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## New Web site features

We are excited to offer you a broader range of services through our Web site, thehealthplan.com. Throughout December and January, we will be adding many new interactive tools and informative features to better serve our members.

If you haven't visited our Web site recently, now is a great time to see how much it has to offer. Web tools can help you take a more active role in your health care.

Many of these tools are found in the secure member section of our Web site and are only

available to registered users. If you have not yet registered, visit thehealthplan.com and click on *New User Registration* in the upper right hand corner of the screen.

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## Geisinger Health Plan ranks high on America's Best Health Plans list

Geisinger Health Plan has been named among top ranked commercial and Medicare health plans in the region according to the U.S. News & World Report/National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) America's Best Health Plans 2007 list. Geisinger Health Plan was ranked in the top 15 percent of health plans in the nation.

Geisinger Health Plan was 33 out of 250 ranked commercial plans. This is the third year that Geisinger Health Plan has been ranked in America's Best Health Plans listing. Geisinger Health Plan's ranking is based on several measures from the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set

"It's great to be recognized as one of the top health plans. Our goal is to be the best in the nation and this moves us dramatically forward."  
 — *Richard Gilfillan, M.D., president and CEO of Geisinger Health Plan*

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# Important information for members

## Copay reminder

Before you visit your PCP or specialist, remember to check whether you will have a copay due. This information can be found on your Face Sheet or by calling the Customer Service Team at (800) 447-4000.

When a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant or nurse specialist provides office visit services, you pay one copay at the time of the visit.

If you receive an injection or a diagnostic test in your physician's office, you pay a copay only if your provider bills you for an office visit service.

If several departments provide medical services, you pay a copay for each office visit, even if those visits occur in the same day.

*Please note:* If you are placed in an observation bed after an emergency room visit, it is not the same as an inpatient admission. If you are kept for observation and later released without being admitted, your emergency room copayment does apply.

## Coordination of benefits

Periodically, you may receive a letter of inquiry regarding insurance you have in addition to Geisinger Health Plan.

Please complete the required information, even if you are not covered by another plan, and return it to us so that we may update your insurance file.

If you are covered by another type of insurance, you will be asked to inform Geisinger Health Plan about that coverage (name of plan, your ID number, etc.). We will cooperate with the other insurer to be sure you receive all benefits to which you are entitled.

We work with other insurers to avoid double payments for claims, which helps keep down the cost of health insurance for you and your dependents, while assuring that you receive the maximum benefit allowed.

If you have a worker's compensation claim, you must use a doctor who participates with both your employer's worker's compensation insurance and the Health Plan. If worker's compensation rejects your claims, they will be considered for coverage by the Health Plan.

Even if you are covered by another insurance plan, you must follow Geisinger Health Plan's coverage guidelines for services to be covered by Geisinger Health Plan.

## Continuity of care

New members who wish to continue an ongoing course of treatment with a non-participating provider must contact the Customer Service Team prior to receiving treatment.

The Health Plan will confer with the provider to determine if he or she will accept the Plan's terms and conditions for payment. If the provider agrees, the Plan will pay for covered services for the first 60 days of enrollment. (If a member is in her second or third trimester of pregnancy, services will be covered through delivery and postpartum care.)

In certain cases, a member may also be considered for coverage of ongoing treatment for a transitional period of time when a provider participation agreement is discontinued. If this occurs, the Health Plan will notify you and outline the process you should follow to exercise your continuity of care option.

## Fraud and abuse statement

In an effort to protect you from health insurance fraud, Geisinger Health Plan maintains an Anti-Fraud Program designed to help detect and eliminate fraud and abuse.

Fraud and abuse take on many forms. Some examples include, but are not limited to:

- Selling or sharing one's insurance identification number or information so false claims can be filed.
- An employer who enrolls subscribers who do not work for his or her business under a group service agreement.
- Using a member identification number that is not your own to receive treatment.

Protect yourself. Use discretion when providing your health insurance information (including your member identification number). Never release your information in exchange for free services or gifts.

If you suspect fraud or abuse, you can contact us by:

- E-mail at [FA@thehealthplan.com](mailto:FA@thehealthplan.com)
- Telephone, using the Customer Service Team number listed on the back of your ID card.
- Or send written correspondence to:

Geisinger Health Plan  
Anti-Fraud Program  
100 North Academy Avenue  
Danville, PA 17822-3220



# New physicians

This list includes new primary care providers who have joined the Health Plan since August 1, 2007. For more information on these and other participating providers, please visit our Web site, [thehealthplan.com](http://thehealthplan.com), or call the Customer Service Team at (800) 447-4000 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

## PENNSYLVANIA

### Allegheny

#### **Internal Medicine**

Syed R. Hussaini, MD

### Berks

#### **Family Practice**

Rebecca Huyett, DO  
John C. Moser, MD  
Emma Singh, MD

#### **Internal Medicine**

Shirish Parikh, MD  
James Wong, MD

#### **Pediatrics**

Olubunmi K. Ojikutu, MD  
Sandra Kelsey Rowan, MD  
Gustaw Woch, MD

### Blair

#### **Family Practice**

Michael A. Pedone, DO

### Bradford

#### **Internal Medicine**

Timothy J. Hoffman, DO

### Cambria

#### **Family Practice**

Kavitha V. Manjunath, MD  
Michael A. Pedone, DO  
Michaeleen Wilson, DO

### Centre

#### **Family Practice**

Tania S. Zuniga, MD

#### **Pediatrics**

Rachel Schwab, MD

### Clearfield

#### **Family Practice**

Gregory Allen Sachs, DO

### Columbia

#### **Family Practice**

Peter H. Seidenberg, MD

#### **Internal Medicine**

Ann M. Zumbo, MD

#### **Pediatrics**

Jennifer K. Seidenberg, MD

### Cumberland

#### **Family Practice**

Kiran Sharma, MD  
Alison Hayes Skurcenski, MD

#### **Internal Medicine**

Harry S. Sahi, MD

### Lackawanna

#### **Internal Medicine**

Alfonso A. Gomar, MD  
Waseem Makhoul, MD

### Lancaster

#### **Family Practice**

Peter J. Altimare, MD  
Robert J. Baird, MD  
James A. Bernheisel, MD  
Mark K. Brummel, DO  
Jason E. Conwell, MD  
Denise N. Cope, MD  
Daniel L. Diehl, MD  
James G. DuPrey, MD  
Catherine J. Edmonds, MD  
David H. Emmert, MD  
David E. Fuchs, MD  
Richard J. Gayeski, MD  
Louis P. Gray, MD  
Dwight A. Herr, MD  
J. Clair Hess, MD  
Jon R. Ichter, MD  
Richard D. Jackson, MD  
Julie L. Jones, MD  
Heidi T. Kistler, MD  
Mark R. Lloyd, DO  
James E. McGeary, MD  
Stephanie A. McKnight, MD  
Charles R. Mershon, MD  
Douglas R. Morrissey, MD  
Garry L. Mueller, MD  
J. William Parke, MD  
Alice E. Riden, MD  
J. Donald Siegrist, MD  
Scott G. Snyder, MD  
Neelofer Sohail, MD  
Robert J. Stengel, MD  
Margaret C. Thomas, MD  
Michael W. Warren, MD

Michael Kroll Weed, MD

Randy R. Westgate, MD

#### **Internal Medicine**

Jeffrey R. Gerard, MD  
Michelle L. Jordan, DO

#### **Pediatrics**

Hilary Jean Becker, MD  
Donna L. Brosbe, MD  
Kenneth David Fleming, MD  
Greta L.B. Laube, MD

### Lehigh

#### **Family Practice**

Michelle K. Dilks, DO  
Nicole R. Sully, DO

#### **Internal Medicine**

Imran Ahmed, MD  
Nina Khan, MD  
Amit B. Sohagia, MD

#### **Pediatrics**

Amy A. Jibilian, MD

### Monroe

#### **Family Practice**

Steven R. Blasi, DO

#### **Internal Medicine**

Sethuraman Muthiah, MD

#### **Pediatrics**

Mary Ellen DeFranco, MD

### Northampton

#### **Family Practice**

Mark A. Casaia, MD  
G. Bruce Miles, DO  
Rita Sharma, MD  
Miriam Shustik, MD  
Ofer J. Shustik, MD  
Ryan T. Smith, DO  
Gregory S. Todd, DO

#### **Internal Medicine**

Daniel C. Schadt, MD

#### **Pediatrics**

Mary Ellen DeFranco, MD

### Northumberland

#### **Family Practice**

Jonathan Dale Gessner, MD

#### **Internal Medicine**

Mini Spoorthi S. Velagapalli, MD

### Pike

#### **Internal Medicine**

John M. Weisenreider, MD

### Snyder

#### **Family Practice**

Rodney W. Companion, DO

### Somerset

#### **Family Practice**

Alfred J. Poggi, DO

#### **General Practice**

Emiliano L. Limcuando, MD

### Wayne

#### **Family Practice**

Linda Joy Mendelsohn, MD

### York

#### **Family Practice**

Debra A. Bell, MD  
Heidi T. Kistler, MD  
Omar S. Minhas, MD  
Beverley Uniacke, MD

## NEW YORK

### Sullivan

#### **Family Practice**

Linda Joy Mendelsohn, MD



## Need help kicking the habit?

Geisinger Health Plan wants to work with you and your doctor to help you quit smoking. Geisinger Health Plan has recently added Chantix to our formulary. Chantix is an oral medication used to help people quit smoking. It is not a nicotine replacement product or antidepressant. Instead, Chantix is specifically used to block impulses in the brain and reduce or eliminate the urge to smoke.

Chantix coverage is available with prior authorization, which is granted when members participate in the Health Plan's Tobacco Cessation Program. For more information about our Tobacco Cessation Program, or to have your provider request prior authorization, please call our Care Coordination department at (800) 883-6355.

Chantix coverage is limited to 24 weeks per lifetime, and is subject to copay/coinsurances as defined in your pharmacy benefit documents. If all the requirements are met, Chantix will be covered at tier 3 for members who have the Triple Tier pharmacy benefit. For members who have the Traditional pharmacy benefit, Chantix will be covered at the cost sharing amount detailed in your pharmacy benefit documents. If you choose to purchase Chantix without prior authorization, Geisinger Health Plan will not reimburse you.

*Formulary updates continued on page 8*

## Geisinger Health Plan ranks high on America's Best Health Plans list

*continued from page 1*

(HEDIS®), a report on performance in preventive measures and treatment of chronic conditions.

Geisinger Health Plan scored well in several HEDIS measures, including #1 in the nation for providing beta-blocker treatment to members for six months following a heart attack. The Health Plan was also ranked among the top ten percent of health plans in the nation for four additional measures: well-child visits for children in the first 15 months; adolescent immunizations for measles, mumps and rubella, hepatitis B and chicken pox; use of appropriate medications for adolescents with asthma age 10 to 17; and annual monitoring of people with heart conditions, high blood pressure and seizures.

In addition, members' access to care and overall satisfaction scores, calculated by the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS®), were factored into the ranking. GHP's accreditation status of "Excellent" from NCQA was the final factor in determining the ranking.

"The new rankings are a result of our approach to provide state-of-the-art health-care benefits, exceptional member service, combined with an excellent network of physicians and hospitals," says Richard Gilfillan, M.D., president and CEO of Geisinger Health Plan. "It's great to be recognized as one of the top health plans. Our goal is to be the best in the nation and this moves us dramatically forward."

"We're thrilled with the new ranking. For 22 years we've been dedicated to working with physicians and hospitals to provide superior health-care coverage to the residents in the counties we serve," says Duane Davis, M.D., vice president and chief medical officer of Geisinger Health Plan. "That we've now been recognized as the best in the region is a wonderful testimony to both our employees and participating medical colleagues."

*The source for data contained in this publication is Quality Compass® 2007 and is used with the permission of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Any analysis, interpretation, or conclusion based on these data is solely that of the authors, and NCQA specifically disclaims responsibility for any such analysis, interpretation, or conclusion. Quality Compass is a registered trademark of NCQA.*

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*America's Best Health Plans is a trademark of U.S. News and World Report.*

### **Geisinger Health Plan Member Update**

is published quarterly.  
Comments are welcome.  
Please write:

**Editor  
Geisinger Health Plan  
Member Update**

**100 North Academy Avenue  
Danville, PA 17822-3240**

or e-mail:

**memberupdate@thehealthplan.com**

For questions about your plan, phone (800) 447-4000 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

# New Web site features continued from page 1

## Online Personal Health Record

One of the new tools available to our members is the online Personal Health Record.

As a Geisinger Health Plan member, you have access to this tool and can use it to create and update your own Personal Health Record.

To access the Personal Health Record, visit the member section of thehealthplan.com and click on the link at the right hand side of the page. Geisinger Health Plan offers this tool through a site called Health A to Z, so the information you enter is kept completely confidential.

When you access the Personal Health Record for the first time, you will be asked to answer a series of questions regarding your health history, emergency contact information, current medications, allergies and medical conditions.

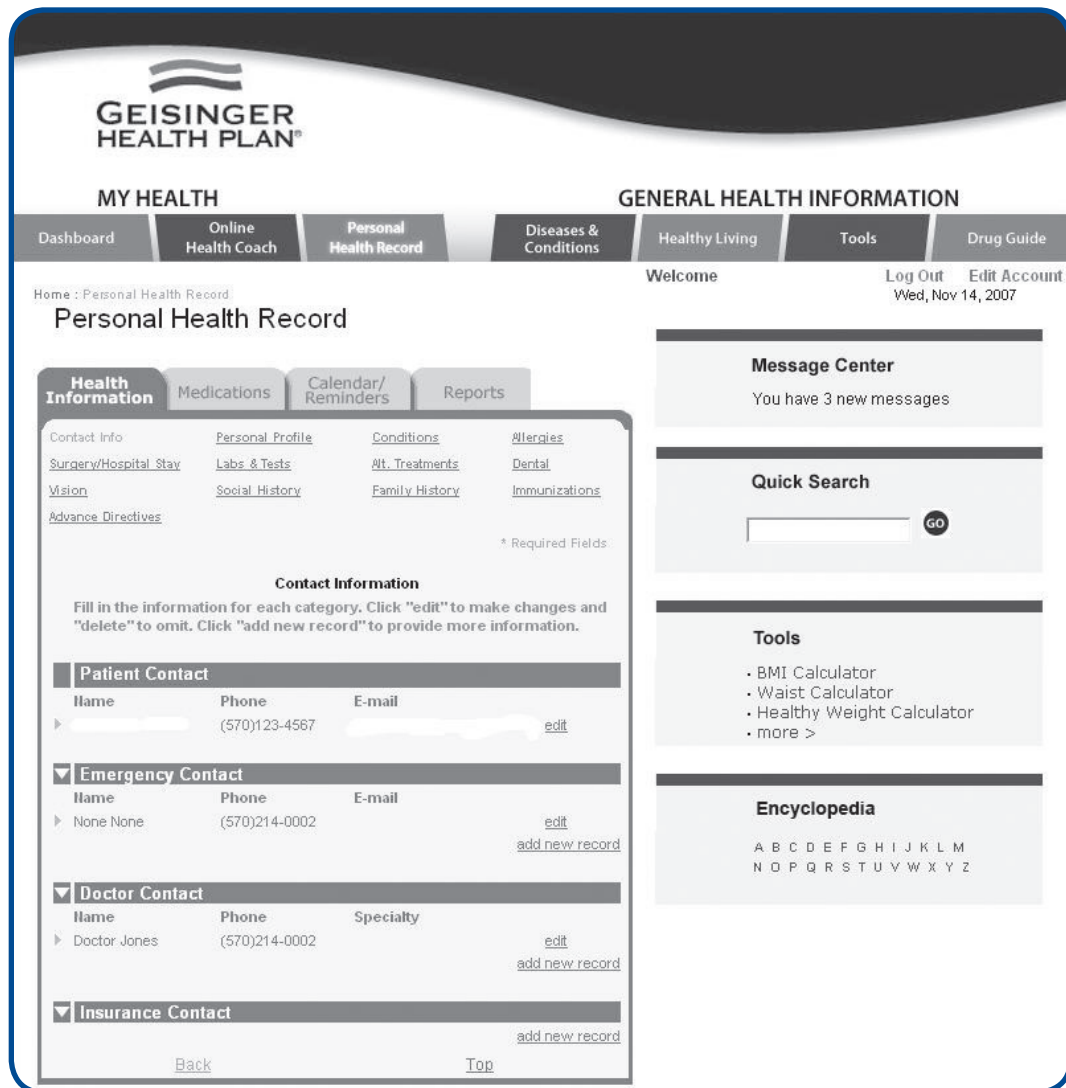
Once you've entered all the information, this tool will generate a Personal Health Record for you. You are then able to add additional information such as lab test results, immunizations you've had, dental and vision information, and whether or not you have an advance directive. You can update the information in your Personal Health Record at anytime. This interactive tool also allows members to check drug interactions and enter appointment reminders.

Once you have entered all your information, you can click on *Reports* to display a printer-friendly version of your Personal Health Record, which you can share with your doctor.

## Coming soon!

Listed below are additional new features members can expect to find at thehealthplan.com in the coming months.

- A new section of our Web site called the *Service Center* will allow members to view their benefit documents and eligibility information, check on the status of claims, view their Explanation of Benefits (EOB) and change their primary care provider (PCP).
- Geisinger Health Plan is also adding a link to give members



access to detailed pharmacy information. Members can find drug interactions, common side effects and risks of certain drugs. Members can also check if a generic substitute is available for a specific medication and can determine financial responsibility, including estimated drug pricing, copays and deductibles.

- The member section of our Web site will also have links to a variety of new interactive health and wellness tools. These tools will allow members to help determine risk factors, and provide guidance on preventive health issues and ways to improve your health based on your input.
- In addition, our physician and hospital searches will be updated. We will include additional information to make these searches more beneficial to our members.
- Finally, members will soon be able to e-mail our Customer Service Teams about specific benefit questions from the secure member section of the site.

Please continue to check our Web site for updates and look for more information on these new features in future newsletters.

# When treatment can't wait

## Would you know if you were experiencing an emergency? Would you know where to go for treatment if you were out of town?

No one can be prepared for every situation. It doesn't matter if you are at home, visiting relatives or vacationing in another state, there is always the possibility of an unforeseen accident or illness. Your first concern may be where to go for treatment. Do you rush to the emergency room or call your physician? What if the closest doctor is not a participating provider? Will your treatment still be covered?

Unfortunately when you are really sick, you may not have time to consider all your options, so it is important to understand ahead of time what to do in these situations.

### What are emergencies and when are they covered?

A medical emergency is when you reasonably believe that your health is in serious danger – when every second counts. An emergency may include severe pain, a bad injury, a serious illness or medical condition that is quickly getting worse.

If you believe you are experiencing a medical emergency you should call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

Medical emergencies are covered anywhere in the United States, at any time. However, emergency services provided by non-participating providers will be covered only until the doctor caring for you determines that your condition is stable. At that time, Geisinger Health Plan or your primary care physician (PCP) will arrange to take over your care or, if you are out of the area, have you transported back to our coverage area.

Your PCP or the Health Plan should be notified of the emergency as soon as possible, preferably within 48 hours, so they can be involved in post-emergency care and coordinating follow-ups or continuing care.

When you go to the emergency room, you will be required to pay any applicable emergency room copayments. These copays will be waived if you are directly admitted to the hospital or admitted to the hospital within 72 hours for the same condition.

After you have been discharged from an emergency room, any additional follow-up medical services must be authorized by your PCP or they will not be covered.

*Please note:* You may be placed in an observation bed after an emergency room visit; this is not the same as an admission. If you are kept for observation and later discharged without being admitted, you will be charged an emergency room copayment.

### What is urgent care and when is it covered?

Fortunately, emergencies are rare. However, there are many other situations when, although your health may not be in serious danger, you need medical attention for a sudden illness or injury and treatment can't wait. These situations are referred to as urgent care. Often, it is unreasonable, given the situation, to seek help from your PCP or other Health Plan providers because you are out of our coverage area.

In urgent care situations you have a few options. You can contact your PCP's office 24 hours a day, seven days a week for medical direction. You can also contact Tel-A-Nurse for advice on your situation at (877) 543-5061.

**Tel-A-Nurse is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to offer Health Plan members support and to provide health care advice. Call toll-free (877) 543-5061**

If you are out of the area and need urgent care, the Health Plan will cover that care anywhere in the United States. If possible though, you need to contact your PCP before seeking urgently needed care or as soon as you can afterwards.

You should return to your PCP for follow-up care; however you will be covered for continued care outside the service area as long as the treatment continues to fit the definition of urgently needed care.

### What else is covered when I'm away from home?

If you are traveling outside the Geisinger Health Plan service area, certain services will still be covered. The Health Plan will pay for medical emergency care, urgently needed care, renal dialysis and any care that has been pre-approved by the Health Plan.

If you have any questions about coverage of treatment, please refer to your Subscription Certificate, or contact the Customer Service Team (800) 447-4000 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m.

# Cold and flu season is here

## Caring for sore throats and runny noses

This time of year, many people develop colds, as the temperature gets colder, the air gets drier and more time is spent indoors. Most colds, characterized by runny noses, sore throats, coughs and mild fevers, are caused by viruses.

Since antibiotics will not cure viruses, a cold or sore throat has to run its course. However, if you or your child has a cold, you can alleviate some of the symptoms.

- Soothe sore throats with lozenges or ice chips.
- Drink lots of fluids.
- Use a humidifier to help with congestion.
- Use over-the-counter cold medicines as appropriate. (Always check with your provider before giving these medicines to young children.)

On average, colds usually last about two weeks. If a cold or sore throat persists beyond that, or symptoms worsen, it is a good idea to schedule an appointment with your doctor.

Your doctor can determine whether you or your child has a virus or a bacterial infection. For a sore throat, your doctor will probably swab the back of your throat to test for strep.

If your provider feels that you have a bacterial infection he/she may prescribe an antibiotic. However, if your provider does not recommend an antibiotic, do not request one.

Antibiotic resistance is a rapidly increasing problem in health care. When bacterial infections become resistant to antibiotic treatments, they can cause prolonged illnesses, more expensive treatments and even death.

The main reason for this resistance is the overuse and misuse of antibiotics. Antibiotics kill bacteria; they do not provide any defense against viruses. Yet, antibiotics continue to be prescribed every day for common viral infections. Many people are not aware that antibiotics will not cure or even relieve the symptoms of viral infections. In fact, taking an antibiotic when you have a cold or other virus will increase your risk of getting an antibiotic resistant infection in the future.

That's why it's important to understand how to use antibiotics and to always follow your physician's treatment instructions.

If your provider does prescribe an antibiotic:

- follow all instructions.
- make sure to take the entire course of medication even if you feel better after a few days.
- do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else.
- discard any leftover antibiotics you may have after you complete your prescription. Do not save them to use the next time you are sick.



## Do I need a flu vaccine?

Anyone who has a high risk for developing serious flu complications, or anyone who cares for or lives with someone at risk, should have a flu vaccine yearly. High risk people include:

- children 6 months to 5 years of age
- pregnant women
- people over 50 years of age
- people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- people who live in nursing home or other long term care facilities

It is also important to stay up-to-date on the pneumococcal vaccination. People who should be vaccinated include:

- People age 65 or older
- People who have problems with their lungs, heart, liver, or kidneys
- People with health problems like diabetes, sickle cell disease, alcoholism or HIV/AIDS
- Children less than 2 years old

While October or November is the ideal time to be vaccinated, you can still be vaccinated in December or later. Talk to your doctor about what vaccinations you need. Staying up-to-date is an important step to maintain your health.

*Information for this article came from The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)*

# Formulary Updates

## Formulary additions:

Exjade (3)\*\*  
Pataday (2)  
Entocort EC (2)

## Medications Deemed Nonformulary:

Tekturna (3) \*, t  
Exubera (3) \*, t  
Moviprep (3) \*, t  
Elestat (3) \*, t  
Patanol (3) \*, t  
Vigamox (3) \*, t  
Zymar (3) \*, t  
Altabax (3) \*, t  
Rebif (3) \*, t

**Copaxone** and **Betaseron** no longer require prior authorization. The drugs have been moved from tier 3 to tier 2.

**Avonex** will be removed from the formulary effective January 7, 2008. It will still require prior authorization and, if approved, will continue to be covered on tier 3. Existing users will be grandfathered.

**Optivar** will be removed from the formulary effective January 7, 2008. It will require a prior authorization and, if approved, will now be covered on tier 3. Existing users will be grandfathered, but will experience the tiering change.

() = tier

\* = requires prior authorization under the non-tiered benefit

t = requires prior authorization under the tiered benefit

\*\* = quantity limits apply

For the most recent formulary information, members can search the formulary online at [thehealthplan.com](http://thehealthplan.com). A printed version is also available by contacting the Pharmacy Customer Service Team at (800) 988-4861.

HPM50 sw December 07 MU 11/19/07

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