

IOWA MEDICAID ENTERPRISE MEMBER NEWSLETTER

Get Ready for Flu Season

Flu (Influenza) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a number of different viruses. Symptoms are sore throat, runny nose, body aches, fever, cough and tiredness. There are things you can take to keep from getting the flu or to make you feel better in the event you get the flu.

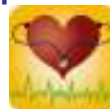
- ▶ Take time to get the flu vaccine if:
 - You are between the ages of 6 months and 18 years of age;
 - You are over the age of 50.
 - You have diabetes, heart or lung disease or other health problems, or
 - Live with, or take care of a young child, older person, or someone with health problems
- ▶ It is best to get the flu shot in October or November before the flu season begins.
- ▶ Take precautions everyday:
 - Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze
 - Stay away from people when you are sick. Flu germs spread through the air.
 - Wash your hands often with soap and water. Try not to touch your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ▶ Call your doctor if you:
 - Have a fever more than 3 days
 - Have problems breathing
 - Cannot eat or drink



- ▶ Here are some questions to ask your doctor about the flu:

- Is the flu serious?
- Where can I get a flu shot?
- Do I need medicine for the flu?
- Can you get the flu from the flu shot?
- What are the flu symptoms?
- Why is it important to keep from getting the flu?

Healthcare Tips



- * Carry a list of your medications and doctors in your purse or wallet.
- * Obtain a medical alert identification band that lists your medical problems or allergies.
- * Make sure you see your doctor on a regular basis for check-ups and lab work.
- * Keep all medical information in one place to refer to.
- * Take all medications consistently as ordered by your doctor. Discuss your medications with the doctor or pharmacist so you will know the reason for taking them and the side effects.
- * Using a pillbox can be helpful if you have several medications to take.

When is it appropriate to use an ambulance?



Ambulance services are meant to provide transportation and care when a person has an emergency medical condition only.

Questions? Call Member Services at 1-800-338-8366. The call is free. You can call Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. In Des Moines, call 725-1003.

When should I seek services from a hospital Emergency Room?



An emergency medical condition is defined as a medical issue which most non-medical people think could result in serious harm or would place the person's health or life at risk.

If you need Emergency Care, go to the nearest doctor or hospital.

Examples of what would not be considered an emergency:

- **Headaches including migraines which occur on a regular basis**
- **Refills on Medications**
- **Constipation or menstrual cramps**
- **Missing a clinic appointment or inability to schedule a clinic appointment**
- **Chronic pain**

Urgent care services are defined as care for non-life threatening conditions that cannot wait for a regular scheduled appointment. You should not use the emergency room for urgent care but instead work with your family healthcare provider. They can assist you by either treating you or referring you to another medical provider as necessary.

Medicaid Cards

Members received their annual plastic Iowa Medicaid Eligibility cards in September 2008.

If your card becomes lost, damaged, or stolen contact Iowa Medicaid Member Services to request a replacement. You may call 800-338-8366 or locally in the Des Moines area 515-725-1003.

Questions? Call Member Services at 1-800-338-8366. The call is free. You can call Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. In Des Moines, call 725-1003.

Traveling Out of State and Iowa Medicaid Coverage



Whenever you seek medical care outside of Iowa, be sure the provider you are going to see is enrolled with Iowa Medicaid. Check out our website for a list of out-of-state providers, contact Iowa Medicaid Member Services, or ask the medical provider.

Iowa Medicaid Member Services Website: www.ime.state.ia.us

Iowa Medicaid has a website available to assist you with questions you may have. Features of the website are the newly added Iowa Medicaid FAQ and an area where you can search for providers enrolled with Iowa Medicaid. Also, you can send an e-mail through the website directly to the Member Services unit with any questions you may have.

The website address is:

www.ime.state.ia.us

The e-mail address is:

IMEMemberServices@dhs.state.ia.us

Helpful Hints to Prevent Being Billed by Your Medicaid Provider

- ▶ Tell your provider you are on Medicaid and show your Medicaid card at each appointment.
- ▶ Ask the provider if they are enrolled with Iowa Medicaid. (Iowa Medicaid can only make payment to enrolled providers).
- ▶ Ask your provider to verify with Iowa Medicaid if a service you are in need of will be covered.
- ▶ Find out if you will be billed for a co-payment and, if so, how much your co-payment will be.