



# a healthier

winter 2011-2012 • [www.ucare.org](http://www.ucare.org)



## Making – and keeping – your New Year’s resolutions

### Getting the help you need after-hours

When you need medical help at night or on the weekend, what are your options?

**1:** Call your doctor’s office, or **primary care clinic.** (It’s listed on your UCare ID card.) The office may not be open, but clinics have a doctor “on call” to answer urgent medical questions.

**2:** Go online to **My Health Decisions** at [www.ucare.org](http://www.ucare.org). This online tool gives you reliable information about a variety of medical conditions to help you learn about treatment options for you and your family.

**3:** Call **Health Connection**, UCare’s 24-hour nurse line, for advice. The toll-free number is **1-800-942-7858** (TTY: **1-877-728-3311**).

For an emergency that needs treatment right away, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room (ER).

2012 is here – a new year, with new possibilities! It’s a tradition to make New Year’s resolutions (goals) to live a healthier life. But for some people, it’s tough to keep those resolutions past the end of January. Here are some tips for making New Year’s resolutions that will stick.

**Keep them realistic.** Too often, people make resolutions to completely change the way they’re living. Then, when they can’t make such drastic changes, they give up altogether. So, instead of saying, “I’m going to lose 100 pounds,” for example, call your clinic to schedule an annual exam first, and talk to your doctor about realistic weight loss goals.

**Keep them specific.** It’s not useful to make a resolution to “live healthier.” Instead, make a specific list of your healthy living resolutions. Those might include getting your flu and pneumonia vaccines, or going in for a mammogram or colonoscopy. That’s another great reason to make an appointment to see your doctor: You can find out what types of screenings you need.

**Get moving.** What if one of your resolutions is to exercise regularly, but you can’t figure out how to do that in January in Minnesota? Instead of letting yourself get stumped, look for options ahead of time, like finding malls, schools, and other enclosed areas where you can walk when it’s snowy outside. If you’re a member of UCare’s MinnesotaCare, MSHO (HMO SNP), MSC Plus, or *UCare Connect* programs, you have free home fitness kits available as part of your membership. Call UCare Customer Services to find out how to order one.

**Find a partner.** Sharing a resolution with someone else can help keep you both motivated. One idea might be to take a fitness class with a friend. Our PMAP, MinnesotaCare, MSC Plus, MSHO, and *UCare Connect* members receive an unlimited number of \$15 discounts on Community Education courses, including lots of fitness class choices.

Best wishes from UCare for a happy, healthy 2012!



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## A message from Nancy

### Dear UCare member,

UCare is committed to partnering with you to have the best health possible. That commitment is part of everything we do, something I hope shines through in your experience with us – from our personal customer service to the programs we offer.

As a health plan, we receive quality ratings that measure how well you and UCare are doing keeping you and your family in good health. UCare offers many programs to help you get and stay healthy. But what are some steps you could take to improve your health? Here are a few ideas:

- Make sure you see your doctor once a year for a check-up, even if you don't feel sick.
- Bring in your children for a Child and Teen Checkups visit every year too.
- If you have a chronic (serious long-term) illness, like diabetes or heart disease, make sure you see your doctor, get the right screenings to monitor your condition, and take your medications.

We're already seeing some good signs for members taking steps to be healthy. This fall, we were proud to learn that UCare's "Star Rating" for our Minnesota Senior Health Options (MSHO) product went up from 3.5 stars for 2011 to 4 out of 5 stars for 2012. The Star Ratings were created by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to show how health and prescription drug plans perform on more than 50 aspects of member health.

As we move into 2012, we'll always be looking for ways to help you improve your health. We invite you to join us in that effort. Many wishes for a great start to the New Year!

Sincerely,

Nancy J. Feldman  
President and Chief Executive Officer



## It's not too late – tell us what you think!

In the last issue of *a healthier u*, we asked for your opinions, and many of you answered us. Thank you! If you didn't have a chance to complete the survey, you can still do so online at [www.ucare.org/survey](http://www.ucare.org/survey). Stay tuned to learn about the results in the next issue!

## Renewing your health care coverage



Attention Minnesota Health Care Programs members: Don't let your health care coverage with UCare end! To get the most out of your health benefits, it's important to keep your coverage current. After you receive a Minnesota Health Care Programs renewal form in the mail, please:

1. Read the instructions on the form carefully.
2. Give complete answers to all of the questions asked on the form.
3. Return the form to your county worker or to MinnesotaCare by the date requested.
4. Send in pay stubs or other proof needed to check your eligibility.

And if you've moved recently, be sure to let your county or MinnesotaCare worker know.

### President and CEO

Nancy J. Feldman

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## Shunning the sun? Check your vitamin D

For years, doctors have been telling us to always wear sunscreen outside, and keep out of the sun during peak hours. And that's good advice: too much sun can damage skin and lead to skin cancers. "But, as sometimes happens," says Craig Christianson, M.D., UCare's Associate Medical Director, "limiting our sun exposure has led to some problems. One of the biggest is that many of us aren't getting enough vitamin D."

Our bodies produce vitamin D when our skin gets sunlight. We can also get vitamin D by eating foods that have it naturally (fish and egg yolks) or have it added (dairy and grain products), or by taking vitamins. Vitamin D helps us absorb calcium, which forms and maintains strong bones. So when we don't get enough, we run the risk of losing bone density, leading to diseases like osteoporosis. Recent research also suggests that low levels of vitamin D may be a cause for more cases of high blood pressure, cancer, several autoimmune diseases, and mood disorders, such as depression.



Other factors, such as skin color, digestive disorders, and obesity, can also play a role in determining our vitamin D levels. More research needs to be done for us to better understand how vitamin D levels affect our overall health, and which current claims are true. For the time being, when thinking about being in the sun, Dr. Christianson recommends "all things in moderation." And check with your doctor at your next visit about whether you might need to have your vitamin D levels checked, or change what you eat.

Source: *MayoClinic.com*.

## Warning! Watch out for carbon monoxide poisoning

You may be surprised by what wintertime health issue leads to more than 50,000 trips to the emergency room (ER), and contributes to more than 2,000 deaths in the United States every year. It's carbon monoxide poisoning, also known as the "silent killer."

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas. It's produced when fuels and other materials are burned, and is especially dangerous in small, enclosed spaces. Unfortunately, the early symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning – headaches, nausea,

dizziness, and tiredness – are often mistaken for other illnesses. Children and older people have the highest risk.

Here's what you can do to help keep you and your family safe:

- **Make sure there's a carbon monoxide alarm in your home.** Since 2009, it's been the law in Minnesota that all landlords need to install these alarms in the buildings they own. Test the alarm to make sure it's working.
- **Don't ever use your gas oven or range to heat your home.** Use only the heater or radiator.

Be careful when using small space heaters, too.

- **Don't leave a running car in a small enclosed space, like a garage.** Always start your car and drive it outside to warm up.
- **Call if you need help.** You can reach Minnesota Poison Control 24 hours a day, seven days a week at **1-800-222-1222** (voice/TTY).

Sources: [www.dps.mn.gov](http://www.dps.mn.gov) and [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).



# Notice of Privacy Practices

Effective date: December 1, 2011

**This Notice describes how medical information about you\* may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.**

\* In this Notice, “you” means the member and “we” means UCare.

## Why are we telling you this?

UCare believes it is important to keep your health information private. In fact, the law requires us to do so. The law also requires us to tell you about our legal duties and privacy practices. We are required to follow the terms of the Notice currently in effect.

## What do we mean by “information?”

In this Notice, when we talk about “information,” “medical information,” or “health information,” we mean information about you that we collect in our business of providing health coverage for you and your family. It is information that identifies you.

## What kinds of information do we use?

We receive information about you as part of our work in providing health plan services and health coverage. This information includes your name, address, date of birth, gender, telephone numbers, family information, financial information, health records, or other health information. Examples of the kinds of information we collect include: information from enrollment applications, claims, provider information, and customer satisfaction or health surveys; information you give us when you call us about a question or when you file a complaint or appeal; information we need to answer your question or decide your appeal; and information you provide us to help us obtain payment for premiums.

## What do we do with this information?

We use your information to provide health plan services to members and to operate our health plan. These routine uses involve coordination of care, preventive health, and case management programs. For example, we may use your information to talk with your doctor to coordinate a referral to a specialist.

We also use your information for coordination of benefits, enrollment and eligibility status, benefits management,

utilization management, premium billing, claims issues, and coverage decisions. For example, we may use your information to pay your health care claims.

Other uses include customer service activities, complaints or appeals, health promotion, quality activities, health survey information, underwriting, actuarial studies, premium rating, legal and regulatory compliance, risk management, professional peer review, credentialing, accreditation, antifraud activities, as well as business planning and administration. For example, we may use your information to make a decision regarding an appeal filed by you.

In addition, we may use your information to provide you with appointment reminders, information about treatment alternatives, or other health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. We may also share information with family members or others you identify as involved with your care, or with the sponsor of a group health plan, as applicable.

## Who sees your information?

UCare employees see your information only if necessary to do their jobs. We have procedures and systems to keep personal information secure from people who do not have a right to see it. We may share the information with providers and other companies or persons working with or for us. We have contracts with those companies or persons. In those contracts, we require that they agree to keep your information confidential. This includes our lawyers, accountants, auditors, third party administrators, insurance agents or brokers, information systems companies, marketing companies, disease management companies, or consultants.

We also may share your information as required or permitted by law. Information may be shared with government agencies and their contractors as part of regulatory reports, audits, encounter reports, mandatory reporting such as child abuse, neglect, or domestic violence; or in response to a court or administrative order, subpoena, or discovery request. We may share information with health oversight agencies for licensure, inspections, disciplinary actions, audits, investigations, government program eligibility, government program standards compliance, and for certain civil rights enforcement actions. We also may share information for research, for law enforcement purposes, with coroners to permit identification or determine cause of death, or with funeral directors to allow them to carry out their duties. We may be required to share information with

the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services to investigate our compliance efforts. There may be other situations when the law requires or permits us to share information.

Other uses and disclosures not described above will be made only with your written permission. We will also accept the permission of a person with authority to represent you (such as a guardian).

That permission may be cancelled at any time. However, the cancellation will not apply to uses or disclosures we made before we received your cancellation. Also, once we have permission to release your information, we cannot promise that the person who receives the information will not share it.

We do not sell or rent information to anyone. We treat information about former members with the same protection as current members.

### What are your rights?

- You have the right to ask that we don't use or share your information in a certain way. *Please note that while we will try to honor your request, we are not required to agree to your request.*
- You have the right to ask us to send information to you at an address you choose or to request that we communicate with you in a certain way. For example, you may request that your mailings be sent to a work address rather than your home address. We may ask that you make your request in writing.
- You have the right to look at or get a copy of certain information we have about you. This information includes records we use to make decisions about health coverage, such as payment, enrollment, case, or medical management records. We may ask you to make your request in writing. We may also ask you to provide information we need to answer your request. We have the right to charge a reasonable fee for the cost of making and mailing the copies. In some cases, we may deny your request to inspect or obtain a copy of your information. If we deny your request, we will tell you in writing. We may give you a right to have the decision reviewed. Please let us know if you have any questions about this.
- You have the right to ask us to correct or add missing information about you that we have in our records. Your request needs to be in writing. In some cases, we may deny a request if the information is correct and complete, if we did not create it, if we cannot share it, or if it is not part of our records. All denials

will be in writing. You may file a written statement of disagreement with us. We have the right to disagree with that statement. Even if we deny your request to change or add to your information, you still have the right to have your written request, our written denial, and your statement of disagreement included with your information.

- You have the right to receive a listing of the times when we have shared your information in some cases. Please note that we are not required to provide you with a listing of information shared prior to April 14, 2003; information shared or used for treatment, payment, and health care operations purposes; information shared with you or someone else as a result of your permission; information that is shared as a result of an allowed use or disclosure; or information shared for national security or intelligence purposes. All requests for this list must be in writing. We will need you to provide us specific information so we can answer your request. If you request this list more than once in a 12-month period, we may charge you a reasonable fee. If you have questions about this, please contact us at the address provided on this page.
- You have the right to receive a copy of this Notice from us upon request. This Notice took effect December 1, 2011.

### What else do you need to know?

We may change our privacy policy from time to time. As the law requires, we will send you our Notice if you ask us for it. If you have questions about this Notice, please call UCare Customer Services at the toll-free number listed on the back of your member card. This information is also available in other forms to people with disabilities. Please ask us for that information.

## Questions

If you have questions or want to file a complaint, you may contact our Privacy Officer at UCare, Attn: Privacy Officer, P.O. Box 52, Minneapolis, MN 55440-0052. You may also file a complaint with the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services at the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 233 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 240, Chicago, IL 60601. We will not retaliate against you for filing a complaint.

## Medicare coverage updates for members of UCare's MSHO (HMO SNP)

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) releases National Coverage Determinations (NCDs) when changes are made to medical services and/or treatments that are now covered or not covered by Medicare. Determination of coverage is often related to specific Medicare criteria and guidelines. These NCDs were released in 2011.

### **Title: Autologous Cellular Immunotherapy Treatment of Metastatic Prostate Cancer**

**Decision:** Medicare has determined that evidence supports the use of autologous cellular immunotherapy treatment – sipuleucel-T; PROVENGE® to improve health outcomes for Medicare beneficiaries with asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic metastatic castrate-resistant (hormone refractory) prostate cancer.

**What this means:** UCare will cover autologous cellular immunotherapy treatment – sipuleucel-T; PROVENGE® for members with asymptomatic or minimally symptomatic metastatic castrate-resistant prostate cancer.

**Effective:** June 30, 2011.

**For more information:** Call the UCare Customer Services phone number on your member ID card.

This announcement and more information can be found at [www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database](http://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database). Enter **CAG-00422N** in the Quick Search Document ID box and click “Search by ID.” Click on the title and then “Decision Memo.”

### **Title: Magnetic Resonance Imaging for Beneficiaries with Pacemakers**

**Decision:** Medicare has determined that magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) will be covered when provided in a clinical study, if the study meets criteria.

**What this means:** Medicare will provide coverage for MRIs for members with implanted cardiac pacemakers or implantable cardioverter defibrillators if the beneficiary is enrolled in an approved clinical research study. For information concerning clinical studies please refer to Chapter 3, Section 5 of the Evidence of Coverage (EOC).

**Effective:** July 7, 2011.

**For more information:** Call the UCare Customer Services phone number on your member ID card.

This announcement and more information can be found at [www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database](http://www.cms.gov/medicare-coverage-database). Enter **CAG-00399R3** in the Quick Search Document ID box and click “Search by ID.” Click on the title and then “Decision Memo.”



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[www.facebook.com/ucarehealthplan](http://www.facebook.com/ucarehealthplan)



## Help prevent health care fraud

Health fraud is a serious problem. One type of health care fraud is when people get services or benefits for themselves or others that haven't been recommended by a doctor or health care professional. Lori Oleson, UCare Director of Compliance, says, "Some experts guess that as much as \$10 of every \$100 of Medicaid funding across the U.S. may be eaten up by fraud." In a time when we're concerned about cuts to public health care programs, it's important to make sure



those wasted funds are instead available for keeping programs going, and keeping as many people covered under these programs as possible.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

When you receive health care services, prescriptions, or other

medical supplies, check to make sure you're getting what your doctor recommended. And make sure you know why you need them, too. If at all possible, get your health care needs met through a UCare network provider. Helping to prevent fraud is the right thing to do. It helps Minnesota provide health care to as many people as possible, and it helps UCare provide our community partners with program funding and other support.

### TAKE ACTION

If you suspect health care fraud, or if you have any questions, contact UCare's helpline at **1-877-826-6847** (toll free). TTY: **1-800-688-2534** (toll free). If you call, you don't have to tell us your name. Please leave a message if you call after regular business hours. You also can send an email to [compliance@ucare.org](mailto:compliance@ucare.org), or fax us at **612-884-2197**, or mail us at:

**UCare  
Special Investigations Unit  
P.O. Box 52  
Minneapolis, MN 55440-0052**

Thank you for doing your part!

UCare's MSHO members:

### Your opinion matters



Every year the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services randomly mails two surveys to help check and improve the quality of care provided to Medicare members. The surveys may look similar, but they collect different kinds of information. With both surveys, your information is kept private. Your answers won't affect your UCare membership.

The **Health Outcomes Survey (HOS)** measures your physical and mental health. It might include questions on whether your doctor has given you advice on physical activity, having necessary tests, and how to prevent falls. The **Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS)** survey asks you about how happy you are with your health plan and the health care you receive. It might have questions about your health plan's customer services, and whether you get the care you need without a long wait.

If you receive one or both surveys, please fill them out and send them back in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided. By doing so, you can help UCare members continue to receive high-quality care.

## UCare discount: Weight Watchers online



Did you know? As a UCare member, you can get a three-month subscription to Weight Watchers for only \$55. Simply call UCare Customer Services to receive the discount code. Then go to **www.weightwatchers.com**, select the online option, and enter the code.

Once you subscribe, you'll have access to online tools to help you reach your goals.

*The products and services described above are neither offered nor guaranteed under our contract with the Medicare program. In addition, they are not subject to the Medicare appeals process. Any disputes regarding these products and services may be subject to the UCare grievance process.*



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# a healthier **U**

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American Indians can continue or begin to use tribal and Indian Health Services (IHS) clinics. We will not require prior approval or impose any conditions for you to get services at these clinics. For enrollees age 65 years and older this includes Elderly Waiver (EW) services accessed through the tribe. If a doctor or other provider in a tribal or IHS clinic refers you to a provider in our network, we will not require you to see your primary care provider prior to the referral.

## Important Plan Information.

**Attention. If you want free help translating this information, call UCare at 612-676-3200 or toll free at 1-800-203-7225.**

ملاحظة: إذا أردت مساعدة مجانية في ترجمة هذه المعلومات، فاتصل على الرقم الموجود أعلاه.

កំណត់សំគាល់ បើអ្នកចង់បានជំនួយបកប្រែព័ត៌មាននេះដោយមិនគិតថ្លៃ សូមទូរស័ព្ទ ទៅលេខនៅខាងលើ ។

Pažnja. Ako vam je potrebna besplatna pomoć za prevod ove informacije, nazovite gornji broj.

Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no dawb, thov hu rau tus xov tooj saud.

ໂປດຊາບ. ຖ້າຫາກທ່ານຕ້ອງການການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອໃນການແປ ຂໍ້ຄວາມດັ່ງກ່າວນີ້ພຣີ, ຈົ່ງ ໂທລະຕາມເລກໂທລະທີ່ຢູ່ຂ້າງເທິງນີ້.

Hubaddhu. Yoo akka odeeffannoon kun sii hiikamu gargaarsa tolaa feeta ta'e, lakkoofsa armaa olii bilbili.

Внимание. Если вам нужна бесплатная помощь в переводе этой информации, позвоните по указанному выше телефону.

Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjama dda macluumaadkani oo lacag la'aan ah, wac lambarka kore.

Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame al número que aparece más arriba.

Chú Ý. Nêu quý vị cần dịch thông tin này miễn phí, xin gọi số nêu trên.

This information is available in other forms to people with disabilities by calling: 612-676-3200 (voice) or toll free at 1-800-203-7225 (voice), 612-676-6810 (TTY) or toll free at 1-800-688-2534 (TTY); or through the Minnesota Relay at 711 or toll free direct access at 1-800-627-3529 (TTY, Voice, ASCII, Hearing Carry Over), or 1-877-627-3848 (speech to speech relay service).

LB5-0011 (1-08)

UCare's MSHO is a coordinated care plan with a Medicare Advantage contract and a contract with the Minnesota Medicaid program.

[www.ucare.org](http://www.ucare.org)