

New Medicare Benefit

(NAPSA)—New Medicare recipients can protect themselves from a serious, often fatal disease by being screened for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) before it ruptures.

AAA is an enlargement that develops in weakened areas in the body's largest artery. The enlargement occurs slowly, over several years, with no symptoms. Most



New Medicare recipients can be tested for weakened blood vessels.

people are unaware of their AAA until it becomes large enough to rupture. Rupture causes sudden, severe pain, and death occurs in most people before they can reach a hospital.

Beginning in 2007, a free, one-time, ultrasound AAA screening will be available for at-risk Medicare beneficiaries during their Welcome to Medicare physical. At risk are men who have smoked sometime during their lives and men and women with a family history of AAA. If AAA is detected, patients should consult with a vascular surgeon. Treatment options include medical management with close follow-up for small AAAs and minimally invasive endovascular procedures, or open surgery, for larger aneurysms.

For additional information or to find a vascular surgeon, visit www.VascularWeb.org or call (877) 282-2010.