National Save for Retirement Week
October 17-23, 2010

Are you saving enough today for a better tomorrow?

Where Are They Hiding? Finding Extra Dollars To Invest
In your jean jacket? Under the sofa cushions? Where can you find extra dollars to put toward your investments? While it might not be as easy as digging through your pockets for misplaced cash, you may be able to come up with additional money to invest just by making a few simple changes to your spending habits.

Use Your Kitchen More.
You’re probably asking, “How will that help me find cash to invest?” The simple truth is that coffee and a bagel on your way to work every morning and lunch at the sandwich shop may cost more than you realize. Instead, toast your bagel at home, bring coffee to work in a thermos, and brown-bag it at lunch time. Then, take the money you save each week and put it toward your investments.

Spend Your Cash.
Well, that sounds like a contradiction, doesn’t it? But, by paying cash or using your debit card instead of charging items to your credit cards, you’ll save money in interest charges. And you won’t be tempted to overspend the way you might with a credit card, because you’ll be limited to using only the money that you actually have on hand.

Rethink the “ Extras.”
You don’t have to give up all the things you enjoy or that make your life easier, but you may want to consider cutting back on some services. For example, skip the “premium” cable channels, find a cheaper Internet provider, and shop for a less expensive cell phone plan. These moves can net you a tidy sum to add to your investment account.

Think of all the little things you can do to find those extra dollars. Over time, small savings here and there can really add up to something big!

Source: MetLife Resources.

Find out how you’re doing. answer some questions and see how you compare to others: https://www.ingcompareme.com/

Link sponsored by ING. Enrollment is not a requirement to use this tool.

For more information about retirement programs available to A&M System employees:
http://www.tamus.edu/assets/files/benefits/pdf/RPB.pdf

Flu Shots – What you should know

Good news! This year, you only need ONE shot. Included in this year’s seasonal vaccine is the H1N1 strain (formerly known as “swine flu”).

Getting the vaccine as soon as it is available will provide protection if the flu season comes early. You can get the vaccine as long as illness is occurring in your community. Influenza can occur at any time, but most influenza occurs from November through May. Adults and older children need one dose of influenza vaccine each year. Some children younger than 9 years of age need two doses to be protected.

If you are enrolled in an A&M System health plan, your seasonal flu shot is covered at 100% with an office visit after the office visit copay.

Flexible Spending Account Participants

New healthcare reform legislation under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, signed in March of this year, impacts reimbursement for over-the-counter (OTC) medicines and drugs beginning January 1, 2011. OTC drugs and medicines will be considered ineligible beginning January 1, 2011 unless you have a prescription from your physician. You can find more specific information online at: mypayflex.com.

Through December 31, 2010:
• OTC drugs and medicines are eligible for reimbursement without a prescription.
• The PayFlex Card™ can be used to purchase eligible OTC drugs and medicines.

Beginning January 1, 2011:
• Over-the-counter (OTC) drugs and medicines will be considered an ineligible expense.
Urgent Care Clinic for Bryan/College Station employees and retirees

Scott & White’s TodayCare clinic, located in College Station, is a walk-in clinic where members can seek care for minor injuries or illnesses without an appointment. This facility is available to both Scott & White Health Plan and A&M Care plan members.

For Scott & White Health plan members, the cost is the same as an office visit: a $25 copayment plus 20% co-insurance if applicable. Co-insurance applies to certain procedures done in the office or diagnostic testing (standard x-rays are excluded) related to the visit. A&M Care plan members will pay a $30 co-payment and co-insurance (percent co-insurance varies with plans) if applicable. For both groups, it is more cost-effective than going to the hospital emergency room unless the situation is more extreme.

Healthcare Reform

Much of the publicity surrounding these new laws does not provide a lot of detail. Guidance for each section of the reform bill continues to be provided by the Department of Labor and the Department of Health and Human Services. Here’s how some of the provisions will affect our A&M System health plans.

Coverage for Adult children to age 26

This requirement will go into effect at the start of the plan year on or after September 23, 2010. For our plans, this means September 1, 2011. Group health plans which cover children, must offer coverage for them, regardless of marital status and without respect to student or dependent status, until the child’s 26th birthday. Coverage is not required to be provided for the spouse of the child. While some plans are making these changes now, all Texas state plans (ERS, UTS and the A&M System) will begin coverage on September 1, 2011 for several reasons. The first is that we need an opportunity to price the impact into the plan and second because this is in direct conflict with the state regulations for coverage which is expected to be addressed in the upcoming legislative session.

Grandfathering - Coverage for Preventive Care and Annual Limits

In the A&M Care plans, because of the copay increase for brand name drugs and because the ratios between the employees’ premium versus the System’s share of the premium has increased, they are not considered grandfathered plans. This is not necessarily a “bad thing,” especially for plan members. It means that there will be additional coverage requirements beginning September 1, 2011. Many of the requirements for grandfathered plans already are in place in the A&M care plans. For example:

- no pre-existing condition limitations
- coverage for routine, preventive immunizations for infants, children and adolescents

Examples of some new services paid with no cost share include:

- Preventive screenings for infants, children and adolescents
- Benefits listed by the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) will be paid with no cost share for network providers.
- Mammograms, colonoscopies and other preventive tests (many of these are already covered in the A&M Care plans at 100%)
- Healthy Diet Counseling and Obesity Screening Counseling

We will also be dropping the annual and lifetime maximums in our current A&M Care plans for skilled nursing care, home health and hospice care.

Other preventive care services are still being studied for coverage guidance.

W-2 reporting for health plan premiums

Beginning with tax year 2012, W-2s must show the aggregate cost of employee health coverage as an informational item. This is NOT an effort to tax premiums and will not change anyone’s taxable income.

Appeals

Group health plans will be required to establish an appeals process for claim or coverage denials that will include internal and external review procedures meeting certain requirements. While we already have an appeal procedure in place, we will realign the process as guidance is released.

We will provide updates as more guidance is issued.