

The Senior Medicare Patrol is.....

LOOKING OUT FOR YOU

DATE: 11/15/14

2014-5

SUBJECT: Immunize Against the Flu and Ward Off the Fraud Bug!

- The seasonal flu vaccine is covered as a preventive treatment under the Affordable Care Act. Most insurance plans will cover the flu shot at no cost to you.

- Be sure to get the full benefit of this Medicare preventive service. Original Medicare will pay for a seasonal flu shot as long as the health care provider is approved by Medicare. You will pay no copay or deductible if you see a doctor or other health care provider who takes assignment. If you have a Medicare Advantage plan, the plan cannot charge you for the flu shot, as long as you use providers in the plan's network.

- Beware of scammers using this government benefit to take advantage of seniors. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has identified numerous untested and unapproved products being illegally marketed with deceptive claims that they prevent, treat, or cure the flu. These products include dietary supplements, air filters, nasal inhalers, and oral sprays. The FDA also warns of illegal online "pharmacies" selling generic versions of Tamiflu, when there are no FDA-approved generics for it. If you buy one of these products, you don't know what you're getting—it could be counterfeit, contaminated, or not stored properly to maintain quality. It could have the wrong active ingredient or no active ingredient at all.

WHAT YOU SHOULD DO:

- Choose a reputable provider that your health plan accepts. As an option to doctor's offices, the "Flu Vaccine Finder" at www.flu.gov will help you find clinics, supermarkets, pharmacies and other vaccine providers in your neighborhood.
- Report any errors on your MSN or EOB to Senior Medicare Patrol. You and/or your Medicare plan may be due a refund.
- Contact Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP Hawaii) at 1-800-296-9422 if you have questions about your medical statements or want to report flu-related scams.



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