



May/June 2012

Choosing a home health agency? New survey results can help

You're ready to go home from the hospital, but you still need treatment at home – how do you choose a home health agency to help you recover? Medicare now has [new survey results](#) to help you compare other patient's actual experiences with home health agencies – including whether they'd recommend the agency to friends.

Let Medicare help you [choose a home health agency](#) that best meets your needs. You'll find information about Medicare-certified home health agencies, quality of care, and the latest patient survey results.

Check your blood pressure regularly

Did you know that 1 in 3 adults in the U.S. has high blood pressure? And, high blood pressure usually has no symptoms, so you can have it for years without knowing it. Medicare's new [cardiovascular disease screening](#) can help you monitor your blood pressure - at no cost to you.

May is National Health and Blood Pressure Education month – [learn more about high blood pressure](#) and how you can lower your risks. Also, watch our short [video](#) about Medicare's efforts to reduce high blood pressure.

Help paying medical & drug costs

There are several programs that can help you save money on Medicare premiums, drugs, or basic living expenses:

- Learn about [Medicare Savings Programs \(MSPs\)](#) to help pay your Medicare premiums
- Apply for [Extra Help](#) with Medicare drug coverage
- Look at [State Pharmaceutical Assistance Programs](#) for more help with drug costs
- Explore national and local charitable programs with [Benefits Check Up](#), created by the National Council on Aging (NCOA)
- Visit [Benefits.gov](#) to learn about government assistance programs

Find out more about these programs at www.medicare.gov.

Are your bones weak?

Ten million Americans have osteoporosis (low bone density). People can't feel their bones getting weaker, so you may not know that you have osteoporosis until you break a bone.

You're at higher risk for osteoporosis if you're:

- White
- Older than 50
- Small in body size
- Eat a diet low in calcium
- Not physically active
- A post-menopausal woman

Medicare can help you prevent or detect osteoporosis at an early stage, when treatment works best. Talk to your doctor about getting a [bone mass measurement](#) – it may be free. Also, watch our short [video](#) about Medicare's efforts to combat osteoporosis.

Prevent falls during National Safety Month

Each year, 1 in 3 older U.S. adults suffers a fall, which can cause serious injuries like bone fractures and head trauma. But, falls don't have to be an inevitable part of aging. June is National Safety Month – [learn more](#) about falls among older adults, including steps you can take now to reduce the risk of falls.



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