

# communityone

PATIENT NEWS

ENGLISH  
EDITION

SUMMER 2005

## Pharmacy Co-pays Increase

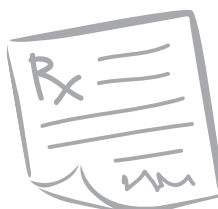
As of March 1, the Harris County Hospital District has increased its pharmacy co-payments for medicines. Pharmacy co-pays have gone up an average of \$3.75.

“We did a survey and found our charges were much lower than other health systems in Texas,” said Lisa Kivela, Director of Ambulatory Pharmacy

Services. “A patient’s payment for each take-home medicine will be based on their pay code.”

Your pay code is on your Gold Card.

For more information, ask your clinic cashier or pharmacist.



Changes are as follows:

Pay Code	Previous Co-pay	New Co-pay
A or Q	\$2	\$5
AC	\$3	\$5
H or communityone	\$10	Variable down payment
E or OC	\$15	\$20 down payment
Medicaid	Will be billed for non-covered medicines	

## Changes in Pharmacy

As of March 1, the Harris County Hospital District’s pharmacies stopped providing over-the-counter (OTC) drugs to patients.

OTC drugs include drugs like aspirin, Tylenol and Benadryl. (Patients can get a list at the pharmacy.)

Now patients have to buy their OTC drugs from a drugstore.

Patients in the hospital will still receive OTC drugs during their stay. New and refill prescriptions will not be filled.

If you have questions, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## Smoking Only Allowed in Right Places

Ben Taub General Hospital and all Harris County Hospital District facilities are smoke-free buildings. The Hospital District wants to encourage you to quit smoking.

But for patients and visitors who do smoke, there are special areas where you may smoke, such as the courtyard next to the parking garage at Ben Taub Hospital. Look for signs and directions to the smoking area.

If you want to stop smoking and need help, call 713-566-6292.



## SPOTLIGHT ON HEALTH:

### Prostate Cancer

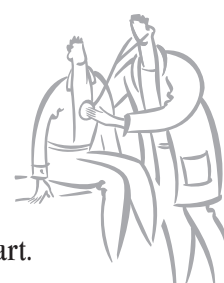
Prostate cancer is the most common type of cancer in men. About 232,090 American men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer this year.

**Factors that increase the risk of prostate cancer are:**

- ✓ **Age:** Most men diagnosed with prostate cancer are older than 65.
- ✓ **Family history:** Having a father or brother with the disease.
- ✓ **Race:** Prostate cancer occurs more in African-American men.
- ✓ **Diet:** A diet high in red meat and fat may increase a man’s risk.
- ✓ **Prostate changes:** Having abnormal prostate cells can increase a man’s risk.

There are two ways men can be screened for prostate cancer.

- ✓ **PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen) test:** A blood test that checks the level of PSA in a man’s blood.
- ✓ **Digital rectal exam:** Your doctor will examine the prostate through the rectum to check for lumps.



Ask your doctor when your prostate cancer screening should start.

For more information on prostate cancer, call:

The Cancer Resource Center at Ben Taub General Hospital – 713-873-2556

The Cancer Resource Center at Lyndon B. Johnson General Hospital – 713-566-4608

### Exercise

It’s important for everyone to be more active. And it’s never too late to start. All you need is 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity. Moderate activity is anything that gets you breathing harder or your heart pumping faster. This includes walking, biking, gardening and even housework.

#### Benefits

- ✓ Improve energy
- ✓ Reduce stress
- ✓ Control weight
- ✓ Lower risk for certain cancers, heart disease and diabetes

Based on information from ACS: Living Smart

#### Adopt an Active Lifestyle

- ✓ **Adults:** Be active for 30 minutes or more five days a week.
- ✓ **Children and adolescents:** Get at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity at least five days a week.



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. For questions or comments about the content, contact Nicole Aguilar via e-mail at nicole\_aguilar@hchd.tmc.edu or call 713-566-6761.

## Get Involved



Do you want to improve your hospital or health center?

If so, get involved with the Health Advisory Council.

Each Harris County Hospital District health center and hospital has an advisory council. These groups are made up of patients and community members.

Councils meet once a month to talk about patient care and services.

They also offer ideas to improve patient care at the health centers and hospitals.

The advisory councils have helped with many projects. They have helped change bus routes and get extended hours.

There is also a council at large meeting. The council at large meeting brings all councils together. They meet once a month to discuss HCHD-wide topics.

To get involved, call the volunteer coordinator at 281-543-2698.

## Stroke Facts

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in America. It causes more serious long-term disabilities than any other disease.

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain stops because it is blocked by a clot. When this happens, the brain can’t get the blood and oxygen it needs.

Knowing the signs of a stroke can help you act in time and help save your life or someone else’s.

#### Symptoms:

- ✓ Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg, especially on one side of the body.
- ✓ Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.
- ✓ Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- ✓ Sudden trouble walking, dizziness and loss of balance.
- ✓ Sudden severe headache with no known cause.



If you or someone with you has one or more symptoms do not delay. Call 9-1-1 immediately.

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

## Patient Telephone Directory



#### Appointment Line

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

#### Ask Your Nurse

24-hour nurse help line  
713-633-2255

#### Ben Taub General Hospital

713-873-2000

#### Community Outreach

Information Line  
713-566-6064

#### 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