

# Living Healthy with **DIABETES**

2nd Quarter 2006  
For BlueCare® and  
TennCare<sup>SM</sup> Select Members



## Member Outreach Raises Awareness of Eye Exams

A huge thank you to all of you who took part in our member outreach phone calling program in February. The program reached out to all BlueCare and TennCare<sup>Select</sup> members with diabetes who, based on claims, had not had an eye exam.

The goal of the program is to:

- Raise rates for eye exams.
- Teach about the importance of eye exams
- Encourage members to keep getting eye exams.
- Offer resources and support.

By using phone-based outreach to engage members in an interactive conversation, our callers addressed questions and offered feedback in a supportive way. We also assured members that the eye exam is a covered benefit. Plus, our outreach efforts gave us a chance to welcome new members into our CareSmart Diabetes Program. This program helps members with diabetes understand the condition better. It also offers:

- Support.
- Educational materials.
- Newsletters four times a year.



### **Outreach Results**

The results of our outreach efforts were remarkable. Forty nine percent of the members for whom the call was intended were reached. During the call, 85 percent opted to stay on the phone once we told them what the call was about.

Other key findings:

- 69 percent had not had their eye exam.
- 48 percent planned to have an eye exam within the next

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### **Check Health Information Library**

You can listen to 10 different recorded messages about diabetes. Just call the Health Information Library. The number is 1-800-999-1658. The recorded messages are available 24 hours a day. Press the 1 key on your touch-tone phone, and then follow directions. Codes for diabetes subjects are 3900 through 3909.

## CareSmart Diabetes Program

Take steps now to lower your chances of having diabetes problems! Just pick up the phone. Then dial 1-888-416-3025 to talk to a CareSmart nurse. The call is free.

## Low-Carb Diets May Raise Cholesterol

A new study shows that both low-fat and low-carb diets seem to help with weight loss up to one year. But low-carb diets may be linked to higher overall LDL cholesterol. LDL stands for low-density lipoprotein. It is often called the "bad" cholesterol.

As obesity increases, more adults in the U.S. are dieting at any one time. Forty-five percent of women are trying to lose weight. Also, 30 percent of men are trying to lose weight. Those who do well may cut their risk of Type 2 diabetes. This may also help them control their blood pressure. Plus, successful dieters may cut their chances of heart disease and related death.

Low-carb, high-protein diets have become a popular choice to the generally recommended low-fat diets that limit calories. But because low-carb diets have large amounts of protein and fat, there are some concerns. The main one is the effect that low-carb diets have on cholesterol levels and the body's system that involves the heart.



## Bills You May Not Need to Pay

Do you ever get a bill from your doctor? You may not need to pay it. You only owe copays or certain special fees that apply to you. Plus, no member ever has to pay a copay for covered preventive services.

If you do owe your doctor money, you will get an Explanation of Benefits statement (EOB) from your health plan. The EOB tells the amount you owe to your doctor. You must pay for any services that are not covered by your health plan. For a list of covered and non-covered services, see your Member Handbook.

If you need a handbook, call the Customer Service number at your health plan. The number for BlueCare members is 1-800-468-9698. The number for TennCareSelect members is 1-800-263-5479. You can also see the handbook on the Web site at [www.bcbst.com](http://www.bcbst.com). If you have any questions about a bill from your doctor, call Customer Service at your TennCare health plan.

### Other Insurance Pays First

Other insurance must pay for health care before your TennCare health plan pays. You should not get billed for covered services. The only exception is for the amount of copays listed in your Member Handbook. For members who also have Medicare, your health plan is not supplemental to Medicare's primary payment. It does not pay your coinsurance amounts after Medicare has paid. But your health plan will pay primary benefits on supplies or services not covered by Medicare. Such services include non-emergency transportation.

If you have both Medicare and TennCare, you need to follow these rules:

### For Medicare Part A (Hospital Care Only):

You need to use a PCP with your health plan for your health care. Your PCP's name will be listed on the front of your member ID card.

### For Medicare Part B (Physician Care Only):

You do not have to use a PCP for all of your health care. You can keep using your Medicare doctor for services covered by Medicare. But you need to see a doctor with your health plan for services only covered by your health plan, or your health plan will not pay the cost of the care.

### For Medicare Part A and B (Hospital and Physician Care)

Follow the same rules above for members who have Medicare Part B only.

Remember to make your doctor aware of any other insurance you may have. That way, he or she can file to the right health plan.

# Smoking Linked to Sugar Intolerance in Young Adults

Active and even second-hand smoke seem to raise the risk of the inability for young people to put up with sugar, a recent report says. Plus, the total amount of years spent smoking is directly linked to the risk of diabetes, it shows.

During the study, nearly 17 percent of the people studied became sensitive to sugar. The rate was highest for current smokers at nearly 22 percent. This was followed by, at about 17 percent, those who had never smoked but had been exposed to second-hand smoke. The ones who had smoked in the past had a sensitivity rate of a little more



than 14 percent. Finally, those who had never smoked and been exposed to passive smoke had the lowest rate at 11 ½ percent.

In women and men, researchers found that the link between smoking and the inability to put up with sugar was stronger in

whites than blacks. They also think they may know the reason for the link between smoking and the inability for young adults to stomach sugar. Researchers believe there may be poisons in cigarette smoke that harm the production of insulin in the body.

## *Diabetes on the Rise Among Youth*

Compared to four years ago, about twice as many young people and teens are taking drugs used to treat or keep them from having Type 2 diabetes, a new study shows.

The findings could mean big problems for the nation's health system. The main reason is that Type 2 diabetes often goes along with serious and costly health problems. The study came out at the same time as some other related research. That research

found that more U.S. kids are overweight. This is a big cause of Type 2 diabetes.

There are two types of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes is caused when the body cannot make enough insulin. People with Type 2 diabetes do not respond in a normal way to the insulin their bodies make. This form of diabetes is often called adult-onset diabetes. The reason is that it is most often found in middle-aged adults and older people.

## *Too Much, Too Little Sleep Can Boost Risk for Diabetes*

Men who sleep too much or too little are at a higher risk of getting Type 2 diabetes, a new study shows.

About 1,700 men, 40 to 70 years old, took part in the study. They were tracked for 15 years with home visits, a health survey and blood samples.

Based on the study, six to eight hours of sleep was found to be most healthy. On the other hand, men

who slept between five and six hours each night were twice as likely to end up with diabetes. And men who slept more than eight hours each night were three times as likely to get diabetes. Prior data from another study have shown the same results in women.

Researchers are just starting to learn about certain results from too little sleep. These causes deal with the

physical and chemical changes in the body. Among the effects are striking changes in some functions within the body. These include:

- Lower tolerance to carbs.
- Resistance to insulin.
- Lower levels of a hormone that leads to obesity.

The reasons why too much sleep raises the risk of diabetes needs further study.



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three months.

- 42 percent accepted an offer to be transferred to CareSmart.
- 72 percent said transportation was an issue.

Here are answers to some of the questions during the calls.

### *What reason convinced you to get your dilated eye exam?*

- Most said that their doctor was the No. 1 reason they had already had one.
- The second most popular response was that they were having trouble with their eyes. Or they said other diabetes problems spurred them to get one.

### *What has made it difficult to get this test?*

- Most said they didn't know it was a covered benefit. ***It is!***
- The second most popular answer was transportation.
- One common response was that the member didn't know about the test until the call. Another was that he or she didn't have time.

No one is treated in a different way because of race, color, birthplace, language, sex, age, or disability. Do you think you've been treated unfairly? Do you have more questions? Do you need more help? You can make a free call to the Family Assistance Service Center at 1-866-311-4287. In Nashville, call 743-2000.

Para información acerca de TennCare en español llame al 1-866-311-4290. For more information about interpretation and translation services, which are free to the enrollee, BlueCare members call 1-800-468-9698. TennCare **Select** members call 1-800-263-5479.

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