



Enrollee Newsletter

Vaccines are available at local drug stores.

During the past 50 years, vaccines (shots) saved more than a billion lives in the United States by preventing illnesses, disabilities, and viruses. MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollees (ages 3 and over) can get shots for free at participating pharmacies such as, CVS pharmacies, MedStar Health retail pharmacies, Target, Walmart, Walgreens, Rite Aid, Giant, and Safeway.



This program includes the flu shot as well as shots for shingles, hepatitis A and B, pneumonia, HPV (to help prevent cervical cancer), chicken pox, and tetanus. Flu shots are given on a walk-in basis. For other shots, including the COVID-19 vaccination, enrollees should call the drug store to make sure the shot needed is in stock and to see if an appointment is necessary. Your doctor will be notified when you receive a shot and add it to your medical record. Shots for traveling outside the country are not included. These shots are given according to the published recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC.gov/Vaccines/Index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/Vaccines/Index.html)).

Understanding your benefits.

You can find valuable information about all of the healthcare benefits offered at **MedStar Family Choice-DC** on our website, **MedStarFamilyChoice.com**. If you would like additional information about MedStar Health hospitals, please visit **MedStarHealth.org**. If you do not have access to the internet, you may call Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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The enrollee handbook is online.

The MedStar Family Choice-DC Enrollee Handbook is available for download on our website, **MedStarFamilyChoice.com**.

If you would like to receive a printed copy by mail at no cost to you, please call Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Please review the handbook in detail to learn about your benefits, services, programs, rights, responsibilities, and contact information. The handbook also explains policies on billing, appeals, fraud, abuse, and more. Important phone numbers for enrollees are included in the handbook as well.



Dental benefits are included.

Routine dental care is covered for adult enrollees of MedStar Family Choice-DC. Dental benefits for enrollees over 21 include: a dental exam and cleaning two times a year, x-rays, fillings, and simple extractions. General dentistry benefits include regular and emergency treatments, and orthodontic care for special problems. Dental check-ups are covered twice a year for children ages 3 through 20.

Call the MedStar Family Choice-DC Dental Help Line at **844-391-6678** to help you find a dentist in the network. The Dental Help Line can also provide information on your dental benefits limitations.

Learn about the enrollee complaint, grievance, and appeal process.

MedStar Family Choice-DC is committed to resolving enrollee complaints, grievances, and appeals quickly and fairly. Our complaint, grievance, and appeal processes can be found at **MedStarFamilyChoice.com** or in your enrollee handbook. If you don't have access to our website, you may call Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549** (TTY: 7-1-1), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to receive a printed copy by mail at no cost to you. Our complaint, grievance, and appeal processes include information on:

- How to file a complaint, grievance, or appeal, and the differences between each
- How quickly we will respond to you
- What to do if you do not agree with our decision

Enrollees always have the right to contact the Health Care Ombudsman if there is a concern about a decision made by MedStar Family Choice-DC. The mission of the Office of Health Care Ombudsman is to guide, advocate, and help people navigate through the health care system. They help enrollees understand their healthcare coverage and assist in appealing health insurance decisions. The Health Care Ombudsman does not make decisions about grievances, appeals, or Fair Hearings.

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Phone: **202-724-7491** or **877-685-6391** (toll-free)
Fax: **202-442-6724**
Email: healthcareombudsman@dc.gov

What are HEDIS® scores?

The National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) is a national not-for-profit company that measures quality across the country. NCQA has many quality measures that they ask each health plan to report on yearly. The quality measures are rolled up in a tool called HEDIS®. The results are audited and reported to NCQA. MedStar Family Choice-DC reports many different quality measures for HEDIS each year. The measures include how care is provided to children, adults, and pregnant women. The scores look at how all managed care organizations provide care. As soon as we have the information we will share it with you through this newsletter.

For additional information please call **855-798-4244** and tell the operator you would like to learn more about HEDIS. HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

Here are your options for emergency care.

We understand that it can be hard to know the difference between what is or is not an emergency. When you are unsure if you are experiencing a medical emergency, you should call the Nurse Advice line for help at **855-210-6204**. The Nurse Advice line can help you decide where to go for your care. MedStar eVisit also gives 24/7 video access to trusted providers from your tablet, smartphone, or computer. To learn more or sign up, please visit **MedStarHealth.org/eVisit**.

You should only visit the emergency room (ER) when you need care right away for a serious, sudden injury or illness. It will often take longer for you to be seen in the emergency room, and you may be exposed to other illnesses while in the waiting room. If you have an emergency, call **911** or go to the emergency room.

How to request out-of-network services.

If MedStar Family Choice-DC is unable to provide a necessary and covered service to an enrollee within our network, MedStar Family Choice-DC may allow the service to be provided outside of the network. In order for this to happen, the provider should fax the request to the MedStar Family Choice-DC prior-authorization department at **202-243-6258** for approval.

MedStar Family Choice-DC cannot take longer than 14 days to make a decision, even if all of the information has not been received. The decision may be shorter, depending on the urgency of the request. MedStar Family Choice-DC will review all requests on a case by case basis.

In cases where out-of-network services have been approved, you are not responsible for the cost of these services.

What are some early signs of asthma?

Watching for these early signs can help parents give asthma medicine before the child gets worse. These signs could prevent an emergency room visit. Early signs include:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath
- Chest feeling tight or painful
- Needing to sit down while playing
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sneezing
- Feeling tired after playing
- Fast breathing while at rest

Be sure to call the doctor if your child is getting worse, even though you have given him or her asthma medicine.



Please take the enrollee satisfaction survey.

MedStar Family Choice-DC is always looking for ways to improve the quality of care you and your family receive. A random survey is conducted on an annual basis. If you receive a HEDIS®/CAHPS® 2021 satisfaction survey, don't forget to complete it.

The Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) surveys collect data from health plan enrollees. The surveys measure how satisfied enrollees are with care received. For additional information please call **855-798-4244** and tell the operator you would like to learn more about CAHPS surveys.

Attend virtual classes and events.

Join us for our New Enrollee Orientation where you can learn more about your health plan services, benefits, and rights. We have monthly Health Education classes and other events too for you and your family. You can also join our Enrollee Advisory Committee to share your thoughts about our healthcare services. Your opinion can help make MedStar Family Choice-DC better for you and all enrollees. Call the Outreach department at **855-798-4244**, press 1 and then press 2 for more information.

Free interpreter services are available.

If you know a MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollee who does not speak English, or doesn't speak it well, call Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**. We have interpreters to help enrollees when visiting their doctors. We will also provide an interpreter to help enrollees who do not speak English or read written information sent by Enrollee Services.

If you or someone you know is deaf or has trouble hearing, enrollees can access TTY assistance by calling 7-1-1. MedStar Family Choice-DC also has people available who can use sign language to help you during doctor visits. You, or someone who can speak for you, must let the Enrollee Services representative know that you need an interpreter.

Help prevent fraud, waste and abuse.

MedStar Family Choice-DC works to identify healthcare fraud, waste, and abuse, and follows applicable laws and regulations to prevent fraud and abuse. Fraud is when someone knowingly does something wrong or dishonest in order to benefit himself or herself or someone else. Abuse consists of behaviors or actions that are unnecessary and create waste, and could be dangerous in a healthcare setting. You must report fraud and abuse when you think it might be occurring. Some examples of enrollee healthcare fraud are:

- Not reporting all of your financial information or giving false information when you apply for benefits
- Allowing someone else to use your health insurance card
- Permanently living in another state while still receiving health benefits from the District of Columbia
- Selling medicines or supplies given to you by your doctor
- Changing or forging prescriptions given to you by your doctor

Some examples of how providers might commit fraud and abuse are:

- Performing services that are not needed
- Billing for services that were never performed
- Billing numerous times for the same service
- Up-coding services

When someone is reported for possible fraud and abuse, MedStar Family Choice-DC will perform an investigation. The results are reported to the Department of Health Care Finance. The Department of Health Care Finance may perform its own investigation as well. People who have been determined to perform these activities or any other dishonest activity may lose their health benefits, be fined, or prosecuted.

While MedStar Family Choice-DC conducts examinations for possible fraud, waste, and abuse activities, as an important partner, we need your help to stop fraud and abuse. MedStar Family Choice-DC has a strict non-retaliation policy; consequently, you do not need to give your name. If you choose to give us your name, you don't have to worry about being:

- Denied service,
- Removed from the managed care organization, or
- Treated in any way that would cause you or a family member to feel that you did something wrong for reporting any incident.

If you know of a situation that may involve or involves fraud, waste, or abuse, please report it immediately by contacting any of the following resources:

- MedStar Health's Integrity Hotline at **877-811-3411** (allows for anonymous reporting)
- MedStar Family Choice-DC Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**
- MedStar Health's Office of Corporate Business Integrity (OCBI) by email at compliance@medstar.net or phone at **410-772-6606**
- DC Department of Health Care Finance Fraud Hotline at **877-632-2873**

Antibiotics aren't always the answer.

Antibiotic resistance is one of the most serious public health problems in the United States. Antibiotic overuse is the leading cause of antibiotic resistance. This happens when germs "outsmart" antibiotics and the antibiotics no longer kill the germ. To combat antibiotic resistance and avoid bad drug reactions, we must use antibiotics correctly.

Antibiotics do not fight infections caused by viruses like colds, flu, most sore throats, and bronchitis (inflammation of the breathing tubes). Even many sinus and ear infections can get better without antibiotics. Instead, symptom relief might be the best treatment for these infections.

Taking antibiotics for viral infections (such as colds, the flu, most sore throats, and bronchitis):

- Will not cure the infection
- Will not keep other people from getting sick
- Will not help you or your child feel better
- May cause unnecessary and harmful side effects
- May contribute to antibiotic resistance

Rest, fluids, and over-the-counter products may be the best treatments for symptoms related to viral infections. Remember, there are potential risks when taking any prescription medicine. Unneeded antibiotics may lead to harmful side effects and future antibiotic-resistant infections.

What You Can Do

Just because your doctor doesn't give you an antibiotic doesn't mean you aren't sick. Talk with your doctor about the best treatment for you or your child's illness. To feel better when you or your child has a viral infection:

- Ask about over-the-counter treatments that may help reduce symptoms
- Drink more fluids
- Get plenty of rest
- Use a cool-mist vaporizer or saline nasal spray to relieve congestion
- Soothe your throat with crushed ice, sore throat spray, or lozenges
- Use honey to relieve cough
- Treat flu illness with prescription flu antiviral medicines

Note: Do not give lozenges to young children or honey to infants under one year of age.

What Not to Do

- Do not demand antibiotics when your doctor says they are not needed
- Do not take an antibiotic for a viral infection
- Do not take an antibiotic prescribed for someone else, as the antibiotic may not be right for your illness. Taking the wrong medicine may delay correct treatment and allow bacteria to grow.



If your doctor prescribes an antibiotic for a bacterial infection:

- Do not skip doses
- Do not stop taking the antibiotics early unless your primary care doctor tells you to do so
- Do not save any of the antibiotics for the next time you or your child gets sick

Using antibiotics only when needed is a win-win for everyone because it:

- Decreases antibiotic resistance
- Reduces risk of side effects
- Reduces cost of unnecessary medications and treatment
- Provides the safest possible care

MedStar Family Choice-DC doctors are working to keep you and your family healthy by only prescribing antibiotics when you really need them.

Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT)

MedStar Family Choice-DC wants your child to visit their doctor every year to meet their healthcare needs. At your child's annual visit to their doctor, they will make sure all your child's healthcare needs and requirements are met. For example, your doctor will make sure your child is up-to-date with all their required vaccinations. It is important to know that children two and under are required to have a blood test to check for lead. It is also important for all children and young adults to have their cholesterol levels measured along with a blood test to check for anemia (lack of healthy blood cells).

The District of Columbia Department of Health Care Finance (DHCF) will review medical records for MedStar Family Choice-DC certified EPSDT providers. DHCF reviews medical records for enrollees age 0-20. The review of medical records is always for the previous calendar year. MedStar Family Choice-DC must receive a total of 80% to pass. MedStar Family Choice-DC will submit a corrective action plan if the participant ratio is under 80%.

Visit the MedStar Family Choice website for valuable information.

MedStar Family Choice-DC continues to update its website with valuable information, and we've made it easier to find and use the information most important to you.

MedStarFamilyChoice.com information includes:

- Appeals process
- Benefit information
- Covered services
- Value-added services
- Copay information
- What to do if you are billed for a covered service
- Case and disease management services
- Contact information
- Find a Provider (searchable provider directory)
- List of medications (formulary)
- Hours of operation and after-hours instructions
- How to access specialty care, hospital services, and behavioral health services
- Interpreter services
- Enrollee handbook
- Enrollee newsletter
- Enrollee rights and responsibilities
- MedStar eVisit
- Fraud and abuse Information
- New technology policies
- Notice of privacy practices
- Out-of-service area coverage
- Outreach program

- Preventive care programs
- Pharmacy protocols and procedures
- Pharmacy quick reference guide
- Quality improvement programs
- Schedule of health education classes
- Transportation guidelines
- Utilization management decision-making
- Utilization affirmative statement
- Utilization external appeal rights
- Wellness rewards

If you do not have access to the internet, all of these materials are available to be printed and mailed to you at no cost by contacting Enrollee Services, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. toll-free at **888-404-3549**.

Did you know a list of approved medications is on the web?

The MedStar Family Choice-DC medication list, also known as a formulary, includes all the approved prescription medications covered by MedStar Family Choice-DC. Any changes made to this medication list will be included in the updated issue.

The MedStar Family Choice-DC medication list is available online at **MedStarFamilyChoice.com**. If you don't have access to our website and you have questions about whether or not a specific medicine is on this medication list, we can send the information you are requesting. Please call Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Case management programs are available for MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollees.

A highly qualified team of nurses and social workers is available to MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollees with special needs, serious medical conditions or social issues such as food, housing, and utilities.

Our nurses and social workers provide education, support, and guidance to those enrollees who need or would like extra assistance to manage their health. Our nurses and social workers can also assist with gaining access to healthcare services. Below are a few examples of medical conditions or healthcare needs where we may be of help to you:



Complex Case Management Services

- One or more hospital-stay in 6 months
- Two or more ER visits in 6 months
- Stroke
- Cancer/tumors
- Sickle Cell Disease with severe crisis
- Acute trauma with complex care coordination needs
- Multiple chronic health conditions
- Complex psycho-social or behavioral needs
- Transplants
- Special healthcare needs

Comprehensive Case Management Services

- High risk pregnancy
- Diabetes
- Asthma
- Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
- Hypertension
- Cardiovascular disease
- HIV
- Substance use disorder
- Social issues/mental health

You do not have to enroll in these services. You may be identified for enrollment if we see that you have certain conditions or medical needs. If identified for enrollment, a nurse or social worker will reach out to you by phone to explain your benefits and these services to you.

The Complex Case Management and Comprehensive Case Management programs are voluntary. If you would like to ask about one of these programs, or if you are already in one of these programs and you would like to stop participating, please contact us at **202-363-4348** or **855-798-4244** (select option 1 and then option 3), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Voice messages received after hours will be returned the next business day.

Understanding your enrollee rights and responsibilities.

As a MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollee, you have the right to:

- Know that when you talk with your doctors and other providers it's private
- Have an illness or treatment explained to you in a language you can understand
- Participate in decisions about your care, including the right to refuse treatment
- Receive a full, clear and understandable explanation of treatment options and risks of each option so you can make an informed decision
- Refuse treatment or care
- Be free from any form of restraints or seclusion used as a means of coercion, discipline, convenience, or retaliation
- See and receive a copy of your medical records and request an amendment or change, if incorrect
- Receive access to healthcare services that are available and accessible to you in a timely manner
- Choose an eligible PCP/PDP from within MedStar Family Choice-DC's network and to change your PCP/PDP
- Make a Grievance about the care provided to you and receive an answer
- Request an Appeal or a Fair Hearing if you believe MedStar Family Choice-DC was wrong in denying, reducing or stopping a service or item
- Receive Family Planning Services and supplies from the provider of your choice
- Obtain medical care without unnecessary delay
- Receive information on Advance Directives and choose not to have or continue any life-sustaining treatment
- Receive a copy of MedStar Family Choice-DC's Enrollee Handbook and/or Provider Directory
- Continue treatment you are currently receiving until you have a new treatment plan
- Receive interpretation and translation services free of charge
- Refuse oral interpretation services
- Receive transportation services free of charge
- Get an explanation of prior authorization procedures
- Receive information about MedStar Family Choice-DC's financial condition and any special ways we pay our doctors
- Obtain summaries of customer satisfaction surveys
- Receive MedStar Family Choice-DC's "Dispense as Written" policy for prescription drugs
- Receive a list of all covered drugs
- Be treated with respect and due consideration for your dignity and right to privacy
- Receive information about the organization, its services, its practitioners and providers and enrollee rights and responsibilities
- A candid discussion of appropriate or medically necessary treatment options for your conditions, regardless of cost or benefit coverage
- Make recommendations regarding the organization's enrollee rights and responsibilities policy

As a MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollee, you are responsible for:

- Treating those providing your care with respect and dignity
- Following the rules of the DC Medicaid Managed Care Program and MedStar Family Choice-DC
- Following instructions, you receive from your doctors and other providers
- Going to scheduled appointments
- Telling your doctor at least 24 hours before the appointment if you must cancel
- Asking for more explanation if you do not understand your doctor's instructions
- Going to the Emergency Room only if you have a medical emergency
- Telling your PCP/PDP about medical and personal problems that may affect your health
- Reporting to Economic Security Administration (ESA) and MedStar Family Choice-DC if you or a family enrollee have other health insurance or if you have a change in your address or phone number
- Reporting to Economic Security Administration (ESA) and MedStar Family Choice-DC if there is a change in your family (i.e. deaths, births, etc.)
- Trying to understand your health problems and participate in developing treatment goals
- Helping your doctor in getting medical records from providers who have treated you in the past
- Telling MedStar Family Choice-DC if you were injured as the result of an accident or at work
- Supplying information (to the extent possible) that the organization and its practitioners and providers need in order to provide care

It is easy to find a provider on the web.

Did you know that as a MedStar Family Choice-DC enrollee you are automatically assigned a primary care provider if you did not select one upon enrollment? If you need to change your primary care provider or find more information on selecting a provider, please call Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549**. MedStar Family Choice-DC has made it easy for you to find a provider on the website.

You can search the website and narrow your search by specific categories to help you. Select a doctor by the name or group, hospital affiliation, gender, language, specialty, city, or the number of miles from your home or ZIP code. Our website also contains detailed provider information, such as office address, phone number, qualifications and certifications, education (such as residency and medical schools), and office hours.

If you do not have access to the internet and would like information for a specific provider, you may contact Enrollee Services. In addition, you should always call the office to make sure they are a participating provider. If you have questions about selecting your primary care provider, please call Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Visit our website at **MedStarFamilyChoice.com** for more information.

Understand how to get a referral to a specialist.

Did you know most primary care providers will give you great advice about the healthcare services? If any of your medical conditions require seeing a specialist, your primary care provider will refer you to one in our network. If an in-network provider is not available, MedStar Family Choice-DC will help arrange one for you outside of our network.

If your primary care providers can handle the condition without referring you, he or she will treat your medical condition. If you are a female enrollee and your primary care provider is not a women's health specialist, you have the right to see a women's health specialist within the MedStar Family Choice-DC network without a referral. If you want a second opinion, you have the right to obtain one from another in-network provider. If another in-network provider is not available, MedStar Family Choice-DC will help arrange a second opinion outside of the MedStar Family Choice-DC network at no cost to you.

You can contact your primary care provider or Enrollee Services at **888-404-3549** for help getting a second opinion. A referral may be required. Most physicians will need to see you in their office before a referral is written for a specialist. If you have questions or concerns about the healthcare services you receive, contact Enrollee Services toll-free at **888-404-3549**, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. to ask for help.

If you do not speak and/or read English, please call 888-404-3549 between 8:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. A representative will assist you.

Si no habla o lee inglés, llame al 888-404-3549 entre las 8:00 a.m. y las 5:30 p.m. Un representante se complacerá en asistirle.

Nếu bạn không nói và/hoặc đọc tiếng Anh, xin gọi 888-404-3549 từ 8 giờ 00 sáng đến 5 giờ 30 chiều. Sẽ có người đại diện giúp bạn.

‘영어로 대화를 못하시거나 영어를 읽지 못하는 경우, 오전 8시 00분에서 오후 5시 30분 사이에 888-404-3549 번으로 전화해 주시기 바랍니다. 담당 직원이 도와드립니다.

Si vous ne parlez pas ou lisez l'anglais, s'il vous plaît appeler 888-404-3549 entre 8:00 du matin et 5:30 du soir. Un représentant vous aidera.

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‘如果您不能講和/或不能閱讀英語，請在上午 8:00 到下午 5:30之間給 888-404-3549 打電話，我們會有代表幫助您

The MedStar Family Choice-DC Enrollee Newsletter is a publication of MedStar Family Choice-DC. Submit new items for the next issue to lisa.r.mcdonough@medstar.net. For more information on your plan or anything in this newsletter, please visit MedStarFamilyChoice.com.

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MedStarFamilyChoice.com

MedStar Family Choice-DC complies with applicable federal civil right laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation.



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GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR