



Did you or your grown “child” turn 18?

If so, it may be time for a new doctor. As an adult, your healthcare needs are changing. If you or your grown child are currently seeing a pediatrician, you may want to find a primary care provider (doctor).

Types of adult primary care provider offices:

- Family Practice
- Internal Medicine

Ask your doctor if you have questions about what type of provider to see. MedStar Family Choice can also help find a new adult doctor in your area. If you would like help, please call us at **443-692-1094** or call Member Services at **888-404-3549** to select a new provider.



Para obtener una versión en español de este boletín, visite [MedStarFamilyChoice.com](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoice.com) o llame a Servicios para Miembros al **888-404-3549**.

In This Issue

- It’s okay to ask the Pharmacy..... 2
- Free interpreter services are available..... 3
- MedStar Family Choice is on Facebook..... 3
- What is utilization management?.. 4
- Understand fraud, waste, and abuse..... 4
- Attention all new or soon-to-be moms: you could earn a \$50 gift card! 5
- Free Nurse Advice Line..... 5
- Breaking down barriers when communicating with your doctor .. 6
- MedStar Family Choice survey results..... 6
- Rare and expensive case management program..... 7
- Spring into wellness and earn gift cards!..... 7
- Understanding tick bites and Lyme disease 8
- Heat related illnesses..... 9
- Free Diabetes Prevention Program 10



It's okay to ask the Pharmacy

Have you ever tried to fill a prescription only to be told the medication is not covered by your insurance?

If so, did the pharmacy offer to contact your doctor's office or insurance to resolve the issue?

Many people will leave the pharmacy without their needed prescription due to these challenges.

But did you know it's okay to ask the pharmacy: Why is my medicine not covered?

1. Is there a way my medicine could be covered?
2. Is there another medicine that could be used that is covered by my insurance?

Here are some common reasons why your prescription is not covered:

- The medicine is not on the formulary (a list of covered medicines).
- The medicine needs approval first (also known as prior authorization).

- It may be too soon to fill the medicine if it is a refill.

No matter the reason, it's okay to ask the pharmacy why the prescription was not covered and what could be done to fix the issue. MedStar Family Choice wants you to get the medical care and medicines you need to keep you healthy. We want you to know it's okay to ask the pharmacy if there is a problem getting your medicine.

If, after asking the pharmacy, you still can't get your prescription medicines, there is help here at MedStar Family Choice.

For help with medicines, please call MedStar Family Choice at **800-905-1722** Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

In addition, MedStar Family Choice members can submit pharmacy issues online using this [form](#).

For help with Mental Health and Substance Abuse related medications, please call the Maryland Department of Health Pharmacy Hotline at **800-492-5231, option 3**.

For more information about your pharmacy benefits, please visit [Bit.ly/MFCPharmacyBenefits](https://bit.ly/MFCPharmacyBenefits).



Free interpreter services are available

If you know a MedStar Family Choice member who does not speak English—or doesn't speak it well—call Member Services toll free at **888-404-3549**. We have interpreters to help members when visiting their doctors. We will also provide an interpreter to help members who do not speak English or read written information sent by Member Services. If you or someone you know is deaf or has trouble hearing, a TTY line is available. Just call **800-508-6975**. In addition, members can access Maryland Relay for TTY assistance. MedStar Family Choice also has people available who can use sign language to help you during doctor visits. You, or someone who can speak for you, must let the Member Services representative know that you need an interpreter.

Si necesita un interprete, por favor contacte al departamento de Servicio al Miembro al **888-404-3549**.

MedStar Family Choice is on Facebook

The MedStar Family Choice has a private Facebook group just for our members. Our Facebook group includes information about member benefits, wellness incentives, COVID-19, events, healthy tips, provider scheduling recommendations, and more.

We encourage all members to join our new group to remain connected. Please visit **Bit.ly/MFCGroup** and click on "+ Join Group" as soon as possible.

What is utilization management?

To make sure that members get needed health care, MedStar Family Choice follows a basic review process called utilization review. A member's doctor sends a request for services to MedStar Family Choice, usually by phone or fax. Our experienced clinical associates review all requests.

MedStar Family Choice decisions are based on national criteria, such as InterQual and Medicaid guidelines. Member needs that fall outside of standard criteria are reviewed by our physicians to see if they are medically necessary. MedStar Family Choice approves or denies services based upon whether the service is medically needed and a covered benefit. We do not financially reward our providers, associates, or anyone contracted with MedStar Family Choice for denying services. In addition, we do not financially reward anyone involved in the decision process in such a way that would encourage less use of services.

MedStar Family Choice requires up to two business days to process a complete request for services, excluding medications. Requests are considered complete when the doctor sends the necessary medical information. The final decision cannot take longer than 14 calendar days, whether or not all clinical information has been received. MedStar Family Choice will approve or deny and make a notification within 24 hours (1 calendar day) from receipt of all medication requests. If MedStar Family Choice denies the request, the provider and the member will receive a copy of the denial. The letter will list instructions on how to appeal the decision. Members may also contact the HealthChoice Help Line at **800-284-4510**.

Understand fraud, waste, and abuse

MedStar Family Choice works to prevent healthcare fraud, waste, and abuse. Fraud is when someone knowingly does something wrong or dishonest in order to obtain healthcare benefits for themselves or someone else. Waste is when too many or unnecessary tests or procedures are ordered that lead to extra costs. Abuse describes provider behaviors that do not follow sound financial, business or medical practice and result in unnecessary costs or do not meet a standard of care.

While MedStar Family Choice looks for possible fraud, waste, and abuse activities, we need your help to stop fraud, waste, and abuse. MedStar Family Choice has a strict non-retaliation policy. You do not need to give your name. If you know of a situation that may involve fraud and abuse, please report it immediately by calling our Compliance Director at **410-933-2283**, Member Services at **888-404-3549** or the MedStar Health Corporate Integrity Hotline at **877-811-3411**. Your report will remain confidential. You may also call the Maryland Department of Health Office of the Inspector General toll-free at **866-770-7175**, report on-line at https://health.maryland.gov/oig/Pages/Report_Fraud.aspx, or in writing to the MDH Program Integrity Unit, 201 West Preston Street, Baltimore, MD 21201. Again, you do not have to give your name.

Attention all new or soon-to-be moms: you could earn a \$50 gift card!

Did you know that MedStar Family Choice has a postpartum program that will meet all your needs? You can also qualify to receive a \$50 MedStar Family Choice Prepaid Mastercard® just for following the state guidelines.

It is more important that you to receive your postpartum exam 21 to 56 days after you deliver your baby. If you have a C-section birth, your doctor may want to see you in the office within two weeks for a suture check. While you're at the appointment, you can schedule an appointment for your postpartum exam (remember the exam must be within 21 to 56 days after you deliver).

MedStar Family Choice will provide you with transportation to and from your visit and you will receive a \$50 prepaid card for going to your exam. You can also earn an additional \$10 prepaid card for going to your first well-child visit with- in 14 days of birth. If you have any questions or would like assistance with scheduling your appointment, please call your postpartum program coordinator at **800-905-1722**.

In addition, the MedStar Healthy Life Portal offers additional Momma & Me classes where you can earn while you learn. Log onto the Healthy Life Portal at [MedStarFamilyChoiceHealthyLife.com](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoiceHealthyLife.com) to enroll and earn a \$25 gift card for completing the Prenatal/Breastfeeding courses, and a \$10 gift card for completing Infant Safety courses.

Card is issued by MetaBank®, N.A., Member FDIC, pursuant to license by Mastercard International Incorporated. Mastercard is a registered trade- mark, and the circles design is a trademark of Mastercard International Incorporated. No cash access or recurring payments. Card valid for up to 12 months, funds do not expire and may be available after card expiration date, fees may apply. Card terms and conditions apply.

Free Nurse Advice Line

Feeling sick or need medical advice? A registered nurse is just a phone call away. The Nurse Advice Line (**855-210-6204**) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Call and talk to a registered nurse to help you figure out what to do or where to go based on your symptoms.

The nurse can provide you with nearby urgent care locations if need be.

Emergency Care is for when you need care right away for a serious, sudden injury or illness. Therefore, non-emergent care can take longer in an Emergency Room.



Breaking down barriers when communicating with your doctor

You play a very important part in your care when visiting your doctor. Here are some things that can help make your visit more pleasant:

- Have your questions already written down before your visit.
- Listen carefully to the advice your doctor is giving you.
- Make sure you follow the doctor's orders. Please get the labs or other tests that your doctor asks you to get.
- Make certain that your blood pressure is taken at every doctor's visit, regardless of whether it is with your primary care doctor or a specialist.
- If you have had a hospital admission or an emergency room visit, tell your doctor. All doctors involved in your care need to know this information.
- Your primary care doctor should receive a copy of your hospital stay, known as a discharge summary. This document provides detailed information on your care in the hospital. It is very important that you schedule a follow-up visit with your doctor regarding any inpatient hospital stay.
- Ask your primary care doctor if he or she has received a copy of the discharge summary. If not, suggest that your primary care doctor request a copy from the hospital, as it is very important in managing your health care.



MedStar Family Choice survey results

MedStar Family Choice wants you to stay informed on how we are doing. For updated information on survey results such as HEDIS®, Satisfaction Surveys, System Performance Reviews, EPSDT audits, and the Consumer Report Card, please visit the MedStar Family Choice Quality web page: [MedStarFamilyChoice.com/Maryland-HealthChoice/For-Maryland-HealthChoice-Members/Quality](https://www.MedStarFamilyChoice.com/Maryland-HealthChoice/For-Maryland-HealthChoice-Members/Quality)

Paper copies are available upon request by calling **888-404-3549**. As we continue to improve and strive for high scores, your dedication to quality health care is very much appreciated.

HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Rare and expensive case management program

The Rare and Expensive Case Management (REM) program is a Maryland Medicaid benefit for members with certain qualifying conditions or diseases. The REM program is not another MCO (Managed Care Organization). The REM Program allows Medicaid recipients to be in traditional Fee-for-Service Medicaid but includes additional case management services.

If eligible for the REM program, you will no longer be in the MCO (MedStar Family Choice). You will be able to see any doctor that accepts the Maryland Medicaid Red and White card (also known as Fee-for-Service or Straight MA). This means you would have access to more doctors/specialists and would no longer need referrals. Children and adults also have dental and vision benefits with REM.

Another benefit of REM is an assigned case manager who will meet with you on a routine basis to help achieve your healthcare goals. The case manager can help make doctor appointments, address medication problems or questions, and even attend appointments to help you ask your doctor questions.

MedStar Family Choice has a case manager to assist you with the REM application. If you believe you or your child has a rare condition that might be eligible for the REM program, please contact our REM Coordinator, Tarsha Williams at **443-692-1184** for assistance. For a list of qualifying diagnoses, visit [MMCP.Health.Maryland.gov/LongTerm-Care/Pages/REM-Program.aspx](https://www.mmcp.health.maryland.gov/LongTerm-Care/Pages/REM-Program.aspx).

Spring into wellness and earn gift cards!

MedStar Family Choice cares about your health. Yearly physical exams are important to keep you and your family healthy. Your health and wellness is very important to MedStar Family Choice. So, we offer the gift cards with various amounts to members who get their screenings (tests) and immunizations (shots) each year.

Without screenings, you may not know of health issues that could get worse without treatment. Don't worry, because MedStar Family Choice is here to help you! Our Outreach Department can assist you and your family with scheduling appointments with your doctor:

Once you have completed one or more of the services above, you could be eligible to receive a prepaid card. MedStar Family Choice offers the following incentives on gift cards just for going to your wellness doctor appointments:

- Up to \$150 for getting your baby's well-child visits before 30 months of age as well as getting a lead test
- \$10 for all prenatal visits
- \$50 for your first postpartum visit within 21 to 56 days of delivery
- \$25 for completing your well-child visits (ages 3-11)
- \$50 for completing your adolescent physicals (ages 12-21)
- \$50 for completing your mammogram in 2024 (50 years and older)
- \$50 for getting your child's lead test screening, up to 12 months of age
- \$50 for A1C/Full Panel (\$25 for A1C only)
- \$25 for eye exam in 2024
- Additional \$50 if your A1C is below 8 by Dec. 31, 2024

Understanding tick bites and Lyme disease

Lyme disease is an infection spread by the bite of ticks. Lyme disease is the most commonly reported tickborne infection in the United States. Untreated Lyme disease can produce a wide range of symptoms, including fever, severe headaches, fatigue, rash, facial paralysis, muscle pain, and arthritis.

While preventive measures against ticks should be taken year-round, ticks are most active in the warmer months. Therefore, extra caution should be taken from April through September.

Here are some tips to avoid tick bites:

- Avoid wooded and brushy areas with high grass and leaf litter
- Walk in the center of trails
- Use insect repellent with 20 percent or more DEET, picaridin, or IR3535 on exposed skin (Note: parents should apply this product to their children, avoiding hands, eyes, and mouth).
- The Environmental Protection Agency has a website to help you find the right insect repellent for your family at [EPA.gov/Insect-Repellents](https://www.epa.gov/insect-repellents).

Use the following steps to remove ticks from you, your children, or your pets:

- Use fine-tipped tweezers to grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible.
- Pull upward with steady, even pressure to remove the tick. Avoid twisting or jerking.
- Clean the bite area and your hands with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.
- Don't use nail polish, petroleum jelly, or a hot match to make the tick detach.
- If a tick mouthpart remains in the skin, leave them alone. In most cases, they will fall out in a few days.

Visit [CDC.gov/Ticks](https://www.cdc.gov/ticks) to learn more about how to prevent tick bites, remove ticks, and check for signs and symptoms of tickborne illnesses.



Heat related illnesses

Dr. Dohmeier

It is August and Maryland as well as much of the United States has been suffering from heat waves. The temperatures have been in the hundreds with the heat index even higher! We all must be CAREFUL out in the heat. There are different heat related illnesses to be aware of that include: Heatstroke, Heat Exhaustion, and Heat Cramps.

Heatstroke is a medical emergency. Heatstroke often occurs as a progression from heat cramps and heat exhaustion, but it can occur even if you have no previous signs of heat injury. Heatstroke is a result of prolonged exposure to high temperatures. It is usually seen in combination with dehydration. The definition of heatstroke is a core body temperature greater than 104 degrees Fahrenheit. Heatstroke can be caused by exposure to a hot environment (classic heatstroke) and strenuous activity in hot weather (exertional heat stroke).

To prevent heatstroke, wear loose fitting or lightweight clothing, wear sunscreen, stay hydrated, take extra precautions with certain medications, never leave anyone in a parked car, take it easy during the hottest parts of the day, limit your time spent working or exercising in heat until you are acclimated, and be cautious if you are at increased risk. Treating heatstroke centers on cooling your body to a normal temperature to prevent or reduce damage to your brain and vital organs. To do this, your doctor may immerse you in cold water, mist cool water on your body while warm air is fanned over you, pack your body with ice and cooling blankets, and give you medicine to stop your shivering.

Heat Exhaustion is a result of your body overheating. Signs and symptoms may develop suddenly or over time, especially with prolonged periods of exercise. Heat exhaustion is preventable. Possible signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion include cool, moist skin with goose bumps when in heat, heavy sweating, faintness and dizziness, fatigue, weak/rapid pulse and low blood pressure upon standing, and muscle cramps, nausea, and headache. Prevention is the same as heatstroke. Usually you can treat heat exhaustion yourself. You can rest in cool place, drink cool fluids, try cooling measures (cool shower, soak in a cool bath or put towels soaked in cool water on your skin, and loosen your clothing).

Heat Cramps are the mildest form of the heat-related illnesses. Signs and symptoms include heavy sweating, fatigue, thirst, and muscle cramps. Drinking fluids or sports drinks containing electrolytes, getting into cooler temperatures, and resting are ways to treat heat cramps.

Free Diabetes Prevention Program

Sumana Kondle, MD, MSPH, MSHPL

The Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a free program included in your insurance. This is for people who might get diabetes. It helps you avoid getting diabetes.

The DPP is right for you if:

- You have been told you have “pre-diabetes.”
- You are feeling more tired than usual and have been told it could be related to pre-diabetes.
- Your doctor has said you need to “get healthier,” but you don’t know how to do that exactly. You are unsure what foods to eat or what exercises to do to prevent diabetes.
- It seems like everyone around you has diabetes and you don’t know how to avoid it.

Why join the DPP?

Diabetes is serious and can happen to anyone. It can cause heart problems, strokes, kidney issues, and even blindness. Managing diabetes can be very expensive. Preventing diabetes can save you from health problems and high medical costs.

How the DPP helps

We want to help you become more energetic and healthier with this free program. In the DPP, you will have a coach who will work with you alone or in a small group. Your coach will help you set health goals and reach them step by step. We will help you manage your weight, plan your diet, and support you. Starting a lifestyle change is hard, but having someone to support you makes it easier.

Success stories

Here are some real-life stories from people who have successfully participated in the DPP:

- “My coach was awesome, sending me emails telling me I was doing well. If I had a question, she would always respond. I was pretty much your standard couch potato before the program. Now my wife and I go walking every day...” (source: CDC)
- “I am now exercising regularly and learning strategies to cope with my emotional eating habits.”

(Source: CDC)

These stories show that with the right support, you can achieve your health goals and prevent diabetes.

Who is eligible?

The program is available to Med-Star Family Choice Medicaid members who meet certain criteria. To find out if you qualify and learn more about the program, please take this self-quiz:

[Could you have Prediabetes?](#)



Program benefits:

- Personal Coaching: One-on-one support from a coach.
- Healthier Lifestyle: Learn healthier food choices, get active, manage stress.
- Community Support: Join a group for encouragement and motivation.
- Lasting Changes: Focus on small, easy steps for improvements in your health.

We're here to help you take control of your health. Let's start this health journey together and make positive, lasting changes.

How to enroll?

Enrolling in the DPP is easy! If you think you could benefit from this program or if the results suggest that you may have prediabetes, please contact our member services team at **888-404-3549** or inform your doctor or case manager at the next appointment.



MedStar Family Choice

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The MedStar Family Choice member newsletter is a publication of MedStar Family Choice.

Submit new items for the next issue to **michael.a.washabaugh@medstar.net**.

For more information on your plan or anything in this newsletter, please visit **MedStarFamilyChoice.com**.

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