



March 18, 2020

Dear Valued Aspire Health Plan Member,

As all of our lives are being affected, if not upended, by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, we at Aspire Health Plan are reaching out to communicate a few things about your safety, healthcare coverage, and the assistance that we might provide in the weeks ahead. Each of us must be as careful as possible to avoid infection and to limit the spread of the virus.

**Personal Prevention.**

The single most important thing we can do is **avoid exposure**. To this end, we urge you to follow the evolving public health recommendations regarding social distancing (keeping away from other people as much as possible). The next most important step we can all take is to wash our hands diligently. We should wash for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water (or, less preferably, use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol) and avoid touching our eyes, nose, and mouth — the same steps we should take to avoid the flu and common cold.

**Receiving Care and Testing.**

Public Health officials recommend that **those who have mild illness should not seek in-person care**; rather that they contact their primary care provider by phone. A second option for non-emergent discussions and recommendations is the Aspire telehealth benefit – **for \$0 copay**. The link to the virtual benefit can be found on the Member Resource tab of the Aspire website, [www.aspirehealthplan.org](http://www.aspirehealthplan.org).

Whether by phone or Aspire’s telehealth service, if a provider concludes it is probable that you should be tested, you will be referred to the County Health Department for the final determination. Currently, only people who meet certain criteria (both symptoms and likely or known exposure to a person with COVID-19) are being tested. If you do receive testing, **Aspire will waive co-pays related to COVID-19**.

**Your prescriptions**

If you need an extended supply of your maintenance prescriptions, we offer a three-month supply for only two copayments through our mail order program. For mail order assistance call **855-873-8739** or go to Aspire’s website and log into the MedImpact portal to register. During this outbreak, Aspire will also allow early 30-day refills on maintenance medications.

**Your health and safety at home**

During this time when public health experts recommend at-risk individuals stay home, we at Aspire Health Plan want to be certain that you have adequate food and other necessities, and have transportation to necessary healthcare. We are assembling an inventory of resources. Please know that **you are not alone** – call our customer service department seven days a week, 8am to 8pm at **855-570-1600** if you need assistance.

**Elective Visits**

As another precaution, we will be rescheduling those who have an upcoming Annual Wellness Visit or Health at Home appointment. Similarly, our healthcare partners are evaluating the need to delay other non-emergent office visits, procedures, and operations. As the national and local circumstances are changing daily, please check for the most current information about COVID-19 at the Centers for Disease Control ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) and Monterey County Health Department (<https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/health>). If you need assistance in doing so, please contact us.

Sincerely,

**James Gilbert, MD MHCM FACOG**  
Aspire Health Plan, Chief Medical Officer

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Aspire Health Plan and our provider partners are closely monitoring the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. While most Americans are still at low risk for contracting coronavirus, we should all remain diligent about preventing the spread of the virus. Those with underlying conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease are more susceptible to infection.

Testing for COVID-19 is only done in collaboration with our public health authorities. Currently, only people who meet certain criteria are being tested. Criteria include both symptoms and likely or known exposure to a person with COVID-19. If you meet the criteria for testing, Aspire will waive co-pays related to COVID-19.

### **Aspire Health Plan's Telehealth benefit reminder - <http://www.aspirehealthplan.org/telehealth>**

If you want to seek healthcare from the comfort of your home, Aspire members can access an interactive virtual experience that provides a diagnosis and treatment plan for a \$0 co-pay.

This benefit is 24-hour virtual care. There is no appointment needed, but you will need to register online. If your clinician prescribes a medication, it will be sent to the pharmacy on file. Telehealth cannot refill prescriptions unrelated to the visit and cannot prescribe anything controlled, such as narcotics or benzodiazepines.

### **To prevent the spread of this illness or other illnesses, including the flu:**

- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze
- Stay home when you're sick
- Call your doctor if you think you're ill

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE**

- [The Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) website](#) for information on COVID-19
- [Community Hospital of Monterey Peninsula](#) COVID-19 updates
- Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System COVID-19 updates: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [Monterey County Health Department \(MCHD\)](#)
- [United Way of Monterey County](#) – Senior resources

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