

PCP E-NEWSLETTER

Cigna Medicare Advantage

July 2020

QUICK CLICKS

- 1 [FOOD INSECURITY](#)
- 2 [HEPATITIS AWARENESS](#)
- 3 [COVID-19 RESOURCES](#)
- 4 [CAHPS CORNER](#)



Message from the Texas Chief Medical Director

To all our heroes,

Thank you for your unwavering commitment during these uncertain times. We're truly grateful to work with you. Although this past year has changed us all forever, we want you to know that our commitment to your patients' health is as strong as ever.

July is here, and it's more important than ever for us to continue working closely together. Our goal is to overcome new obstacles without losing sight of existing goals, such as aiming for, or maintaining, a Five Star Quality Rating.

Thank you again. You're all true heroes and we're proud to work with you toward healthier days ahead.

Respectfully,

Dr. Carlos Gonzalez
Chief Medical Director



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SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH – FOOD INSECURITY

As economic challenges increase during COVID-19, food insecurity continues to intensify, making more patients vulnerable.

Check out this recent article in the [Washington Times](#).

Several Texas-specific food resources are listed on the [Texas Health and Human Services](#) page.



Continued on next two pages

Breaking down barriers

Food insecurity and access to foods that support healthy eating

Fresh and nutritious foods are essential to good health. But for many, eating a healthier diet is not as simple as choosing to do so. There are often conditions beyond their control that limit their access to healthy foods.¹



37.2
million people
live in food-insecure households.²

Did you know?

A healthy diet costs

\$1.48

more per day than an unhealthy one.³

Produce costs



102%
more

in convenience stores than chain supermarkets and may be the only local grocer.⁴



Access to large supermarkets increases fruit and vegetable intake by **.69 servings per day.**⁵

Children refuse unfamiliar food **8-15 times** leading families to purchase nutrient-poor food to avoid waste.⁶



Five things you can do to help



Ask, don't assume

A patient may not be choosing to not eat nutritiously. Be empathetic and talk to your patient about why a behavior may be happening. Read some [**critical thinking questions**](#) that may be helpful to understand how to combat the behavior.



Educate your patients

Talk to them about what may be an unhealthy coping strategy when facing food insecurity, and provide alternatives to those behaviors. Get [**tips and information**](#).



Guide to resources

Remind patients to [**call 211**](#) to get connected with human service agencies and community organizations, such as food banks that can provide assistance. Or introduce them to resources such as [**Meals on Wheels**](#) or [**Aunt Bertha**](#).



Organize a food drive at your office

Get [**helpful tips**](#) to make it a success.



Suggest lower-cost produce options

'Ugly' produce companies sell and deliver lower-cost produce that looks imperfect, but is in otherwise perfect condition.

For more resources visit [CareAllies.com](https://careallies.com).

1. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-health/interventions-resources/food-insecurity>
2. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx#insecure>
3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3855594/>
4. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29540244/?from_filter=years.2017-2020&from_linkname=pubmed_pubmed&from_from_uid=28809795&from_pos=7
5. <https://healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Community/Pages/Improving-Access-to-Healthy-Foods.aspx>
6. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953615302331?via%3Dihub>



HEPATITIS AWARENESS

There are five types of viral hepatitis: A, B, C, D, and E. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 257 million people live with chronic hepatitis B, and 71 million people live with chronic hepatitis C worldwide. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the most common types of hepatitis in the United States are hepatitis A (HAV), hepatitis B (HBV) and hepatitis C (HCV). In fact, two out of every three people with HBV don't know they're infected. Fortunately, there are vaccines for HAV and HBV. July 28 is World Hepatitis Day. Use this as a reminder to review current immunization recommendations for HAV and HBV.

Vaccine Type	Summary of indicated populations	Vaccine name	Vaccine schedule
Hepatitis A*	- Travel to high/intermediate risk area - Men who have sex with men - IV drug use - Clotting factor disorder - Chronic liver disease - Healthy adults through age 40 recently exposed to HAV virus - Those who want protection	Havrix	2 doses: 0 and 6-12 month; at least 6 months apart
		Vaqta	2 doses: 0 and 6-18 months; at least 6 months apart
Hepatitis B†	- Chronic liver disease - HIV infection - Risk of exposure to blood - Patients with diabetes (those ≥ 60 years old at physician discretion) - Patients receiving hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis - Recent/current injection drug users - Sexual exposure risk, including men who have sex with men - Stay in care settings with high proportion of adults who have risks for HBV infection - Travel to high/intermediate risk area - Those who want protection	Engerix-B	3 doses: 0, 1, 6 months
		Recombivax HB	3 doses: 0, 1, 6 months
Hepatitis A & B combination**	<i>Please see above</i>	Twinrix	3 doses: 0, 1, 6 months Accelerated: 0, 7, 21-30 days, followed by a booster dose at 12 month

*Contraindications include severe allergic reaction following previous administration of HAV-containing vaccine or any component of the vaccine, including neomycin.

†Contraindications include severe allergic reaction following previous administration of HBV-containing vaccine or any component of the vaccine, including yeast.

References:

- 1) https://www.who.int/health-topics/hepatitis#tab=tab_1
- 2) <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html>
- 3) <https://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis/abc/index.htm>



COVID-19 RESOURCES

At Cigna, we continue to closely monitor COVID-19. Additionally, we've put together provider resources and information to keep you up to date and informed. Please visit [MedicareProviders.Cigna.com](https://www.MedicareProviders.Cigna.com).

CAHPS CORNER

What is the Health Outcomes Survey (HOS)?

The HOS is sent to a random sampling of patients with Medicare Advantage plans. It's related to patient-provider relationships and asks questions related to physical and behavioral health, incontinence, physical activity, fall risk and prevention, and other topics. HOS data helps the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) monitor health plan performance based on patient health outcomes. Additionally, it affects about 12% of the Star Quality Ratings that help Medicare beneficiaries choose a health plan. A baseline HOS is sent in April (postponed to August for 2020 dates of service due to COVID-19). Respondents who are still in the Medicare Advantage Organization two years later get a follow-up HOS in May.

HOS – FOCUS ON FALL RISK

As a provider, you can positively impact HOS results by starting important conversations during office visits. Ask questions, create recall and encourage actions that align with key HOS measures.



Continued on next page

CAHPS CORNER *continued*

HOS questions (reducing fall risk):

In the past 12 months ...

- › Did you talk with your provider about falling or problems with balance or walking?
- › Has your provider done anything to help prevent falls, or treat problems with balance or walking?
Some things they might advise are to use a cane or walker.

Actions you can take:

- › Discuss balance problems, falls, difficulty walking and other fall risks.
- › Suggest cane or walker, hip protectors, or emergency alert devices.
- › Check blood pressure with patient standing, sitting and reclining.
- › Suggest exercise or physical therapy.
- › Suggest vision/hearing test.
- › Perform bone density screening, especially for high-risk members.
- › Regular medication review for possible drug interactions/withdrawal from psychotropic medications.
- › Cardiac pacemaker for cardio-inhibitory carotid sinus hypersensitivity.

Fall risk management- Preventive measures:

- › Exercise
- › Assistance devices
 - Hand rails
 - Grab bars
 - Non-slip mats
- › Fall-proof home
 - Declutter high-traffic areas
 - Clear stairs
 - Secure throw rugs
 - Secure loose cords
- › Lighting installation

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK

Please email us any questions you have or topics you'd like discussed. Our goal is to tailor our content to meet your needs. We look forward to hearing from you at:

PCP_ENewsletter_Team2@HealthSpring.com

