

# A Fresh Coat of Blue



Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas

April 2000

## The **ABCs** of Away From Home Care (AFHC)

AFHC is the out-of-area program that provides convenient health care coverage for traveling **HealthSelect Plus<sup>SM</sup> (HSP)** participants with no out-of-pocket cost, excluding prescriptions, at the time of service. (Applicable copayments will apply at the time claims are processed).

*Benefits offered to HSP participants include:*



**(A) Urgent Care:** available to participants who become ill/injured while traveling. The participant can access care by calling the Urgent Care 24-hour toll-free phone line at (800) 446-6872 and being given the name and telephone number of a local HMO's AFHC Coordinator, who then arranges their care.\* Urgent Care is intended for any unexpected illness or injury that occurs while traveling, that should be treated before you return home. In a life-threatening emergency, you should go to a hospital immediately and notify HMO Blue<sup>®</sup> according to membership instructions.



**(B) Follow-Up Care:** pre-arranged treatment for an illness or injury that originates before the participant leaves home, allowing them to travel outside of their own service area even though additional medical care is needed.



**(C) Guest Membership:** a courtesy enrollment in another participating Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association affiliated HMO, in whose service area a participant temporarily resides. The guest member enjoys the full range of benefits/services offered by the host HMO. A HSP participant can obtain a guest membership if he/she plans to stay in the host location for 90 or more consecutive days.

**Please Note:** Effective 9/1/00, Guest Memberships outside of Texas will no longer be available for HMO Blue, West Texas and HMO Blue, SouthWest Texas participants.

\*Effective 3/1/00, HMO Blue, West Texas and HMO Blue, SouthWest Texas HSP participants should comply with the following procedures for Urgent Care Services:

- Choose a physician and schedule an appointment.
- Call Customer Service at (888) 585-9393 **before** you go for your visit.
- When you call Customer Service, provide them with the name of the physician you are going to see and the date of the visit. Customer Service will send you a claim form.
- At the time of the visit, you will be required to pay for services and submit the charges for reimbursement to HMO Blue at the address on the back of your ID card. You will be reimbursed the total of the covered charges, less the applicable copayment.

*The three types of guest memberships are:*

- 1) **Families Apart** — available to spouses and dependents living away from the home HSP service area and residing in a participating HMO's service area.
- 2) **Long Term Traveler** — available to members with dual residences or long term work assignments; however, the member is limited to six months out-of-area.
- 3) **Students** — available to dependents who go away to school.

For more information about the AFHC program, HSP members can contact an HMO Blue Away from Home Care Coordinator toll-free at (888) 522-2396.

## Identification Cards

Are you hearing complaints from employees who are not receiving their HealthSelect<sup>SM</sup> (HS) or HealthSelectPlus (HSP) ID cards? Please verify the IEBS processing date and whether IEBS has the correct address for the member. As a reminder, ID cards cannot be issued until IEBS has been updated and the information transmitted to BCBSTX.

If the employee's address is correct and it has been at least two weeks since the process date, and the employee still has not received the cards, please contact Customer Service at (800) 252-8039 or HSP at (888) 585-9393. (If the situation is urgent, Customer Service can type temporary cards).





## Problems Getting Prescriptions?

When HealthSelect (HS) participants report problems getting their prescriptions, you can:

- **Verify** that they are using their HS ID card with the 9/1/99 effective date when they visit the pharmacy;
- **Ensure** that they have the PAID Prescriptions L.L.C. toll-free number, (800) 922-1557, for pharmacists to call to set up their computers correctly;
- **Verify** that they are calling the Merck-Medco customer service phone number, (800) 903-8345, to check their membership status (Important — Merck-Medco gets membership information from ERS, not BCBSTX).

In addition, you as a Coordinator can call the Client Service Team at Merck-Medco on the participant's behalf. As the Prescription Drug Program is administered by Merck-Medco, BCBSTX and HS Customer Service cannot be of help with prescription drug problems.

## Attachments

Attached to this issue of *A Fresh Coat of Blue* you will find the one form to fax to BCBSTX to:

- Request Summer Enrollment meetings/information booths;
- Request Summer Enrollment materials (combined Information Booklets/Provider Directories and Video);
- Request your Working Supply for the year of above combined booklets.

On the reverse of this form, there is an updated version of the back-by-popular-demand, "How to Use Your Supply of HealthSelect and HealthSelect Plus Materials."

If you have any questions regarding Summer Enrollment procedures, please call Connie Blevins in the BCBSTX Marketing Department at 512-795-5928.

## Austin Marketing Specialists

The Austin Marketing office of BCBSTX has two specialists who handle escalated issues that have not been resolved by Customer Service for HealthSelect and HealthSelect Plus. If your employees have claims or benefits problems that have not been handled to their satisfaction, you are welcome to contact either specialist: Cyrus Walker (512-795-5908)

or Colette Pearce (512-795-5906). These specialists are also available via e-mail ([cyrus\\_walker@bcbstx.com](mailto:cyrus_walker@bcbstx.com) and [colette\\_pearce@bcbstx.com](mailto:colette_pearce@bcbstx.com)). **Please note:** with any problems concerning HealthSelect prescription drug issues (e.g., membership updates, denials of prescriptions), contact the Merck-Medco Client Service Team.



## History of Firsts

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas was:

- **First** in the state to offer coverage for cancer treatment
- **First** in the state to offer coverage for catastrophic illnesses, such as polio, leukemia and diphtheria
- **First** in the state to offer coverage to the poor and elderly before the advent of government programs
- **First** in the state to offer coverage for infants from birth
- **First** in the state to offer coverage to migrant farm-workers
- **First** in the state to administer Medicaid
- **First** in the state to administer Medicare

# HealthSelect & HealthSelect Plus Materials

Materials	How Materials are Supplied	Delivery Date
<b>Information Booklets/Provider Directories</b> (Combined in one book). To be used for Summer Enrollment	Benefits Coordinators will order the supply needed for Summer Enrollment (SE) and for new employees for the year from BCBSTX/HMO Blue. <b>(Supplies must be ordered by 5/31/00, using the attached request form).</b>	6/23/00
<b>Benefits Book Supplements</b>	BCBSTX/HMO Blue will ship to Benefits Coordinators a limited supply for Human Resource office use only.  BCBSTX/HMO Blue will mail to all current members' homes.  After 9/1/00, BCBSTX/HMO Blue will mail to new members' homes, along with ID cards and the 9/1/99 Benefits Book.*	9/1/00  9/1/00
<b>ID Cards</b> (mailed to current members only if copays change)	If copays change, BCBSTX/HMO Blue will mail new cards to all current members' homes. (Cards will be effective 9/1/00).	9/1/00
<b>Benefits Video**</b>	BCBSTX/HMO Blue will ship to Benefits Coordinators at central agencies.	6/23/00

\* New members who enroll during SE will receive their member materials as soon after 9/1/00 as possible.

\*\* The benefits video you will receive in June can be used in place of having a BCBSTX/HMO Blue representative attend your Summer Enrollment meetings.

## Texas Blue Quality Centers for Hip and Knee Joint Replacements

To assist HealthSelect and HealthSelect Plus members in making decisions regarding orthopedic care, a network of regional quality centers called **Texas Blue Quality Centers for Hip and Knee Joint Replacements** has been established.

The goal of a Quality Center is to promote clinical procedures that result in better outcomes, shorter hospital stays and fewer days missed from work or other activities. Studies show that patients generally recover faster and with fewer complications at hospitals designated as Quality Centers.

The Texas Blue Quality Centers were chosen based upon a number of factors such as volume of procedures performed, outcomes, patient risk factors, and patient satisfaction. The program is voluntary, and members are not required to use the centers. Members who are interested in utilizing a Quality Center should consult their physician regarding this option of care. Members will require referrals from their primary care physicians.



### Texas Blue Quality Centers for Hip and Knee Joint Replacements

Presbyterian Hospital of Dallas  
8200 Walnut Hill Lane  
Dallas, Texas 75231-4496  
(214) 345-8400

Covenant Health System  
3615 19th Street  
Lubbock, Texas 79410  
(806) 792-1011

St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital  
6720 Bertner Avenue  
Houston, Texas 77030  
(713) 791-2011

Harris Methodist Fort Worth\*  
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue  
Fort Worth, Texas 76104  
(817) 882-2100

Southwest Texas Methodist Hospital  
7700 Floyd Curl Drive  
San Antonio, Texas 78229  
(210) 575-4000

Additional Texas Blue Quality Centers are planned in 2000 for:

- **Breast Care**
- **Cardiac Services**

\*HealthSelect only

The BCBSTX/HMO Blue Case Management departments will work directly with members and their physicians to coordinate access to a Quality Center.



## Fruits and Veggies that Pack a Powerful Punch

Fruits and vegetables with high antioxidant potential are called high-ORAC foods. The dark or vividly colored produce has a higher ORAC rating. Look for these top scorers next time you're at the grocery store:

**FRUITS:** prunes, raisins, blueberries, strawberries, and raspberries

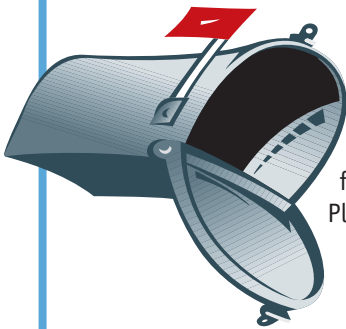
**VEGETABLES:** kale, spinach, brussels sprouts, broccoli florets, and beets

— UC Berkeley Wellness Letter

## Beating the Urge

According to a recent study, individuals who are in the process of quitting smoking can benefit from an exercise program while they're involved in their smoking cessation classes. Researchers note that the exercisers have a higher rate of success and gain less weight. The mood boost and increased energy associated with exercise are likely responsible for easing the depression that often accompanies quitting smoking.

— Rhode Island's Miriam Hospital



## Address Change Reminder

Just a gentle reminder that all UGIP Supplemental Information forms designating PCP selections for HealthSelect and HealthSelect Plus should be mailed to:

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas**  
PO Box 655730  
Dallas, TX 75265-5730

Evidence of Insurability (EOI) forms should be mailed to Group Life and Health Insurance Company at the following address:

**Attn: Medical Underwriting Department**  
**Group Life & Health Division**  
**Fort Dearborn Life Insurance Company**  
PO Box 655403  
Dallas, TX 75265-5403

Processing of these forms will be delayed if you send them to the Austin address. Please inform any personnel for whom this is relevant information.



**BlueCross BlueShield of Texas**

## Marketing Division

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HealthSelect administered by: Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Texas, a Division of Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company, ★  
HealthSelect Plus administered by: Rio Grande HMO, Inc. ★ d/b/a HMO Blue, Northeast Texas; HMO Blue, South Texas; HMO Blue, Southeast Texas; HMO Blue, Central Texas; HMO Blue, El Paso; HMO Blue, SouthWest Texas  
West Texas Health Plans, L.C. ★ d/b/a HMO Blue, West Texas  
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