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Hello Latin America & Canada!

Check out your website at: <http://tricare15.army.mil/>



- Information on Enrollment for Long Term TDY Personnel
- Quarterly Verification of Enrollment
- From the Director . . .
- Health Quackery: Spotting Health Scams
- What's New on the TRICARE Website

Information on Enrollment for Long Term TDY Personnel

Active duty personnel on Temporary Additional Duty (TAD) or Temporary Duty (TDY) to Remote Latin America are not normally eligible to enroll. However, there are many cases where the active duty service member is extended in place (in a foreign country) and is in need of routine healthcare.

Effective immediately, active duty personnel who are extended in place with subsequent TAD/TDY orders beyond 179 days will be eligible to enroll in TRICARE Latin America & Canada Prime. They must be eligible in DEERS and complete and fax an enrollment form with a copy of BOTH the original and extended TAD/TDY orders.

Family members of these service members are not eligible for Prime in these locations.

Quarterly Verification of Enrollment

The partnership between the TAO and our TRICARE POCs is critical for effective administration of the TRICARE Program. Quarterly, the TRICARE Area Office (TAO) sends a list of currently enrolled beneficiaries to each TRICARE POC to verify and return. It is imperative that each TRICARE POC review the list and identify those who have PCS'd and those who have reported that do not appear to be enrolled. We realize that being a TRICARE POC is not a POC's primary duty, but appreciate the support they provide. BRAVO ZULU to those POCs who respond to this valuable administrative tool.

Dear TLAC TRICARE POCs:

Here are several items of interest:

- Web Site Wins Gold Star. The TLAC Web Site has received the "2004 Best of TRICARE Gold Star" certification from the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). The Gold Star signifies that the web site provides all the essential information that TRICARE beneficiaries expect to see when they need to know about the TRICARE program. The TLAC Web Site is excellent – please check it out!
- TRICARE Puerto Rico Contract. Was "kicked off" on May 1st. During the third week of April a team from this office, TMA and the contractor visited Puerto Rico and conducted five Town Hall meetings at various locations. We met with over 500 beneficiaries to educate them about the contract and receive feedback. The new contract represents a significant milestone in how health care is managed on the Emerald Island.
- Civilian Health Care Costs. No doubt you've heard about the continuing rise in health care costs throughout the United States. There, cost increases put into perspective the high value of the TRICARE benefit. If you could find a similar, comprehensive health care plan in the commercial sector, it would cost you thousands of dollars each year to insure you and your family. We strongly encourage all active duty family members to be enrolled in TRICARE Overseas Prime while serving in Latin America.



Please stay healthy and thanks again for your great work!

Sincerely,

/s/

Paul W. Lund

Captain, Medical Service Corps, U.S. Navy

Deputy Director, TRICARE Area Office (TAO)

(Latin America & Canada)

Health Quackery: Spotting Health Scams

You see the ads everywhere these days — “Smart Drugs for Long Life” or “Arthritis Aches and Pains Disappear Like Magic!” or even testimonials claiming, “This treatment cured my cancer in one week.” It’s easy to understand the appeal of these promises. But there is still plenty of truth to the old saying, “If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is!”

Quacks — people who sell unproven remedies — have been around for years. Today they have more ways than ever to peddle their wares. In addition to TV, radio, magazines, newspapers, infomercials, mail, and even word-of-mouth, they now can use the internet — websites offer miracle cures; emails tell

stories of overnight magic. Sadly, older people are often the target for such scams. In fact, a government study found that most victims of health care fraud are over age 65. The problem is serious.

Unproven remedies may be harmful. They may also waste money. And, sometimes, using these remedies keeps people from getting the medical treatment they need.

What Do Quacks Promise?

Unproven remedies promise false hope. Often they offer cures that are painless or quick. Why do people fall for these sales pitches? After all, at best these treatments are worthless. At worst, they are dangerous. One reason health care scams work is that they prey on people who are frightened or in pain. Living with a chronic health problem is hard. It’s easy to see why people might fall for a false promise of a quick and painless cure. You may see unproven remedies in products for:

Anti-Aging. Claims for pills or treatments that lead to eternal youth play on the great value our culture places on staying young. But, aging is normal. A product may smooth your wrinkles, but no treatments have yet been proven to slow the aging process. Eating a healthy diet, getting regular exercise, and not smoking are your best bets to help prevent some of the diseases that occur more often with age. In other words, making healthy lifestyle choices can increase your chances of aging well.

Arthritis Remedies. Unproven arthritis remedies can be easy to fall for because symptoms of arthritis tend to come and go. You may believe the remedy you are using is making you feel better when, in fact, it is just the normal ebb and flow of your symptoms. You may see claims that so-called treatments with herbs, oils, chemicals, special diets, radiation, and other products cured arthritis. This is highly unlikely.

Individual testimonials alone do not guarantee that a product is effective. Instead, scientific studies proving that a treatment works are needed. While these products may not hurt you, they are costly and aren’t likely to help much either. There is no cure for most forms of arthritis, but rest, exercise, heat, and drugs can help many people control their symptoms. If you are thinking about a new treatment, talk with your doctor first.

Cancer Cures. Quacks prey on people’s fear of cancer. They promote treatments with no proven value — for example, a diet dangerously low in protein or drugs such as Laetrile. By using unproven methods, people with cancer may lose valuable time and the chance to receive a proven, effective treatment. This delay may lessen the chance for controlling or curing the disease.

Memory Aids. Many people worry about losing their memory as they age. They may wrongly believe false promises that unproven treatments can help them keep or improve their memory. So-called smart pills, removal of amalgam dental fillings, and brain retraining exercises are all examples of untested approaches that claim to help memory.

How Can You Protect Yourself From Health Scams?

Be wary. Question what you see or hear in ads or on the internet. Newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV stations do not always check to make sure the claims in their ads are true. Find out about a product before you buy. Don’t let a sales person force you to make a snap decision. Check with your doctor first.

Remember stories about the old snake oil salesman who traveled from town to town making claims for his fabulous product? Well, chances are today’s quack is using the same sales tricks. Look for red flags in ads or promotional material that:

- Promise a quick or painless cure,
- Claim to be made from a special, secret, or ancient formula — often only available by mail or from one sponsor,
- Use testimonials or undocumented case histories from satisfied patients,
- Claim to be effective for a wide range of ailments,
- Claim to cure a disease (such as arthritis or cancer) that is not yet understood by medical science,
- Offer an additional “free” gift or a larger amount of the product as a “special promotion,” or
- Require advance payment and claim limited availability of the product.

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Resources

If you have questions about a product, talk to your doctor or contact one of the organizations below. Get the facts about health products and protect yourself from health care hoaxes.

National Cancer Institute (NCI) Cancer Information Service (CIS)

Phone: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

TTY: 1-800-332-8615

Website: <http://cis.nci.nih.gov>

National Arthritis, Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NIAMS)

1 AMS Circle

Bethesda, MD 20892

Phone: 1-877-22-NIAMS (1-877-226-4267 – toll-free)

TTY: 301-565-2966

Website: www.niams.nih.gov

Council of Better Business Bureaus (C BBB)

4200 Wilson Boulevard

8th Floor

Arlington, VA 22203

Check the telephone book for the number of your local chapter.

Website: www.bbb.org

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

Room 421

6th Street and Pennsylvania

Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20580

Phone: 1-877-FTC-HELP (1-877-382-4357—toll-free)

TTY: 1-800-326-2996

Website: www.ftc.gov

U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

5600 Fishers Lane

Rockville, MD 20857-0001

Phone: 1-888-INFO-FDA (1-888-463-6332—toll-free)

Website: www.fda.gov

U.S. Postal Inspection Service (USPS)

Office of Investigation

Washington, DC 20206-2166

Check the telephone book for the number of your local postal inspector.

Website: www.usps.com/postalinspectors/fraud/

Quackwatch, Inc.

Quackwatch, Inc, is a nonprofit corporation making information available to combat health-related frauds, myths, fads, and fallacies. Website: www.quackwatch.org

The National Institute on Aging offers a variety of information on health and aging. For more information, contact:

National Institute on Aging Information Center

P.O. Box 8057

Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057

Phone: 1-800-222-2225

TTY: 1-800-222-4225

Website: www.nia.nih.gov

National Institute on Aging

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services

National Institutes of Health

September 2002

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Curanderos: Cómo reconocer estafas en cuestiones de salud

Hoy día vemos los avisos publicitarios por todas partes — “Drogas Inteligentes para una Larga Vida” o “¡Los Dolores y las Molestias de la Artritis Desaparecen Como por Arte de Magia!” o aún testimonios que sostienen: “Este tratamiento me curó del cáncer en una semana”. Es fácil entender el atractivo de estas promesas. Pero hay mucho de verdad en el antiguo proverbio que dice, “¡Si suena demasiado bueno para ser verdad, probablemente lo es!”

Los curanderos — gente que vende remedios no sometidos a prueba previamente — han existido durante años. Y hoy en día cuentan con más medios que nunca para ofrecer y vender sus mercancías. Además de la televisión, la radio, las revistas, los periódicos, los comerciales en forma de programa de televisión, el correo y aún por recomendaciones de una persona a otra, ahora ellos pueden hacer uso de la Internet — los sitios en la red ofrecen curas milagrosas; los correos electrónicos cuentan historias de curas mágicas de la noche a la mañana. Y lamentablemente, la gente mayor es a menudo el blanco de estas estafas. De hecho, un estudio efectuado por el gobierno descubrió que la mayoría de las víctimas de fraude relacionado con cuidados de la salud pasan de 65 años de edad. El problema es grave. Los remedios no experimentados antes pueden ser perjudiciales. También pueden implicar pérdida de dinero. Y, en ocasiones, el uso de estos remedios impide que la gente obtenga el tratamiento médico que requiere.

¿Qué prometen los curanderos?

Los remedios no sometidos a previa prueba prometen falsas esperanzas. A menudo ofrecen curas indoloras o rápidas. ¿Por qué se deja engañar la gente por estas ofertas de venta? Después de todo, en el mejor de los casos, estos tratamientos son inútiles. En el peor de los casos, son peligrosos. Una razón por la que dan resultados estos engaños en el cuidado de la salud es que están dirigidos a la gente que está atemorizada o que sienten dolor. El vivir con un problema crónico de salud es difícil. Es fácil ver por qué la gente se puede dejar engañar por la falsa promesa de una cura rápida e indolora.

Ustedes encontrarán remedios no experimentados anteriormente en productos como:

Anti-Envejecimiento. La afirmación de píldoras o tratamientos que conducen a la eterna juventud juega con el enorme valor que nuestra cultura le da al hecho de mantenerse joven. Sin embargo, el envejecimiento es normal. Un producto puede suavizar nuestras arrugas, pero hasta el momento, ningún tratamiento ha probado que pueda retardar el proceso del envejecimiento. El mantener una dieta saludable, hacer ejercicio con regularidad y no fumar son sus mejores armas para ayudar a prevenir algunas de las enfermedades que se presentan más a menudo con la edad. Es decir, el elegir opciones saludables en cuanto a su estilo de vida, puede aumentar su posibilidad de envejecer bien.

Remedios contra la artritis. Los remedios contra la artritis no sujetos anteriormente a prueba fácilmente pueden engañar ya que los síntomas de la artritis tienden a aparecer y a desaparecer. Usted puede creer que el remedio que está utilizando lo está haciendo sentir mejor cuando, de hecho, se trata simplemente de la aparición y desaparición normal de sus síntomas. Usted puede encontrar afirmaciones acerca de que los llamados tratamientos con hierbas, aceites, productos químicos, dietas especiales, radiación y otros productos curaron la artritis. Esto es muy poco probable. Los testimonios individuales de por sí no garantizan que un producto sea efectivo. En lugar de ello, se requieren estudios científicos que comprueben que un tratamiento da resultado. Aunque es posible que estos productos no le causen daño, son costosos y tampoco le van a ayudar mucho. No hay ninguna cura para la mayoría de las manifestaciones de la artritis, aunque el descanso, el ejercicio, el calor y los medicamentos pueden ayudarle a mucha gente a controlar sus síntomas. Si está considerando un nuevo tratamiento, hable primero con su médico.

Curas para el cáncer. Los curanderos aprovechan el temor que la gente le tiene al cáncer. Promueven tratamientos sin ningún valor comprobado — por ejemplo, una dieta peligrosamente baja en proteínas o drogas como el Laetrile. Al utilizar métodos no experimentados, la gente que sufre de cáncer puede perder tiempo valioso y la oportunidad de recibir un tratamiento comprobado y efectivo. Esta demora puede reducir la posibilidad de controlar o curar la enfermedad.

Ayudas para la memoria. Mucha gente se preocupa porque su memoria les falla a medida que envejecen. Pueden creer equivocadamente en falsas promesas de que tratamientos no experimentados los pueden ayudar a mantener o mejorar su memoria. Las llamadas píldoras inteligentes, la remoción de las calzas dentales de amalgama y los ejercicios para reeducar el cerebro son todos ejemplos de medios no sometidos antes a prueba que se supone ayudan a la memoria.

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¿Cómo puede usted protegerse de los engaños relacionados con la salud?

Sea precavido. Cuestione lo que ve o escucha en los avisos publicitarios o en la Internet. Los periódicos, las revistas, la radio y los canales de televisión no siempre verifican para garantizar que las afirmaciones en sus avisos de propaganda son verdaderas. Averigüe acerca de un producto antes de comprarlo. No permita que un vendedor lo obligue a tomar una decisión instantánea. Consulte primero con su médico. ¿Recuerda las historias acerca del viejo culebrero que vendía aceites de pueblo en pueblo, afirmando las maravillas de su fabuloso producto? Bueno, es muy posible que los curanderos actuales utilicen las mismas tretas para las ventas. Intente identificar información dudosa en el material promocional o de avisos publicitarios, que:

- Prometen una cura rápida o indolora,
- Sostienen ser fabricados con una fórmula especial secreta o antigua — a menudo únicamente disponibles por correo o a través de un promotor,
- Utilizan testimonios o historias de casos no documentados previamente de parte de pacientes satisfechos,
- Sostienen ser efectivos para una amplia gama de enfermedades,
- Sostienen curar una enfermedad (como la artritis o el cáncer) que aún no ha sido descifrada por la ciencia médica,
- Ofrecen un obsequio adicional "gratis", o una cantidad mayor del producto como "promoción especial," o
- Exigen el pago anticipado y sostienen que la disponibilidad del producto es limitada.

Recursos

Si tiene preguntas acerca de un producto, consulte con su médico o comuníquese con una de las siguientes organizaciones. Averigüe los hechos reales acerca de los productos para la salud y protéjase de los engaños en el cuidado de la salud.

National Cancer Institute (NCI)

Instituto Nacional del Cáncer
Cancer Information Service (CIS)
Servicio de Información del Cáncer
Teléfono: 1-800-4-CANCER
(1-800-422-6237) (llamada gratis)
TTY: 1-800-332-8615
Página Web: <http://cis.nci.nih.gov>

National Arthritis, Musculoskeletal, and Skin Diseases Information Clearinghouse (NIAMS)

Banco Nacional de Información sobre la Artritis y las Enfermedades Musculoesqueléticas y de la Piel
1 AMS Circle
Bethesda, MD 20892
Teléfono: 301-495-4484, o Teléfono: 1-877-22-NIAMS (226-4267) (llamada gratis)
TTY: 301-565-2966 Página Web: www.niams.nih.gov

Council of Better Business Bureaus

(CBBB) Consejo de Agencias para Mejores Negocios
4200 Wilson Boulevard, 8o. piso
Arlington, VA 22203
Verifique en el directorio telefónico el número de su capítulo local.
Página Web: <http://www.bbb.org>

Federal Trade Commission (FTC)

Agencia Gubernamental Encargada de Regular y Supervisar Métodos y Prácticas Comerciales
Suite 421, 6th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20580
Teléfono: 1-877-FTC-HELP 1-877-382-4357 (llamada gratis) TTY: 1-800-326-2996
Página Web: <http://www.ftc.gov>

U. S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

Administración de Alimentos y Medicinas de Estados Unidos
5600 Fishers Lane
Rockville, MD 20857-0001
Teléfono: 1-888-INFO-FDA 1-888-463-6332 (llamada gratis) Página Web: <http://www.fda.gov>

U.S. Postal Inspection Service

(USPS) Servicio de Inspección de Correos de Estados Unidos Oficina de Investigación
Washington, DC 20206-2166
Verifique en el directorio telefónico el número de su inspector de correos local.
Página Web: <http://www.usps.com/postalinspectors/fraud/>

Quackwatch, Inc.

Quackwatch, Inc., miembro de la Federación de Consumidores de Estados Unidos, es una entidad sin fines de lucro, cuyo propósito consiste en combatir los fraudes, mitos, lo último que se está usando y falacias relacionados con la salud.

Página Web: <http://www.quackwatch.org>

El Instituto Nacional Sobre el Envejecimiento (National Institute on Aging) ofrece una amplia gama de información sobre la salud y el envejecimiento. Para mayor información, comuníquese con:

The National Institute on Aging

El Instituto Nacional Sobre el Envejecimiento
Centro de Información
P.O. Box 8057
Gaithersburg, MD 20898-8057
Teléfono: 1-800-222-2223
TTY: 1-800-222-4225
Página Web: <http://www.nia.nih.gov>

National Institute on Aging

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health
Septiembre de 2002

What's New on the TRICARE Web Site
eUpdate News Releases, Updates, and New Features
April 30, Vol 2, No. 16

Week of April 26, 2004

News Releases

For news releases, please visit the following:

TRICARE News Releases <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/NewsReleases/>

Military Health Care System News Archives <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/main/news.html>

New Web Site

[Patient Bill of Rights](#)

MHS patients have explicit rights to information disclosure, choice of providers and health plans, access to emergency services, participation in treatment decisions, respect and nondiscrimination, confidentiality of unique health information, and complaints and appeals, as well as specific responsibilities to participate in their own health decisions. View the DoD Directive for Patients Bill of Rights.

Updated Web Sites

[Media Readiness Room \(MRR\)](#)

This update of the MRR highlights efforts by each of the services to restore the hope of their members and families striving to recover from alcohol and substance abuse. The "What's Hot?" section features a test "How much is too much alcohol?" that you can take to screen for harmful or hazardous drinking patterns. This test is based on the Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), developed by the World Health Organization to screen for harmful or hazardous drinking patterns. The "What People are saying" section features a 2004 National Alcohol Screening Day kick off speech by U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Richard H. Carmona. Also, Lt. Chris Front, Department Head, Navy Substance Abuse Rehabilitation Program, Rota, Spain, talks about the facility and the counselors who are dedicated to helping service members recover from substance abuse. The "Did You Know?" section features interesting facts on long-term, excessive drinking. The "That's Cool!" section features frequently asked questions developed by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) and an article from the Alaska Military Weekly entitled " National Guard: 'Just Say No' not always enough." Also on display on the home page of the MRR is a presentation slide on the warning signs of alcohol abuse.

[Congressional Information](#)

The Congressional Web site has been updated with the report to Congress on [TRICARE Program effectiveness for FY04](#). The report features information on new benefits and programs in FY03, MHS inpatient/outpatient workload and other financial perspectives, customer satisfaction, readiness, and quality - including overall outpatient access and availability and ease of obtaining care. A number of findings reflect ongoing efforts that improve performance and increased beneficiary satisfaction.

[TRICARE Webmaster's Toolkit](#)

As the TRICARE Regions transition, some great changes in information availability and TRICARE Web site upgrades are happening, and we will spotlight those Web sites. The [TRICARE Next Generation of Contracts Web sites section of the toolkit](#) features the TRICARE Area Office (Latin America and Canada) TLAC Web site. It is the first in what we hope will be many Web sites spotlighted during and after the transition.

[TRICARE Management Activity \(TMA\) Employment Web site](#)

The TMA Employment Web site has been updated with the latest civilian vacancies within TMA. Civilian job opportunities are listed and may be viewed by clicking on the announcement number to review the specific job requirements, qualifications, and instructional information for submitting your resume.

Featured Web Site

[Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

Visit the FAQs Web site to locate answers to FAQs regarding the TRICARE benefit. The site has basic and advanced search capabilities and tips on searching. The basic search allows users to enter word(s) in the search field to retrieve questions containing the word(s) entered. The advanced search allows searching by category or subcategory. For example, you can search for all questions in the "TRICARE" category, with "college students" as the subcategory. The Web site also features real time posting of the 20 recently added/edited FAQs and the top 20 most viewed questions.

Subscription Information and Comments

You are subscribed to "What's New on the TRICARE Web Site eUpdate."

To be added to or removed from this mailing list, or to report mailing list problems, please visit <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/subscriberservices>.

For TRICARE Web site assistance, send e-mail to Webmaster@tma.osd.mil.