New ID cards coming

Some carriers will be sending new ID cards to everyone, some only to new members. Check here for your carriers’ information:

- Only newly enrolled BlueCross BlueShield A&M Care members will get new cards. If you are already enrolled in any of the A&M care plans, you will not get new cards unless you make a tier change such as from employee-only to employee and child or employee and spouse, etc.
- Scott & White will be sending new cards to all members because the office visit copays have changed.
- Both the Dental PPO and the Delta Care DHMO plans will send new ID cards to all members.
- All vision plan members – new and old – will get a new EyeMed card.
- If you re-selected a Payflex debit card for your Health Care Spending Account, you will receive a new card if your existing card has an expiration date of 08/11. Otherwise, your existing card will be re-loaded with your new amount.

Dependent coverage

As a reminder, beginning 9-1-11, you will be required to verify the eligibility of any dependents added to insurance coverage. When a dependent is added to insurance coverage, send new ID cards to all members.

For Medical ONLY, your eligible dependents are:

- Your spouse;
- Your unmarried child(ren) under age 25, including stepchildren, adopted children, and children for whom you are the legal guardian;
- Your unmarried grandchild under age 25, if the child lives in your household; and
- Children over age 25, who are determined to be medically incapacitated and unable to provide their own support.

For all other Voluntary Benefits, your eligible dependents are:

- Your spouse;
- Your unmarried child(ren) under age 25, including stepchildren, adopted children, and children for whom you are the legal guardian;
- Your unmarried grandchild under age 25, if the child lives in your household; and
- Children over age 25, who are determined to be medically incapacitated and unable to provide their own support.

Outbound phone calls

Some members have recently received a phone call from BlueCross BlueShield of Texas or Medco, the pharmacy benefit manager that provides drug benefits for those in an A&M Care plan.

Both carriers have launched programs dedicated to keep members healthy and to provide information about programs offered to assist members in meeting health goals and in some cases, help save money.

For BlueCross BlueShield, Blue Care Advisors - registered nurses and other health care professionals - can work with members and their physician to provide education, coaching and monitoring of chronic conditions and to help make healthier lifestyle changes.

Medco programs include:
Therapeutic Resource Center (TRC) Awareness – A program that contacts members with certain conditions to advise them a nurse specialist is available to assist with drug-related questions. Conditions include: Cardiovascular disease, Hemophilia, Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension, IVIG/Autoimmune Disorders, Oncology Specialty, Hepatitis, Oncology/Immunology, Diabetes, Multiple Sclerosis, Women’s Health, Gastroenterology, Arthritis-Immune, Specialty Pharmacy, Cardiovascular, Pulmonary and Neurology/Psychiatry.

TRC clinical consultative calling – TRC nurses call patients in their therapeutic group, who are taking at least 3 maintenance medications, to help them with compliance and make them aware of available assistance.
My Rx Choices – This program raises member awareness about less-expensive alternative medicines and retail-to-mail savings.

Generic Rx Advantage – This program targets members taking a brand-name drug that will be available soon in a generic form.

Specialty retail refill allowance - If you had a specialty medicine filled at a retail drug store and are close to needing a refill, you will be contacted by the specialty pharmacy, if you have not contacted them first.

Therapy-Specific Generics Education – This program targets members taking a drug in a drug class where other generics are available.

State health plans

Texas State statutes prohibit a person from being enrolled in and receiving the full employer contribution for coverage under more than one state agency. The A&M System will identify individuals (including dependent, employees and retired employees) enrolled in A&M System medical coverage in addition to medical coverage provided by the University of Texas or Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS). Those individuals receiving more than one full employer contribution for insurance coverage will be given the opportunity to decline one of the state plans. Otherwise, one of the agencies will cancel coverage for that person.

BlueCross BlueShield website now available in Spanish

A new Spanish version of the BlueCross BlueShield website is now accessible via the en Español link in the upper right corner of the bcbstx.com home page, the Spanish version contains the same BCBSTX brand format and easy navigation as the English website.

You can access the Spanish site to:
• Learn about Coverage Options,
• Explore Health & Wellness information, including a Body Mass Index calculator and heart disease quiz,
• View member information under Already a Member?,
• including Advantages of Membership and Prescription Drug Resources.

Got Sunglasses?

The better question is, “Do you have the “correct” sunglasses?” WellPoint, Inc and Transitions® Optical, Inc. conducted a survey of 2,500 Americans ages 18+. Only a third of the group knew children’s eyes were at more risk of damage from ultraviolet (UV) light exposure than adults eyes. $16 billion yearly is spent on diseases of the eye, as reported by the Vision Council.

“Long-term UV exposure has been linked to eye diseases such as cataracts, macular degeneration and other eye diseases later in life, so it’s important to make sure you are doing everything you can to maintain healthy eyes,” said Pat Huot, director of Managed Vision Care for Transitions Optical.

If you do outdoor activities, such as snow skiing, hunting, etc. buy performance or sport sunglasses. Lens color does not affect the level of UV protection, but does affect high-energy visible (HEV) protection. Lense colors such as bronze, copper and reddish-brown block blue light significantly, which is a very important function.

After choosing your sunglasses, remember to have an optician evaluate them for true UV protection. Do not rely on the manufacturer’s notice on the front of the sunglasses.

The following are a few tips on choosing your sunglasses:
1. Make sure no distortion of images happens when you look through the sunglasses.
2. Get a pair with 100% UV protection that includes both the UVA and UVB protection. Again, have your optician verify their UV protection rating.
3. Larger lenses or close-fitting wraparound styles are best.
4. On over-cast days, select yellow or amber colored sunglasses and for sunny days choose a medium or dark brown pair.

More information can be found at http://www.articlesnatch.com/Article/Sunglasses--The-Best-Effective-Way-To-Protect-Eyes-From-Uv-Rays/996536