

communityone

PATIENT NEWS

ENGLISH EDITION

SPRING 2005

Changes in Eligibility Make Process Easier

You may notice some changes in eligibility center hours and policies. Some centers will stay open later. The rules on when you need to renew your eligibility with the Harris County Hospital District also have changed.

New Center

A new eligibility center has opened inside Acres Home Health Center. It replaces the one that closed across the street from the health center.

Extended Hours

The following eligibility centers will stay open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. on the following days:

Monday
Strawberry Eligibility Center

Tuesday
Southwest Eligibility Center

Wednesday
South Loop Eligibility Center

Thursday
East Mount Houston Eligibility Center

“We have extended the hours of the eligibility centers to mirror those health centers that are staying open later,” said Vania Duckett, Director of Patient Eligibility Services. “We want to make things easier for our patients.”

Changes for Medicare Patients

Another change in eligibility affects Medicare patients. Patients on Medicare now need to renew their Gold Card eligibility every two years, instead of every year.

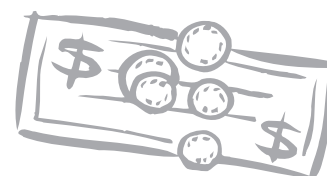
For more information about eligibility, call 713-566-6691.



Online Calculator

The eligibility department has added an online calculator for you to determine your payment schedule using the Gold Card or communityone. Visit the Web site at www.hchdonline.com, then click on Patient Information and select Gold Card/Online Calculator or communityone/Online Calculator. Once you've selected the calculator, you will be asked three questions.

1. The number of people in your family.
2. Your gross monthly income (the amount of money earned before taxes or expenses).
3. Do you have Medicare?



After answering the questions, click on the Submit button. You will be shown what your payment will be when you visit HCHD health centers, pharmacies, clinics or hospitals.

For more information about eligibility, call 713-566-6691.

Healthy Heart Facts

Heart disease is the main cause of death in America. High blood pressure, heart failure, hardening of the arteries and stroke are all diseases of the heart. Many types of heart disease can be prevented.

Some things that we can control, treat or prevent to stop heart disease are:

- ✓ High blood pressure
- ✓ Tobacco smoke
- ✓ High cholesterol
- ✓ Physical inactivity
- ✓ Obesity
- ✓ Diabetes
- ✓ Stress
- ✓ Alcohol and drug use



Other factors that we cannot control are:

- ✓ Age
- ✓ Sex (gender)
- ✓ Race

- ✓ Family history
- ✓ Previous heart attack or stroke

To lower your risk of getting heart disease:

- ✓ Know your risk factors.
- ✓ Don't smoke and avoid other people's smoke.
- ✓ Control your blood pressure.
- ✓ Eat a healthy diet low in fat, cholesterol and salt.
- ✓ Be physically active.
- ✓ Control your weight.
- ✓ Get regular medical check-ups.
- ✓ Follow your doctor's orders for taking medicine.

For more information, call Ask Your Nurse at 713-633-CALL (2255).



SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH:

Healthy Futures

Steps to take for a healthy delivery

The Harris County Hospital District offers fun, free prenatal classes. They help moms-to-be prepare for pregnancy and childbirth.

Prenatal care starts before conception. If you plan to get pregnant, take care of yourself and see your doctor. Your doctor will make sure your body is healthy for pregnancy. If you are pregnant, visit your doctor right away. The care you receive can help you have a healthy baby.

Follow these easy steps before and during pregnancy for a healthy baby:

- ✓ Reduce stress.
- ✓ Do not smoke.
- ✓ Do not use drugs or alcohol.
- ✓ Only take medication approved by your doctor.
- ✓ Eat healthy.
- ✓ Take prenatal vitamins with folic acid.
- ✓ Stay physically active.
- ✓ Attend prenatal class.

For more information, call 713-566-6292.

This publication is co-produced with the Health Promotion Services Department for the patients of the Harris County Hospital District. All Spanish copy is provided by HCHD Interpretation Services and Miguel Ortiz of the Learning and Resource Center. For questions or comments about the content, contact Beth Gullett via e-mail at beth_gullett@hchd.tmc.edu or call 713-566-6936.

Food on the Go

Our lives are busier than ever. When we have a hectic schedule, we go to fast food restaurants. Most of us know that fast food is not the best diet choice. On the bright side, fast food places have added healthier foods to their menus. Try these eating tips to make your next fast food meal a little healthier:

- ✓ Instead of eating fried foods, try baked, roasted, broiled or grilled foods.

- ✓ Try not to use mayonnaise or any other extra sauces with your meals.
- ✓ Try a salad, but be sure to only use half the salad dressing!
- ✓ Sodas have lots of calories and sugar — drink diet soda, unsweetened iced tea, low-fat milk, 100 percent juice, or water.

Eating healthy on the go is not hard, and you can make small changes for a healthier life.



Cancer Awareness

Cancer affects everyone differently. It can be found in many parts of the body, such as the breast, prostate, lung and even the brain. Scientists are unsure how cancer starts. There are things you can do to decrease your chance of developing it. Here's how:

1. Exercise at least 30 minutes a day 3-5 times a week.
2. Eat a diet rich in fresh fruits and vegetables.
3. Quit smoking.
4. Limit your alcohol use.
5. Wear sunscreen when going outdoors.
6. Talk to your doctor.

If cancer has affected someone in your family, you may be at a higher risk. It is important to talk to your doctor about your cancer risk. There are warning signs you should know about when dealing with cancer.

Remember Caution

- C** = change in bowel or bladder
- A** = a sore that does not go away
- U** = unusual bleeding or discharge
- T** = thickening or lump in the breast
- I** = indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
- O** = obvious change in wart or mole
- N** = nagging cough or hoarseness

If you have questions or would like to learn more about cancer, call the Ben Taub Cancer Resource Center at 713-873-2556 or the LBJ Cancer Resource Center at 713-566-4608.

Patient Telephone Directory



Appointment Line
Call to schedule appointments at any facility.
713-526-4243

Ask Your Nurse
24-hour nurse help line.
713-566-6437

Ben Taub General Hospital
713-873-2000

Community Outreach Information Line
713-566-6064

Health Call Information Line
713-715-2800

LBJ General Hospital
713-566-5000

Patient Billing Office
713-566-6600

Patient Education Classes
713-566-6292

Patient Eligibility Office
713-566-6691

Quentin Mease Community Hospital
713-873-3700