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November is Warrior Care Month It is Flu Season: Are you protected? ISOS Care Survey

Warrior Care Month:

Providing care to wounded, ill and injured service members is a top priority of the DoD and the MHS. Senior defense leaders are committed to ensuring service members, families, and care providers are kept informed about the latest warrior care news and improvement of services.

There will be an online event that will feature a live web discussion with senior leadership and subject matter experts on a wide variety of warrior and family as well as veterans issues. It will provide participants with the opportunity to interact with an array of service members and families who have been touched by warrior care. "We want to share with service members and their families about the progress we've made to find solutions that work," said Dr. S. Ward Casscells, assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. "We want to hear from you directly, so please join us online on November 19."

Town hall participants can submit questions to MHSWebContent@tma.osd.mil beginning Nov. 14 and throughout the live program on Nov 19. Instructions on how to participate in the webhall can be found on the front page of <http://www.health.mil>. For privacy reasons, participants should limit discussions to broad issues and lessons learned and do not disclose personal information. When possible, service members should contact their chain of command to resolve personal issues. In addition to the web town hall meeting, service members and families may also share their feedback in an online questionnaire about warrior care by logging onto <http://www.health.mil> and looking under the "Top Headlines" section.

Learn more about Warrior Care Month at <http://www.warriorcare.mil> and find more about TRICARE benefits for wounded, ill and injured at <http://www.tricare.mil/wii/>.

Flu Season:

According to the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there is a sense that antibiotics are a "cure all." Many beneficiaries expect an antibiotic prescription when they see their Primary Care Manager (PCM) for colds, the flu, most coughs, sore throats and some ear aches. Instead of automatically asking for antibiotics, TRICARE encourages all beneficiaries to listen to their PCM about the best treatment options. Many things can help beneficiaries stay comfortable and feel better if they have this season's cold or flu. The CDC recommends that children and adults increase fluid intake, use a cool mist humidifier or use saline solutions to relieve congestion and get plenty of rest. Children who are unable to blow their nose may benefit from saline nasal drops and a bulb syringe to help keep their nasal passages clear. Over-the-counter medications may help adults.

Prevention is better than cure, and following these steps can help beneficiaries avoid catching a cold or the flu:

- o Get the flu shot or nasal mist flu vaccine to reduce risk of contracting the flu virus. Both are appropriate for children and adults. (Contact your POC or ISOS provider for information on availability of flu vaccines in your specific area, all areas in the Pacific are not on the same time schedule for the flu vaccine.)
- o Wash hands often because colds and the flu are spread by direct contact.
- o Drink plenty of water to flush out the body.
- o Cough or sneeze into a tissue instead of the hands.

o Keep hands off the face. The cold and flu viruses can enter the body through the eyes, nose and mouth.

Beneficiaries should keep their PCM informed if their illness gets worse or lasts a long time because viral infections such as the flu or cold can sometimes lead to bacterial infections. If a bacterial infection is present and a PCM decides that antibiotics would be beneficial, the CDC suggests several tips to follow:

o Take an antibiotic exactly as prescribed and do not skip doses, even when feeling better. Stopping the medicine too early may allow some bacteria to linger, increasing the possibility of getting sick again.

o Throw away any unused medication after finishing the recommended treatment. It is not safe to keep antibiotics for future illnesses.

o Do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else, as they are specific to that person's illness.

Taking the wrong medication may delay proper treatment and allow bacteria to multiply. To learn more about the flu and steps to stay healthy during the cold and flu season, visit the CDC web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm>.

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SOURCE: TRICARE New Release at

<http://www.tricare.mil/pressroom/news.aspx?fid=475>

ISOS Care Survey:

TRICARE and ISOS are always striving to ensure our beneficiaries are taken care of at home and especially while abroad. ISOS has a very detailed system set up for surveys after each visit with an ISOS provider or facility in the remote areas. ISOS and TRICARE read these and value your input as the consumer of the services provided by ISOS. Please take the time to fill these surveys out with good experiences and any issues you may be experiencing with your care. The website to complete the questionnaire is: <http://www.keysurvey.com/survey/29870/1906/> or you can also get to it by clicking on the Customer Satisfaction Survey link via the TGRO/International SOS website at: <http://www.internationalsos.com/private/tricare/pacific/>.

As always, we are interested in your feedback and any ideas for health care issues you would like our office to address in the future. Contact us at TPHI@med.navy.mil.

Sincerely,
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