

Healthmate

A Publication of Health Tradition Health Plan

VOLUME 9, NO. 1

A MAYO HEALTH SYSTEM CHOICE IN WISCONSIN

WINTER 2003

Special: Laser Vision Correction Price Reduction for Health Tradition Members!

Members Health Tradition members will be pleased to learn that as of April 1, 2003, you are eligible for a special price on laser vision correction from Franciscan Skemp Healthcare. This procedure is normally valued at \$1650 per eye, but for Health Tradition members, it is now priced at \$1250 per eye (enhancements additional, if needed).

"This is a creative way to add value for our members," said Steve Kunes, Executive Director of Health Tradition. "Through our partnership with Franciscan Skemp Healthcare, we negotiated a special price to make this service more affordable."

"We know that many people would like to reduce their need for eyeglasses or contact lenses, to be more active with sports or other activities," said Tom Bartlett, Director, Franciscan Skemp Eye Services. "If you have been thinking about having laser vision correction for awhile, now would be a good time to learn more about it."

Seminars have been scheduled, free of charge, at the

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**Service
Excellence**
THE TRADITION CONTINUES



Alan Krumholz, MD

MEDICAL DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Anti-inflammatory Agents and Insulin Formulary Changes

I recently received a letter about the formulary changes for January 1, 2003. What does this mean for me?

To make sure you and your family receive the highest quality drugs at the best available price, from time to time the drugs on the formulary are changed, availability of some drugs may be limited to only certain manufacturers or drugs are earmarked as requiring prior approval from the Plan due to current research on effectiveness or medical necessity.

Does this apply to the 65+ insurance?

No, 65+ members do not use the drug formulary. It applies only to Premier and Premier Plus policies.

What are COX-II inhibitors and what changed about them?

COX-II inhibitors are a subgroup of a larger class of medications known as Non-Steroidal Anti-inflammatory Agents (NSAIDS). Typically NSAIDS are used in the treatment of a variety of conditions ranging from the short-term treatment of muscle strains and sprains to long-term treatment of arthritis. The brand names of the Cox-II drugs currently on the market are Vioxx, Celebrex, Mobic and Bextra.

Are Vioxx, Celebrex, Mobic and Bextra available on our formulary?

No, only Vioxx is on the formulary. But, if your insurance coverage allows you access to non-formulary drugs at the higher co-pay, Mobic, Celebrex and Bextra are available at a higher cost to you. If you do not have coverage for non-formulary drugs, (for instance, State of Wisconsin employees and certain others), only Vioxx is available.

What changed about these drugs?

For anyone under the age of 60 and just starting a new prescription on any of these drugs, they will require prior approval from the Plan.

What if I am currently on them? What if I am over age 60?

The process only applies to new prescriptions and does not apply if you are over age 60. You can continue to get the drugs without prior approval.

How will they be approved?

The pharmacy computer system will do an automatic search to see if you meet any one of the criteria. Don't worry about the criteria or the drugs you've used in the past. Your provider and the pharmacy system will apply the criteria.

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Customer Service 1-877-832-1823

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Anti-inflammatory Agents and Insulin: Formulary Changes

If I meet all the criteria, what happens?

If you qualify, it is automatically approved via the pharmacy computer system. However, your co-pays from your insurance coverage will apply. For Vioxx, the formulary co-pay will apply. If you have a prescription for one of the other drugs, the higher non-formulary co-pay will apply. If you do not have coverage for non-formulary drugs, only Vioxx will be available to you unless you choose to pay the full price yourself.

If I DON'T meet the criteria, what happens?

You will be responsible for the full cost of the medication. However if you feel that you do meet the criteria and that not all of your drug history for the last 6 months is in the Health Tradition pharmacy computer system your provider can submit a letter of facts to Health Tradition Health Plan in Onalaska, WI for consideration. If it is determined that you still don't meet the criteria, your provider can review your choices with you and may recommend an alternative agent.

What changed about the insulin?

The Plan has selected the Novo Nordisk brand of insulin as the only brand of insulin that will be on the formulary. Most Eli Lilly insulins will be non-formulary. Some unique forms of insulin currently only available from Eli Lilly will still be available on the formulary. These unique forms include Humalog, and Humalog mixtures.

If I go to get my insulin and the pharmacist gives me an Eli Lilly brand, will it deny payment?

No. It will specify it as non-formulary. If you have three choices of co-pay in your insurance coverage, the pharmacy computer system will say you have the highest co-pay. If you have two choices of co-pay in your insurance coverage and no coverage for non-formulary drugs (for instance, State of Wisconsin employees and certain others), it will say it is non-covered. Simply tell the pharmacist you need the Novo Nordisk brand, not an Eli Lilly brand, to get the lowest co-pay available to you.

What if I use an insulin pen with an insulin mixture in it?

Humalog or Humalog mixtures in pen cartridges are unique to Eli Lilly and will continue to be covered as a formulary item. All other forms of insulin currently available from Eli Lilly in pen cartridges are also available from Novo Nordisk.

What if I have questions?

Questions on the best drug for you should be discussed with your provider. If you have questions about your insurance coverage or drug co-pay levels, call Customer Service at 1-877-832-1823. Consult your Plan documents for information on your coverage.



Sneezing, coughing?

Child with earaches? Wrench your back sledding with kids?

We understand. For the very latest in health information — at your fingertips — go to MayoClinic.com. World-renowned medical experts give you comprehensive medical information on a whole range of subjects, everything from simple, everyday injuries to complex treatment options that are on the horizon for chronic diseases such as diabetes or heart disease. Remember, this information is not meant to replace treatment from your healthcare provider. Also, you can call *Ask Mayo Clinic* at 1-877-832-1823 (toll free).

MayoClinic.com

Ready to Quit Smoking?

Call our Tobacco Quitline at 1-888-642-5566 (toll-free)

Is it a Cold or the Flu?

How to tell the difference

It's cold outside and you are stuck indoors surrounded by people. This is the time of year you always seem to catch a cold, or do you have the flu? Influenza (the flu) is similar to the common cold in many ways. Bottom line, they both make you feel awful and can disrupt your life.

They are also both respiratory infections caused by viruses. So why should you know the difference? If a cold is mistaken for the flu, there's no problem. At worst, a cold can occasionally lead to bacterial infections of the middle ear or sinuses, which can be treated with antibiotics. However, if the flu is mistaken for a bad cold, potentially life-threatening flu complications such as pneumonia may be overlooked.

Is there a cure?

Unfortunately, there is no proven cure for colds or flu. Time, treating the symptoms, and prevention are your only options. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids and get lots of rest. Over-the-counter medications can help make you feel more comfortable. Antibiotics are **NOT** effective — they do not kill viruses. Children and teenagers with symptoms of the flu should not take aspirin or products containing aspirin. A rare condition called Reye's Syndrome can occur, which can be fatal.

Prevention:

- ◆ Build a strong immune system with good nutrition, rest and exercise.
- ◆ Avoid contact with sick people.
- ◆ Practice good hand washing to eliminate the viruses that cause colds and the flu. To kill viruses, you must wash your hands with soap for a minimum of 15 seconds. Hand sanitizers — cleansers that don't require water — are a good alternative when soap and water aren't available. When rubbed into hands for approximately 15 seconds, hand sanitizers kill approximately 99.9 percent of germs. However, hand sanitizers typically contain about 60 percent ethyl alcohol and often contain perfumes; they can dry out and irritate sensitive skin. And they don't effectively clean dirt or grime buildup. They're also flammable and can cause death if consumed by a small child.



Below is a chart to help you decide if your symptoms indicate you have a cold or the flu. Prevention is your best medicine, but if you find yourself feeling low, knowing what you might be experiencing is the best way to take steps toward feeling better. As always, if you have any questions, consult your healthcare provider.

SYMPTOMS	COLD	FLU
Fever	Rare	Usually high (102-104°F) lasting 3-4 days
Headache	Rare	Prominent
Body aches & pains	Slight	Usual, often severe
Fatigue and weakness	Quite mild	Common, lasting 2-3 weeks
Extreme exhaustion	Never	Early and prominent
Stuffy nose	Common	Sometimes
Sneezing	Usual	Sometimes
Sore throat	Common	Sometimes
Cough and discomfort	Mild to moderate, can be hacking	Common, can become severe
Stomach upset	Rare	Rare Nausea, vomiting and diarrhea are NOT influenza. They are signs of gastroenteritis.

Source: MayoClinic.com and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases

New additions to your Healthcare Network

BLACK RIVER FALLS

Krohn Clinic, Ltd:

- ◆ Lenley Jackson, MD, family practice

DECORAH, IOWA

Decorah Clinic - Mayo Health System:

- ◆ Karen Cowan, MD, family practice

EAU CLAIRE

Midelfort Clinic - Luther Campus:

- ◆ Annie Bailey, CNM, OB/GYN
- ◆ Macaulay Onuigbo, MD, internal medicine
- ◆ Patrick Roberts, DPM, podiatry
- ◆ James Ruskin, MD, radiology, nuclear

LA CROSSE

Franciscan Skemp Healthcare:

- ◆ Mark Inman, MD, pathology
- ◆ Ellen Brodrick, CNM, OB/GYN
- ◆ David Capelli, MD, pediatrics
- ◆ Joseph Goveas, MD, psychiatry
- ◆ Scott Meyer, MD, urgent care
- ◆ Arno Jensen, MD, radiology

- ◆ John Barsch, MD, anesthesiology
- ◆ Leon Kuhs, MD, psychiatry
- ◆ Joseph Padolick, MD, oncology
- ◆ Robert Shaw, MD, psychiatry
- ◆ Samer Suleiman, MD, radiology, diagnostic

MENOMONIE

Red Cedar Clinic - Mayo Health System:

- ◆ Marek Kaminski, MD, internal medicine
- ◆ J. Scott Persing, MD, psychiatry
- ◆ Jacqueline Walter, MD, emergency medicine

SPARTA

Franciscan Skemp Healthcare:

- ◆ Martin Nelson, MD, radiology, diagnostic

WINONA, MN

Winona Clinic, Ltd:

- ◆ Robert Wilfahrt, MD, family practice

10 Tips (continued from page 1)

following times and locations:

INSERT SEMINAR SCHEDULE HERE:

Dr. Robert Freedland, ophthalmologist, has been performing laser vision correction for nine years, and has received extremely high satisfaction ratings from his patients. Franciscan Skemp uses the cool, precise excimer laser from VISX; past patients often comment on how quickly and smoothly the procedure goes, and how little discomfort there is.

If you have questions, or would like to schedule your free, personal consultation to find out if you are a candidate for laser vision correction, call (608) 791-7889. Video and audio tapes may be available

New facilities added to the Health Tradition Network

MAUSTON

- ◆ Hess Memorial Hospital
- ◆ Mile Bluff Clinic, LLP

ELROY

- ◆ Elroy Family Medical Center

NECEDAH

- ◆ Necedah Family Medical Center

NEW LISBON

- ◆ New Lisbon Community Clinic

Provider terminations

DECORAH, IOWA

Decorah Clinic - Mayo Health System

- ◆ Max Quaas, MD, family practice

EAU CLAIRE

Midelfort Clinic - Luther Campus

- ◆ Theresa Cheng, MD, neurosurgery

HILLSBORO

St. Joseph's Family Clinic

- ◆ Deborah Tietjen, FNP, certified nurse midwife

LA CROSSE

Franciscan Skemp Healthcare:

- ◆ David Rigby, MD, radiology

- ◆ Judy Rigby, MD, neonatology
- ◆ Michael DiBella, MD, emergency medicine

- ◆ William Deering, MD, pediatric neurology
- ◆ Mark McConnell, MD, internal medicine

NEW HAMPTON, IOWA

New Hampton Clinic - Mayo Health System

- ◆ James Carr, MD, family practice

WABASHA, MN

Wabasha Clinic - Mayo Health System

- ◆ Ashokakumar Patel, MD, pulmonary
- ◆ Amy Williams, MD, nephrology

Health Tradition

A Mayo Health System Choice in Wisconsin

Executive Director	Steven M. Kunes
Medical Director	Alan Krumholz, MD
Director of Operations	Beverly Larson, RN
Director of Health Services	Mary Wanzek, RN
Director of Sales & Marketing	Michael Eckstein

The purpose of Healthmate is to inform and communicate with health plan members. Please submit suggestions or ideas to:

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