

Medicare & You

Using Medicare Coverage To Stay Healthy

(NAPSA)—In this, the second article in a series of six, Tommy G. Thompson, Secretary of Health and Human Services, answers a reader's question about Medicare.

Q. *I'm healthy and I want to stay that way. What preventive services does Medicare cover?*



Thompson

A. Medicare covers many preventive services to help you stay healthy. These valuable benefits may be the key to long lasting good health. Talk with your doctor about your risk of developing

certain health problems and your need for these preventive services. Medicare covers the following preventive services:

- Shots—flu, pneumonia, and Hepatitis B
- Colorectal cancer screening
- Prostate cancer screening
- Bone mass measurement
- Diabetes supplies and services
- Glaucoma screening
- Mammogram screening
- Pap test and pelvic examination.

There are limits for how often you can get these services. Some services have limits on who or what is covered. More specific information about these services is available in some Medicare publications: Medicare Preventive Services to Keep You Healthy; Women with Medicare—Visiting Your Doctor for a Pap Test, Pelvic Exam, and Clinical Breast Exam;

Medicare Coverage of Diabetes Supplies & Services; and Medicare & You handbook.

It is important that you find out if you can get these services. You can get this information or a copy of the Medicare publications mentioned above by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). This toll-free helpline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help you with your questions. When you call, customer service representatives are available to provide assistance in English or Spanish. The helpline also allows callers to do some things automatically, like get important phone numbers, order publications, and get answers to common questions. TTY users can call 1-877-486-2048.

You can also get information at www.medicare.gov, Medicare's official web site. It offers many tools to help you get the information you need in order to make health care decisions that are right for you. This site provides basic information about Medicare, including what's covered, how to enroll, and answers to common questions. You can also read, print, or order publications. Some information on this site is available in Spanish. Information on the site is updated regularly.

These and other information resources are available to help you understand as much about the Medicare program as possible. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), the federal agency that runs the Medicare program, and I want you to have all the information you need to make important health care decisions.