tips can help you avoid that possibility:

- **Have a plan.** Before you leave the hospital, you and your caregivers should meet with a hospital discharge planner. Create a detailed, written plan that spells out everything you’ll need to do once you are home.

- **Know your medications.** It’s important that you understand what medications you should take after you leave the hospital, and when you should take them.

- **Keep your follow-up appointments.** Seeing your primary care provider or specialist a few days after you leave the hospital can help reduce the chances that you’ll need to be readmitted. MetroPlus can help you make appointments. Call 1.866.986.0356.

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR BOTH MEDICARE AND MEDICAID? Bring both ID cards to your medical appointments. This helps ensure your care is properly covered.

Visit us at metroplus.org/medicare

1.800.442.2560
24/7 Medical Answering Service
After 8 p.m., Sundays and holidays:
8 p.m., Oct. 1–Feb. 14, 7 days a week, 8 a.m.–8 p.m.

Hours of Operation: Feb. 15–Sept. 30, Mon.–Sat., 8 a.m.–8 p.m.,
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YOUR PRIVACY MATTERS

MetroPlus respects your right to privacy. We do not release any information about members and former members to anyone, except as permitted by law. We also limit access to your information. Only MetroPlus employees and other persons who need it to conduct MetroPlus business or to follow legal and regulatory requirements can review member information.

Customer Services Is Here for You

Medicare Customer Services is here Monday to Saturday from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Call 1.866.986.0356. If you have trouble hearing, you can call our TTY number: 711. Or visit us online at metroplus.org/medicare. If you need help on Sunday, on a holiday or after hours, we have a 24/7 Medical Answering Service. Call 1.800.442.2560.

- Do you speak a language other than English? We have Customer Services staff who speak your language.
- Share feedback about your care! Join our Member Advisory Committee (MAC). Call Customer Services to learn more.
- If you need help making an appointment, our Customer Services Department can help.

TOGETHER, WE CAN STOP FRAUD

MetroPlus wants to stop healthcare fraud. We look into all possible cases of fraud, waste or abuse. Fraud includes member fraud, provider fraud, employee fraud and vendor fraud.

Tell MetroPlus if you think you see fraud related to your healthcare or insurance. Contact us privately by calling our hotline at 1.888.245.7247. Or write to MetroPlus Special Investigation Unit, 160 Water St. 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10038.
Urinary tract infections (UTIs) are common infections. Older adults are more likely to get them. They occur when bacteria infect parts of the urinary tract, such as the bladder.

**The most common signs of a UTI are:**
- Pain or burning while urinating
- Frequent urination
- Feeling the need to urinate when your bladder is empty
- Low fever
- Cloudy or bloody urine
- Pressure or cramping in the groin or lower abdomen

Most UTIs can be treated with antibiotics. Sometimes an infection can spread to the kidneys, which is less common but more serious.

**Warning signs of a kidney infection include:**
- Flank or lower back pain
- High fever (101°F or above)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Mental status changes
- Chills or night sweats

If you have symptoms of a kidney infection, contact your doctor right away.

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**YOUR INTRODUCTION TO MEDICARE PREVENTIVE VISIT**

Here's what you can expect from your first healthcare visit as a Medicare member.

**Your doctor will:**
- Review your medical and family history, current health conditions and prescriptions.
- Check your blood pressure, vision, weight and height to get a baseline for your care.
- Make sure you’re up to date with preventive screenings and services, such as cancer screenings and shots.
- Order health tests, depending on your general health and medical history.
- Provide a plan for screenings and preventive services, which are typically no cost to you.

Here's what you should bring to your appointment:
- Medical records, including immunization records. Even if the visit is with your current doctor, gather as much medical information as you can to make sure nothing is overlooked.
- Family health history. This information will help you and your doctor better understand what screenings you should get and what to watch for in the future.
- Your medications. Bring a list of your prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, vitamins and supplements.
**Men, Take Heart**

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in men. Your risk increases with age. But it is preventable. Take these steps to protect your heart:

1. **See your doctor.** He or she can perform tests to check for heart disease. It’s particularly important to track your blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

2. **Take your medications as directed.** If you are at risk or have heart disease, your doctor will likely prescribe one or more medications. They will only work if you take them properly.

3. **Follow a healthy lifestyle.** Eat a variety of foods that are rich in nutrition: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy, legumes and nuts. Stay active, don’t smoke and avoid secondhand smoke.

Learn more about caring for your heart at metroplus.org, under Healthy Living.

**ASTHMA IN OLDER ADULTS**

Asthma is often thought of as a childhood disease, but it can develop in older adults. It’s good to talk with your doctor if you notice the signs of asthma. It can cause serious health problems if left untreated.

**Common symptoms include:**
- Coughing that includes sputum (fluid that’s coughed out)
- Wheezing, shortness of breath, tightness in the chest or chronic cough with regular activities, such as housework, shopping or walking

**There are special considerations for seniors who have asthma:**
- Short-term use of oral steroids can help treat flare-ups.

Long-term use is not recommended in older adults because of possible severe side effects, including weakening of the bones, ulcers or high blood pressure.

- Many asthma medications come in the form of an L-shaped metered dose inhaler, but the device requires a certain degree of dexterity. If you have difficulty using your L-shaped inhaler, ask your doctor if you can use a dry powder inhaler or an oral medication instead.
- Regular vaccinations for influenza and pneumonia are strongly recommended for older adults with asthma.

Visit us at metroplus.orgmedicare