

Important Insurance Information for Patients

The deadline for enrolling in or changing your Medicare coverage is fast approaching. Open enrollment began Nov. 15 and expires Dec. 31 for those who did not sign up last year or wish to change insurance plans.

Those eligible for Medicare benefits can choose to receive their benefits through the Original Medicare provisions or to one of the private health plans available through insurance companies. These private plans are generally managed care plans where rules and restrictions apply. It's important to read the provisions of the plan carefully to see if it covers all your current and anticipated needs.

Before enrolling in a private plan, check the list of providers. Not all doctors, physical therapists, orthotists, prosthetists, and other healthcare professionals are included in every network. (Original Medicare has no such restrictions).

Private health plans may not cover the services of an orthotist or prosthetist, or they may put a cap on the cost, which will result in you paying more out-of-pocket or not getting the best product or service for your needs.

Make sure you know your private health plan's costs, because some charge higher co-pays for certain types of care. You should also understand

the rules of the plan. If you do not follow the private plan's rules you may have to pay up to the full cost of the service.

If you are currently enrolled in a private plan, you still need to review your costs, coverage, and provider network, as these change yearly.

If you choose Original Medicare, you may want to purchase a "Medigap" plan to lower your out-of-pocket costs, unless you have supplemental coverage from a current job, a spouse's job, or retiree health coverage.

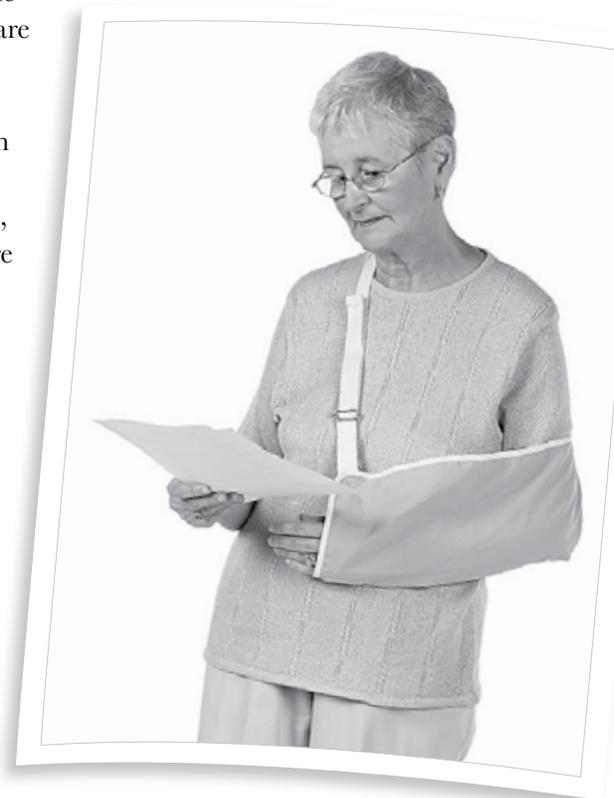
If you have retiree health coverage, check with your former employer to see if it works with a Medicare private health plan. According to the Medicare Rights Center, a national consumer group, if you join a private health plan, you may lose your retiree health benefits and never get them back. Regardless of which plan you choose, you will be locked into it for the entire calendar year.

When changing plans, please keep us informed. This is vital to our billing process. Services that require pre-authorization have to be with the current provider. If you change providers before a prosthesis or orthosis is delivered, the insurance carrier that you started out with is not responsible for its costs and the current provider will not provide coverage without preauthorization.

We at Rehab Tech will help you in whatever way we can to ensure you get the full benefits to which you are entitled. Don't hesitate to call us at any time if you have questions regarding your insurance coverage.

Additional information can be obtained from the Medicare Helpline at (800) 633-4227 or visit www.medicare.gov.

In New York State, the Department of Insurance can be reached at (800) 342-3736, for information on Medicare, Medigap, and long-term care, or visit www.ins.state.ny.us/chealth.htm.



ABC Certification Means Professionalism and Quality Patient Care

Patients who choose Rehab Technologies Inc. to receive orthotics, prosthetics, and pedorthics are assured of professional standards and quality, competent care from practitioners who are board certified in an accredited facility.

Since most states do not license orthotists and prosthetists, national certification by a qualified authority is the best way patients can be assured of standards of patient care and practitioner competence. In our field of healthcare, that authority is the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics & Pedorthics (ABC).

Practitioner Michael Hall, CPO, has been an ABC-certified orthotist and

prosthetist since 1975, and Jeremy Hall, CP, RTPO, was certified in 2004. They have completed education requirements, and passed written and clinical certification examinations, and maintain their certification through continuing professional education courses, seminars, workshops, and in-services.

In addition to our certified practitioners, Rehab Tech has been also an ABC-accredited facility since 1990, meeting and exceeding standards in patient care, administrative policies and procedures, facility safety, and patients' rights. We undergo a review by ABC every three years to maintain our accreditation. Periodic recertification of professionals and their facilities



ensures that ABC's high standards of performance are continually met.

In addition to ABC accreditation, practitioners may also be certified by the Board for Orthotist/Prosthetist Certification (BOC). Like ABC, BOC is committed to promoting the highest standards of excellence and competence of orthotists and prosthetists, and requires continuing education credits for certification renewal. Medicare recognizes both ABC and BOC-certified practitioners as service providers.

This emphasis on the highest credentials and thorough practitioner training is just part of the quality of care that is fundamental to Rehab Tech and of the highest benefit to our patients.

Hire Heroes Launched to Help Disabled Vets Find Jobs



Do you know a disabled military veteran who is looking for a job? Or, are you an employer who could help?

Earlier this year, Hire Heroes USA, a program designed to help veterans with disabilities find careers nationwide, was launched by Health Career Foundation, a nonprofit healthcare education organization.

Hire Heroes will help veterans returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom with any level of disability as determined by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Hire Heroes will identify veterans with disabilities who are seeking career placement services by working with transition centers and VA rehabilitation centers. Each applicant will be qualified and screened to determine career interests, job skills and location preferences. Additionally, Hire Heroes USA will work with potential employers by contacting interested companies to identify suitable positions for the veterans. Efforts are underway to raise the necessary operating funds to make this program a success.

"Through Health Careers Foundations' relationships with companies nationwide, the Hire Heroes USA program will help thousands of veterans with disabilities

secure employment," said Clayton Shepherd, chief executive officer, Health Careers Foundation. "By helping these honorable veterans find careers across the country, they will be able to continue to serve and to make a difference."

"Our mission is to be the bridge to the right career fit for our returning heroes," said Bayne Tippins, director, Hire Heroes, USA. "Hire Heroes USA will help to ease the transition from military to civilian life."

"With the help of industries nationwide, Hire Heroes USA will help those who have defended this country so bravely conquer challenges they may face in securing employment and re-building their lives," said John Bardis, chairman, president and CEO of MedAssets.

If you are a disabled veteran or an employer who would like to help, more information is available at www.hireheroesusa.org.

For Scenic Walks or Hard Workouts: THE TRANQUIL SPORT OF ADAPTIVE SNOWSHOEING

It's time for the fresh, chilly air and peaceful scenery offered by winter sports. If you're looking for a way to improve balance and spatial awareness, and to get exercise at a level that you can set for yourself, consider adaptive snowshoeing this season.

Snowshoeing is the "quiet" snow sport, according to Tom Iselin, Executive Director of Sun Valley Adaptive Sports in Ketchum, Idaho. "It allows you to experience the stillness of the backcountry," he said. "No lift lines. No screaming kids... You hear the crunch of the snow and feel the wind in your face. Time seems to slow."

The light aluminum snowshoe, with criss-crossed thongs, sometimes can look like a racquet that you strap to the bottom of your shoes. "Walking in snowshoes is almost as easy as walking regularly – it's just that your shoes are the size of Shaq's," Iselin said. "The snowshoes' size distributes your weight over a larger area so that your foot won't sink completely into the snow."

Walking through the snow can be relatively easy or quite difficult, depending on the slope of the terrain and the type of snow on the ground. Because the sport does require walking, adaptive snowshoeing is best suited for people with disabilities who are ambulatory, such as people with traumatic brain injuries, amputations or hemiplegia.

"Basically, if you can walk, you can snowshoe," Iselin said, adding that it's a good idea to use Alpine ski poles at all times to help with balance and posture.

If the snow is firm and the ground is flat, a prosthetic leg used to walk on flat surfaces will suffice. Upright walking aids and devices used for balance can also be adapted for snow.

"Walking down steep – even

medium – pitch slopes in soft, deep snow can be tricky. You may punch into a soft 'hole,' a shoe may turn and burrow to one side, or the toe of the shoe can dig in," Iselin cautioned. "Any of these mishaps can cause a fall or muscle strain."

Walking downhill in heavy, wet snow is also tricky. "The shoes can stick as the heavy snow piles on top," he said. That could make walking difficult, to the point of stumbling. If the snow is deep and the slope is steep, a prosthetic foot with a multiaxial ankle or one made especially for uneven terrain works well.

Iselin advised, "The secret to walking downhill in either deep, powdery snow or heavy, wet snow is to walk slowly and deliberately. Take medium-length steps, keeping your back fairly erect, and planting your poles out to the front and slightly to the side for balance."

He said, "The most important thing is to keep your pace under control."

Always snowshoe with a partner. Anytime a person is out in the snow, there are dangers. Falling upside down in a few feet of powder can be fatal. While snowshoes are fun, they can be awkward and could get tangled up if you fall head over heels.

"Even getting up after falling on your side can be a little challenging



until you get the hang of it," he said.

Whether you want to take it easy on flat ground and firm snow, or go for a bigger workout on a steep slope with fresh powdered snow, consider the tranquil sport of snowshoeing this winter.

Snowshoeing Programs in New England

STRIDE Adaptive Sports in Rensselaer, N.Y., offers programs on Saturday afternoons from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Pineridge Cross-Country Ski Area, Petersburg, N.Y. For additional information and reservations, call Chuck Golden (518) 283-0658 or visit www.stride.org/sports/snowshoeing.

Maine Handicapped Skiing, Newry, Maine, (800) 639-7770, www.skimhs.org.

Bretton Woods Adaptive, Inc., Bretton Woods, N.H., (603) 278-8398, <http://mtwashington.com/thingstodo/adaptiveprogram.htm>.

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ORTHOTICS:

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- Lumbar Corsets
- Acute Through Rehabilitative Services
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- Soft Goods
- Knee, Ankle
- Shoes and Inserts

PROSTHETICS:

- Upper Extremity, Conventional and Myoelectric
- Immediate Post-Operative Prosthesis (IPOP)
- Above Knee, Computerized Knees
- Computer-Aided Design and Manufacturing CAD/CAM
- Below Knee
- Lightweight, Geriatric

HELPING OUR PATIENTS REACH THEIR GOALS

Keep Your Skin Healthy During the Cold Weather Season

People with disabilities need to be careful during the cold weather season because all the layering of clothes can cause skin problems in places where circulation is poor. The key to skin care is prevention. Prevent the sores from starting and you won't have to worry about the significant damage they can cause.

Here are a few tips:

The Residual Limb

- Keep your skin clean. Wash daily with warm water and a pure soap.
- Rinse thoroughly. Remaining soap film contributes to skin irritation.
- Dry completely. Damp skin inserted in a socket can swell and become irritated.

- Apply a medicated skin lotion or cream to keep the skin supple.

The Socket

- Should also be cleaned regularly.
- Wash with warm water and mild soap.
- Wipe out with a cloth dampened in clean water.
- Dry thoroughly before donning.

Socks and Liners

- Wash anything that comes into contact with your skin. Use mild soap and warm water.
- Rinse thoroughly and dry.
- Eat a balanced diet and drink plenty of water to maintain supple, healthy skin.
- If a sore or abnormal condition develops, notify your prosthetist and physician without delay.



Dear Friends,

This is the perfect time of year to focus on family and friends and to celebrate the relationships that give meaning to our lives.

At Rehab Tech, we value the relationships we have with all of you – our patients and our healthcare associates who are like an extended family to us.

We appreciate your trust in our care and abilities to meet your prosthetic, orthotic, and pedorthic needs. Our most important mission is to help you achieve success.

Best wishes for a “wonder-full” holiday season and a successful 2008!

Sincerely,

The Staff at RehabTech