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## Geisinger Gold ranks in the nation's top ten

Geisinger Gold and Geisinger Health Plan (GHP) are the top-ranked Medicare and commercial health plans in Pennsylvania and in the top ten nationally for quality and service. *U.S. News & World Report* produces its annual America's Best Health Insurance Plans list in conjunction with the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA). Geisinger Gold is ranked #3 among Medicare plans and Geisinger Health Plan is ranked #6 among commercial plans, according to the 2009-10 list.



More than 220 commercial and 150 Medicare plans are ranked in America's Best Health Insurance Plans 2009-10 list. As the health-care reform debate moves forward, it is more important than ever before for consumers to have an apples-to-apples comparison of health-care quality and customer satisfaction.

"It's great to be recognized as one of the top ten Medicare and commercial health plans in the nation and the top plan in Pennsylvania," says Jean Haynes, president and CEO of Geisinger Health Plan. "This ranking supports the quality and value that we provide to our members. The doctors and other care givers in our network also play a major role in our success. They provide our members with excellent care. This partnership is one of the reasons Geisinger Health Plan has recently been cited as a model for health-care reform by President Obama."

"Our main focus is that our members receive the proper care," says Duane Davis, M.D., vice president and chief medical officer of Geisinger Health Plan. "Last year alone, Health Plan made over 100,000 calls to members reminding them of the importance of well child visits, immunizations and preventive care. The nurses even scheduled appointments when needed. It's nice to be recognized for doing what we do everyday for our members."

*America's Best Health Plans 2009-10 is a trademark of U.S. News and World Report.*

## Medicare annual enrollment period

Medicare's annual election period is November 15 through December 31. This period is when beneficiaries can make changes in their plan selection.

From January 1, 2010, until March 31, 2010, beneficiaries can make one change to their benefits. This change will be effective until December 31, 2010. However, you cannot add or drop prescription coverage during this time.

The Annual Notice of Change (ANOC) was mailed to your home in October. The ANOC included all your benefit documents for 2010. Unless you make any changes to your plan before the end of year, you will not receive any additional benefit documents in January.

If you have any friends or family members who are interested in Geisinger Gold, they can call (800) 631-1656, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week; TDD/TTY users call 711. You can also visit us online at [www.GeisingerGold.com](http://www.GeisingerGold.com).

# Strong bones; strong body

Osteoporosis is a disease that causes bones to weaken and fracture with very little stress. While osteoporosis can affect men, women are four times more likely to develop the disease. Although these breaks can affect any bone, fractures related to osteoporosis usually occur in the hip, wrist or spine and often result in hospitalization and major surgery.



Osteoporosis has no symptoms, so many people don't realize they have it until they suffer a fracture. If you have any of these risk factors, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor about osteoporosis.

- Older age
- Family history of osteoporosis or broken bones
- Being small and thin
- History of broken bones
- Low estrogen levels in women, including menopause
- Missing periods (amenorrhea)
- Low calcium or low vitamin D intake
- Excessive intake of protein, sodium and caffeine
- Inactive lifestyle
- Smoking and/or alcohol abuse

Osteoporosis can be diagnosed with a specialized bone mineral density test (BMD). The recommended type of BMD test is called a dual energy x-ray absorptiometry (DEXA) scan. This test can tell if a person has low bone density and, if the test is repeated, whether the bone density is diminishing or staying the same.

With the results from a DEXA scan, you and your doctor can determine if you are at risk for a fracture and if you need treatment to prevent fractures. While there is no cure for osteoporosis, there are several medications your doctor could prescribe to treat it.

Geisinger Gold offers an osteoporosis management program as part of your benefit package. This program can help you reduce the risk of complications if you have been diagnosed with osteoporosis. To enroll, call our health management department at (800) 883-6355 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Source: National Osteoporosis Foundation*

## Make important health care decisions in advance

Advance health care directives let you clearly communicate your wishes regarding your care to your family, friends and doctors. If a time comes when you are unable to make these decisions due to an accident or serious illness, these documents can help avoid confusion and ease the burden on family members.

### There are two types of advance health care directives

A *living will* is written instructions documenting your wishes about whether to receive life support and other medical treatments when you are permanently unconscious or have a terminal condition.

A *health care power of attorney* lets you name a person you trust to make health care decisions for you when you no longer can.

### There are several ways to obtain a living will or power of attorney form.

You can get a form from your lawyer, a social worker, or at some office supply stores. Keep in mind that this form is a legal document, so consider having a lawyer help you prepare it. Also, because these are complex, personal decisions, it's a good idea to discuss your preferences with your doctor, trusted friends and family members, or a clergy person.

If you ever change your mind, you can change your advance health care directive at any time.

### Keep a copy of your form at home.

You should also give a copy to your doctor and the person you name as your power of attorney. You may want to give copies to other close friends or family members as well.

# New physicians

This list includes new primary care physicians who have joined Geisinger Gold since July 1, 2009. For more information on these and other participating providers, please visit our Web site, [www.GeisingerGold.com](http://www.GeisingerGold.com), or call the Gold customer service team at (800) 498-9731 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. TDD users call the PA Relay at 711.



## Adams

### **Family Practice**

Rita B. Harrison, MD  
Bruce E. Walther, MD

### **Internal Medicine**

Moushumi F. Kundu, MD

## Allegheny

### **Family Practice**

Steven Richard Wolfe, DO

## Berks

### **Family Practice**

Timothy J. Kutz, MD  
Jeffrey Allan Gold, DO

## Blair

### **Family Practice**

Ruth Diane Jones, DO

## Bucks

### **Internal Medicine**

Amanda M. Owens, DO

## Clinton

### **Family Practice**

Mark V. Pace, DO  
Sabir Khan, MD

## Cumberland

### **Family Practice**

Mary Sneider, DO  
Christina M. Griffith, DO

### **Internal Medicine**

William F. Wright, DO

## Dauphin

### **Family Practice**

Douglas L. Charles, DO  
Richard Rayner, MD

### **Internal Medicine**

Ravinder Dhatt, MD

## Forest

### **Family Practice**

Deborah Jo Chambers, MD

## Jefferson

### **Family Practice**

Deborah Jo Chambers, MD

## Lackawanna

### **Family Practice**

Phaythoune  
Chothmounethinh, MD

### **Internal Medicine**

Luiz Felipe Galvao, MD  
JayaKrishna  
Chintanaboina, MD  
Chad P. Walker, DO  
Ludy Lukose, MD  
Jignesh Sheth, MD  
Anthony J. Yanni, MD

## Lancaster

### **Family Practice**

Kamlesh R. Acharya, MD  
Gretchen Marie Dickson, MD  
Michael J. Leser, DO  
Mandy Renea Fannin, MD  
Zachary Andrew Geidel, MD  
Sharon C. Eltz, MD  
Kimberly K. Williams, MD  
Trevor Martenson, MD

### **Internal Medicine**

Minnie Taw, MD  
Hemalatha Chaparala, MD

## Lehigh

### **Family Practice**

Vanessa J. Eiswerth, DO

### **Internal Medicine**

Deborah A. Lehrich, MD  
Brian J. Costello, MD

Jose Santiago Rivera, MD

Sam S. Weng, MD

## Luzerne

### **Family Practice**

Daniel G. Walker, DO

## Lycoming

### **Family Practice**

Frederick Coleman Funk, MD

## Monroe

### **Internal Medicine**

Manju Chanana, MD

## Northampton

### **Family Practice**

Jennifer L. Reif, DO  
Gabriela E. Popescu, MD  
Vanessa J. Eiswerth, DO

### **Internal Medicine**

Meena Agarwala, MD  
Ahmad Mizyed, MD  
Anita Rohatgi, MD  
Jeffrey Hostetter, DO  
Prasanthi Marella, MD  
Cara Ruggeri, DO  
Horace N. Olewiler, MD  
Patricia A. Quinlan, MD  
Jinesh M. Gandhi, MD

## Northumberland

### **Internal Medicine**

Mouna A. Al-Agha, MD  
Susan F. Borys, MD  
Constance McKelvy, MD

## Perry

### **Family Practice**

Douglas L. Charles, DO

## Pike

### **Internal Medicine**

Shalini Byadgi, MD  
David M. Garrison, MD

## Schuylkill

### **Family Practice**

Douglas L. Charles, DO

### **Internal Medicine**

Philip T. Zachariah, MD

## Snyder

### **Internal Medicine**

Constance McKelvy, MD

## York

### **Family Practice**

Jessica S. Starner, MD  
Nicholas S. Bower, DO

# Information for members

## Quality improvement

Geisinger Gold is committed to providing quality health care to our members. One way we can ensure that we are holding ourselves to the highest standards is to review our performance against accepted care and service measures. For example, the Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®)\* provides a set of measures against which we can judge our effectiveness.

Quality indicators, such as HEDIS and other initiatives, are set forth by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) to ensure that Gold members receive high quality care.

Geisinger Gold conducts an aggressive preventive health program, geared toward members most at risk for a variety of preventable illnesses, ailments and diseases.

Quality improvement nurses work directly through personal and automated telephone calls and mailings to reinforce the importance of preventive measures and suggested screenings.

These measures include mammography, blood pressure and cholesterol screenings, comprehensive diabetes care, and beta blocker treatment to prevent cardiac-related events.

Administering the highest quality care possible helps Geisinger Gold keep members healthy and happy.

\* HEDIS is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

## Copay reminder

Before you visit your PCP or a specialist, be sure to check whether you will have a copay due. This information can be found on your ID card or by calling the Gold customer service team at (800) 498-9731 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. TDD/TTY users call PA Relay 711.

When office visit services are provided by a physician, nurse practitioner, physician assistant (PA) or nurse specialist, you will pay one copay. If you receive an injection or a diagnostic test in your physician's office, you will be charged a copay only if your provider bills you for an office visit service.

If several departments provide medical services, you will be charged a copay for each office visit, even if those visits occur in the same day. In addition to copayments, coinsurances and deductibles may apply,



depending on your benefit package.

Please note: You may be placed in an observation bed after an emergency room visit. This 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.

## Protect yourself from insurance fraud

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

Fraud and abuse take on many forms. Some examples include:

- selling or sharing one's insurance identification number or information so false claims can be filed
- 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 in any of the ways listed below. You may remain anonymous.

- 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 Gold  
Anti-Fraud Program  
100 North Academy Avenue  
Danville, PA 17822-3220

# Quitting tobacco

If you or anyone in your family smokes or regularly uses any other tobacco products we would like to take this opportunity to advise you to quit and let you know there are medicines, methods and strategies to assist you with quitting.

## Talk with your doctor

Your doctor can be an important resource in your effort to quit. Your doctor or other health care providers may do the following each time you have a visit:

- ask if you use tobacco and advise you to quit
- tell you about medicines that can help you quit
- tell you about things that you can do (besides medicine) to help you quit, including enrolling in a tobacco cessation program and learning how to change behaviors that contribute to your use of tobacco

If your health care provider doesn't offer this information at your next visit, be sure to ask.

## Geisinger Gold can help

If you would like to quit using tobacco, Geisinger Gold has a program to help you. To learn more about quitting tobacco, talk to your doctor or other health care provider or call toll-free at (800) 883-6355 or (570) 271-8763, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. TDD users call PA Relay 711.

Other resources for quitting:

- American Cancer Society Quitline® – (800) ACS-2345
- American Lung Association – (800) LUNG USA
- Pennsylvania FREE QUITLINE – (877) 724-1090
- National Cancer Institute Smoking Quitline – (877) 44U-QUIT
- National Cancer Institute LiveHelp service – support from smoking cessation counselors through instant messaging online
- The federal government's Web site – <http://www.smokefree.gov>

# Glaucoma

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that gradually steal sight without warning. In the early stages of the disease, there may be no symptoms. Experts estimate that half of the people affected by glaucoma may not know they have it.

Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness and accounts for 9% to 12% of all cases of blindness in the U.S. Early detection, through regular and complete eye exams, is the key to protecting your vision from damage caused by glaucoma.



## Who needs an Authorized Representative?

By designating an Authorized Representative, you give Geisinger Gold permission to talk to someone else regarding your care, claims and benefits. An Authorized Representative form can be very important if someone else is handling your finances or helping with your care.

You may need an Authorized Representative form if you are:

1. a **parent** who has an 18-year-old child that is still covered on your insurance
2. a **spouse** who needs to discuss a claim you received for your husband or wife
3. **son or daughter** caring for an elderly parent who needs to understand ongoing health management with a case management nurse

An Authorized Representative form differs from a Power of Attorney form because the person you designate has no authorization to make medical decisions on your behalf; you are simply giving us permission to talk to someone about your care.

You received an Authorized Representative Form in your member packet. If you would like another copy, please call the Gold customer service team at (800) 498-9731 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. seven days a week. TDD/TTY users call PA Relay 711.

## Formulary Updates

### Formulary additions:

Astelin-added to the third tier of the \$0 Deductible RX formulary and to the second tier of the Standard RX formulary.

Geodon-changed from the third tier to the second tier of the \$0 Deductible RX formulary.

Aggrenox - added to the second tier on both the \$0 Deductible RX formulary and the Standard RX formulary

### Medications deemed non-formulary (prior authorization required):

Kapidex**	Exforge HCT
Aplenzin	Apriso
Astepro	Fanapt
Patanase	

### General updates:

Effective immediately for members who choose to use a retail pharmacy to obtain an influenza vaccination (seasonal and H1N1), coverage for such influenza vaccinations will be offered when administered by a participating pharmacy. It is important to consult the pharmacy to confirm availability, administration times, and other restrictions that may apply (such as age limits, etc.).

Synvisc, Synvisc One, and Euflexxa are available or acquisition via the Health Plan's Specialty Vendor program in a voluntary manner.

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For the most recent formulary information and Pharmacy Management Procedures, members can review the formulary online at [thehealthplan.com](http://thehealthplan.com). A printed version of the formulary is also available by contacting the pharmacy customer service team at (800) 988-4861.

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## Tips on medication safety

When it comes to taking medications, you can never be too careful. Always take all medications exactly as your physician prescribes them. To ensure proper dosage, follow all the instructions on your prescription bottle. If you feel that these instructions differ from the directions your doctor gave you, always double check with your physician or pharmacist. Also, be sure to have your prescriptions refilled on time so you can continue to take the correct dose of medications.

In addition, it is important to store your medications properly. Do not keep them in places prone to high humidity such as a bathroom, and always store them in air-tight containers.

To avoid any interactions between drugs it is very important that you communicate with all of your physicians about all of the medications you take, including over-the-counter medications. If you cannot remember, ask your pharmacist for a list in writing.



# Managing diabetes

Diabetes is a serious condition that affects many people and causes life-long health problems. People with diabetes are more likely to have higher blood pressure and higher cholesterol than people without diabetes. They also have an increased risk of heart disease, stroke, eye problems, kidney problems and nerve damage.

That's why, if you have diabetes, it's important to stay active and eat a balanced diet to reduce your risk of developing other health problems.

**Make fitness a priority.** Begin an exercise program and set aside a specific time each day for your activity. You should gradually increase your activity level, working towards 30 to 60 minutes a day. Walking is a great way to stay fit and maintain a healthy weight. Remember to talk to your doctor before beginning any exercise program.

**Eat a balanced diet.** Eating right can help you control your weight, lower your cholesterol, and give you the energy to stay active. Eat lots of whole grains, fruit and vegetables, and moderate amounts of lean protein and healthy fats.

While exercise and a healthy diet can help manage your diabetes, you also need to work with your doctor to monitor your condition.

If you have diabetes, there are several tests you need to have:

- **A1C (blood sugar) screening** – your A1C level should be below 7
- **LDL (bad cholesterol) screening** – your LDL level should be below 100 mg/dl
- **Dilated eye exam**
- **Kidney function test** or treatment with medicines such as ACE or ARBs to maintain kidney function
- **Blood pressure reading** – your blood pressure should be less than 130/80

Talk to your health care provider to make sure you have received all the important tests and have your diabetes under control.

If you have questions about diabetes, or would like to learn about our diabetes management program, please call (800) 883-6355 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

# Breathe easier — living with COPD

Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) is a serious lung condition where a blockage in the lungs makes it increasingly harder for a person to breathe. COPD happens as the result of other health problems such as bronchitis, emphysema or asthma.

There are several risk factors for developing COPD, including environmental pollutants. However the number one factor is smoking, which causes about 80 to 90 percent of deaths related to COPD, according to the American Lung Association.

## Testing for COPD

If you are at risk for COPD or are experiencing symptoms, talk to your doctor about being tested for the disease. Some of the symptoms include shortness of breath, a constant cough and wheezing.

The test for COPD, called spirometry, is a simple breathing test. The patient blows into a machine, which measures specifically the amount and/or speed of air that can be inhaled and exhaled. From this test,

your doctor can determine if you have the disease and, if so, how far it has progressed. This information can help you and your doctor develop an appropriate treatment plan.

## Treating COPD

You can live with COPD if it is diagnosed and treated properly. Once you've been diagnosed with COPD, it's important that you eliminate certain risks. You should quit smoking, and avoid exposure to chemicals, dust and other pollutants. In addition to these important lifestyle changes, your doctor may prescribe one or more medications to manage your condition and help you breathe easier. Medications for COPD can include bronchodilators or inhaled steroids.

If you have questions about COPD, or if you would like to learn about our COPD health management program, please call our health management department at (800) 883-6355 Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

# Flu season still going strong

Although flu season usually begins in October, most flu outbreaks happen in January or later. If you haven't had your flu vaccine yet this year, it's not too late to protect yourself.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends that certain people should get vaccinated each year. This includes people 50 years of age and older, people with chronic medical conditions, and people who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities. (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site)

Due to an increase in demand and the need for the vaccine makers to switch their production to the H1N1 (swine flu) vaccine, the community is facing a shortage of seasonal flu vaccine. If you have not already received the seasonal flu vaccine, it will may not be available to you this year. Supply distribution varies so check with your doctor.

The H1N1 vaccine is being distributed by the State of Pennsylvania based on the groups at highest risk. H1N1 flu virus tends to affect younger and high risk people the most. So, the senior age group will not be the first to receive the vaccines. We encourage you to get this vaccine when it is available to you.

Geisinger Gold will cover the cost of administering the H1N1 flu vaccine for its members. The cost of

the vaccine itself is covered by the Federal Government. While members are encouraged to receive their H1N1 flu vaccine from a participating provider, Geisinger Gold will also reimburse non-participating providers (including pharmacies) at in-network rates. Members with billing questions should contact the customer service phone number on the back of your member identification card.



*Geisinger Gold Member Update* is published three times a year. Comments are welcome. Please write:

**Editor**

**Geisinger Gold Member Update**  
**100 North Academy Avenue**  
**Danville, PA 17822-3240**

or e-mail:

**goldmemberupdate@thehealthplan.com**

For questions about your plan, phone  
(800) 498-9731 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through  
Friday; TDD/TTY for the hearing impaired: PA  
Relay 711

HPM50 js December GMU  
H3954 9338\_2 12/10/09

*Important Plan Information*  
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