

ASPIRE ADVOCATE

ISSUE 4 — SPRING 2018

Dear Member,

As a member of a Medicare Advantage Plan like Aspire, you, as a consumer have many protections. We contract with the federal government to provide your Medicare coverage. It's through this contract that **Aspire Health Plan** commits to providing quality healthcare with the overall mission of keeping you healthy. Striving to create programs that enhance your health and well-being is also part of our mission.

In every issue of the *Aspire Advocate*, we encourage you to get the necessary preventive screenings and, in some cases, we incentivize you to do so. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) rates us based on your opinions and overall health status. As the director of compliance, it's my job to oversee the compliance of our programs. We want you to have a positive experience with Aspire Health Plan. We want to ensure that we meet your healthcare needs.

Every year, CMS asks a random sample of members how we are doing as your health plan. Please take the time to grade us. It's our opportunity to get better. If you can't give us high marks, tell us how we can improve — call us.

Thank you for your continued membership.

Sincerely,
Melissa Hall
Director, Compliance

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Fitness for every body

When someone thinks about joining a gym, it's usually to lose weight, gain muscle tone, train for a sporting event, or feel healthier. For older adults, the main goals for exercise may also include maintaining quality of life, mobility, and preventing chronic disease.

Regardless of fitness level, as we age, our muscle mass decreases, balance becomes unsteady, bones weaken, and flexibility decreases. This is why it is harder to stand up from a seated position and daily tasks are more taxing. To combat these normal signs of aging, we need to focus on strengthening and maintaining muscle mass, staying mobile and flexible, improving cardiovascular health and endurance, and preserving balance and stability. **Exercise must be helpful, not hurtful, so finding the perfect intensity is important to avoid injury while still getting results.**

The Montage Wellness Centers in Salinas and Marina offer a wide-variety of older-adult-friendly exercise classes, personal training, and equipment.

UNSURE WHERE TO START?

These options are the most beneficial for people who are reentering the fitness arena.

1. LOW-IMPACT AEROBICS

Thirty minutes per day of aerobic activity will help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol, burn calories, maintain joint movement, improve heart health, and boost energy levels. Start with just 5 or 10 minutes and increase as your stamina improves. What's most important is the type of cardio exercise you do. Choose low-impact activities like biking, swimming, walking, elliptical training, or the rowing machine to reduce strain on your joints.

2. PROGRESSIVE STRENGTH TRAINING

We lose 5% of our muscle mass every decade after our 30th birthday. Atrophy (muscle loss), can affect our metabolism (how many calories we burn at rest), posture, chance of injury, balance, and bone density. The good news is we can reverse these with a progressive strength training routine. Strength training isn't isolated to the weight rack. You can try body weight, machine-based, and resistance band exercises to start. How much? Try two to three days a week of a full body workout.

Want to start strength training safely and effectively? The Montage Wellness Center offers members a complimentary Health Risk Assessment and Equipment Orientation with one of its degreed personal trainers to help guide you through a customized strength-training program.

3. PILATES

Pilates is a form of light strength training focused largely on the core and stabilizing muscles that help with balance and mobility. It was originally created to help dancers build a strong center, improve flexibility, and fix postural alignment. With some modifications, Pilates is recommended to adults of all ages for these benefits.



4. GENTLE YOGA

Yoga is a gentle, low-impact way to gain mobility, flexibility, and strength. If you're intimidated by the thought of walking into a yoga class with no experience, don't be. There are plenty of beginner yoga classes available, and you can always ask one of the certified instructors to help you modify poses.

5. WATER AEROBICS AND STRENGTH TRAINING

Water aerobics and strength training may be one of the best modes of exercise for older adults, especially for those with arthritis or osteoporosis. Aqua exercise improves your cardiovascular health and strengthens muscles with minimal stress on your joints and bones. Studies have also shown that swimming doesn't only strengthen your body, it also helps keep your mind sharp. You can start your exercise regimen by joining an Aqua Dynamics class in the warm-water therapy pool; you don't even have to know how to swim. Or swim laps in the lap pool at the Montage Wellness Center.

Health is not a one size fits all; every person will have different skills, goals, and abilities. The Montage Wellness Center is dedicated to helping you learn safe exercises that make you feel your personal best.

Montage Wellness Center offers Aspire Health Plan members a 50% discount off monthly dues, and the initiation fee is waived.

Go online or call for more information.
montagewellnesscenter.com
Marina: (831) 883-5656
Salinas: (831) 622-6900

New Medicare cards protect your personal information

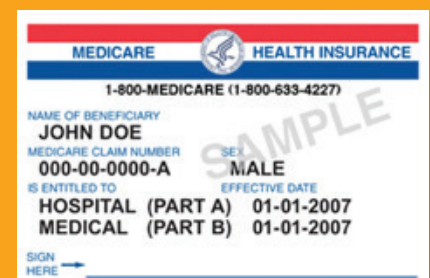
Starting in April 2018, new Medicare cards will be mailed to all people with Medicare, to help protect you from identity fraud. Social Security numbers will be removed from all Medicare cards.

The new Medicare card contains a unique, randomly-assigned number that replaces the current Social Security-based number. Medicare will mail new cards in waves, with California residents receiving theirs between April 2018 and June 2018.

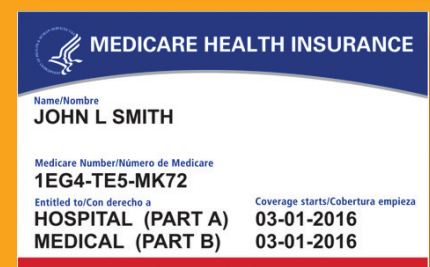
KEY INFORMATION TO KNOW:

- The new Medicare card doesn't replace your Aspire Health Plan card. Continue to present your Aspire Health Plan identification card to all of your healthcare providers.
- The new Medicare number is needed to join, leave, or switch to a different plan.
- You should destroy your old Medicare card once you receive your new card. Do NOT destroy your Aspire Health Plan card.
- Once received, store your new (red, white and blue) Medicare card in a safe place.

CURRENT CARD:



NEW CARD:





Managing your prescriptions: Taking an active role

As you age, your health needs change and you may notice your list of medications has increased. This can be overwhelming and confusing, and if not managed correctly, could potentially be harmful. It's important to take an active role in understanding your medication, and how to manage it correctly.

To help, we've created this useful checklist to help you manage your prescriptions:

I Medication list. Create and maintain a list of all your prescription medications and any over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and/or supplements you are currently taking. It's also helpful to include the directions and your prescribing doctor's. The more information you have to provide at your next doctor's visit, the more accurately the doctor can pinpoint any potential adverse effects or drug interactions. Be sure to keep a copy of your list with you and updated at all times.

I Use one pharmacy. Have all your medications filled at the same pharmacy, if possible. If you are using both a retail pharmacy and mail-order pharmacy, try to maintain one pharmacy for each service. This will also help your doctor and pharmacist keep track of your medications.

I Organize and get into a routine. Put all your medications into a pillbox organizer. Discard any unused, expired, or discontinued medications to eliminate confusion.

I Create reminders. Calendars, charts, and reminder services are good cues for incorporating prescription medication times and refill notices. Most pharmacies will offer a call or text message reminder indicating that your prescription is ready for pick-up or that it is time to refill.

I Consider generics. A generic drug is a medication created to be the same as an existing, approved brand-name drug in dosage form, safety, strength, effectiveness, stability, and quality. Due to lower research costs, generic drugs are sold at a substantially lower cost and could save you money. Always ask your doctor if your prescription is available in generic form.

I Pharmacy benefit. Take advantage of what your plan has to offer. Most members with at least three chronic disease states such as diabetes, COPD, respiratory, dyslipidemia, depression, and Alzheimer's are likely to incur annual drug costs that exceed \$3,967. Programs such as Medication Therapy Management (MTM) are designed to have pharmacists work closely with you and your doctor to get the best results from your medications and help you find savings at the same time.

If you think you may qualify for Aspire's Medication Therapy Management program, or have questions about it, call: (800) 546-5677. If we can help you in obtaining your medications prescribed by your doctor, please call member services: (800) 574-4938

Age Well, Drive Smart

We all want to stay mobile and independent as long as possible. For most of us, this means that as we age, we want to continue to drive ourselves to appointments, grocery shopping, on road trips, and more. While the impact of aging varies widely from person to person, the gradual, incremental effects on vision, flexibility, and response times may compromise safety and require us to evaluate our driving abilities.

Research shows that older adults involved in crashes tend to be more vulnerable than younger people, meaning they suffer more severe injuries. Crash prevention and driver protection become urgent needs for older adults.

To that end, the California Highway Patrol provides the *Age Well, Drive Smart* program to give older adults the necessary tools to remain safe and confident on the road. The program covers various

topics ranging from California driving laws, safe driving practices, and the effects of aging on a person's ability to drive safely.

It's easy to fool ourselves, or even fail to notice changes in our own physical or mental conditions, which could negatively affect our ability to drive safely. That's why the *Age Well, Drive Smart* program includes a self-assessment to assist drivers in identifying and addressing these changes. The class provides opportunities to refresh your knowledge of driving laws, evaluate your driving abilities, and improve your overall driving skills.

***Age Well, Drive Smart* classes are available through:
Central Coast Senior Services or Monterey CHP office directly**

**Monterey County Office, CHP (831) 770-8000
Central Coast Senior Services (831) 649-3363**



Upcoming events



Community Connections

Enhance your mind, body, and spirit with our FREE social and wellness classes. Meet community friends and have fun learning. **Bring a friend.** Community connections classes are open to the public.

Tuesday, April 17, 10–11:30 a.m.
THE AGING EYE WITH DR. PHILIP PENROSE:
Learn how to protect your eyesight
Crazy Horse Restaurant at Bay Park Hotel
1425 Munras Ave., Monterey, CA 93940

Wednesday, April 18, 10–11:30 a.m.
MEDITERRANEAN DIET II: More great tips for a healthy (and delicious) lifestyle
Montage Wellness Center
2920 2nd Ave., Marina, CA 93933

Thursday, April 19, 10–11:30 a.m.
T'AI CHI: Find your peace and calm in this introduction to t'ai chi.
Montage Wellness Center
1910 North Davis Rd., Salinas, CA 93907

Tuesday, May 22, 5:30–7 p.m.
RECIPE MAKEOVER:
Small changes for a healthier menu
Montage Wellness Center
2920 2nd Ave., Marina, CA 93933

Wednesday, May 23, 2–3:30 p.m.
MAY IS FOR MOTHERS: Continue the celebration with a special afternoon tea service
Crazy Horse Restaurant at Bay Park Hotel
1425 Munras Ave., Monterey, CA 93940

Thursday, May 24, 12–1:30 p.m.
SPEAKING "DOCTOR TALK":
Tips for a successful visit
Montage Wellness Center
1910 North Davis Rd., Salinas, CA 93907

For more information or to register, please visit: www.aspirehealthplan.org/connections or call (877) 663-7651. Topics, locations, dates, and times are subject to change. Seating is limited.

Learn about Medicare's Extra Help program

Thursday, June 21, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.
Montage Wellness Center, 1910 North Davis Rd., Salinas
If you are having trouble paying your health care costs, we'll show you how to apply for Low Income Subsidy. There will be local resource tables sharing additional assistance programs for low income seniors.

Archive: www.aspirehealthplan.org/members-newsletter.php
Share your thoughts: feedback@aspirehealthplan.org



Like us on Facebook:
facebook.com/aspirehealthplan

Aspire Health Plan is a Medicare Advantage HMO plan sponsor with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Aspire Health Plan depends on contract renewal. This information is not a complete description of benefits. Contact the plan for more information. Aspire Health Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-855-570-1600 (TTY: 711) 注意: 如果您使用繁體中文, 您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電1-855-570-1600 (TTY: 711) Medicare evaluates plans based on a 5-star rating system. Star Ratings are calculated each year and may change from one year to the next. Other providers are available in our network. We are open 8 a.m.–8 p.m PT Monday through Friday from February 15 through September 30 (except certain holidays) and 8 a.m.–8 p.m. seven days a week from October 1 through February 14. H8764_MBR_Newsletter4_0318_IA_031618



Share your passion

Do you have a story, skill, knowledge, or talent you'd like to share with your fellow members?

Aspire is looking for members to lead our monthly Community Connections classes, and/or be featured in an upcoming issue of the *Aspire Advocate*. If you would like to be considered for an *Aspire Advocate* feature, or you would like to share your skills or knowledge with a Community Connections class, go online and tell us about yourself, at :

www.aspirehealthplan.org/passion
or complete the form and mail to:

Aspire Health Plan
Attn: Share Your Passion
10 Ragsdale Drive Suite 101, Monterey, CA 93940

Name: _____

Phone: _____

- ☐ Please consider me for an *Aspire Advocate* feature
- ☐ Please consider me as a speaker for Community Connections classes
- ☐ Please consider me for both

About me:

Win a fitness pack on us

Jump start your routine with one of our fitness packs, including Montage Wellness Center water bottle, resistance bands and instruction booklet, pedometer to help you track your daily steps, and nutritious and energy-packed snacks.

Fill in the blanks correctly and you are eligible to win*. Five winners will be randomly selected from among all entries received by April 30, 2018.

Enter your answers online, at
www.aspirehealthplan.org/win.
Or drop off your entry or mail to:
Aspire Health Plan
Attn: Member Relations
10 Ragsdale Drive. Suite 101
Monterey, CA 93940

**Your entry gives Aspire Health Plan permission to publish your name and city in this newsletter, should you win.*

- 1. Medication List.** Create and maintain a list of all your prescription medications, and any _____ - _____ medications, _____, and/or _____ you are currently taking.
- 2. Use one pharmacy.** Have all your _____ filled at the _____ pharmacy, if possible.
- 3. Organize and Get Into a Routine.** Discard any _____, _____ or _____ medications to eliminate confusion.
- 4. Create Reminders.** Most pharmacies will offer a _____ or _____ message reminder indicating that your prescription is ready for pick-up or that it is time to refill.
- 5. Pharmacy Benefit.** Programs such as Medication Therapy Management (MTM) are designed to have pharmacists work closely with you and your doctor to get the _____ from your medications and help you find _____ at the same time.
- 6. Consider Generics.** A generic drug is a medication created to be the same as an existing, approved brand-name drug in dosage form, _____, _____, _____, stability and _____.



ASPIRE ADVOCATE



ASPIRE**HEALTH**PLAN

Your Medicare Advantage.
All-in-one plans. Exceptional service.
Great value.

In collaboration with



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of the Monterey Peninsula
Montage Health



Salinas Valley
Memorial
Healthcare System

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www.aspirehealthplan.org

Health and Wellness Information