

TRICARE FAQs

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SICK AFTER HOURS – URGENT CARE (as of 15 Sep 15)

Clinic isn't open and you are sick. You feel like you might need to see a doctor - not an ER visit type of sick. To be reimbursed for an Urgent Care facility visit, you need to have a referral in TRICARE.

REQUIRED ACTIONS: 1) Call the Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-874-2273. 2) The nurse should advise you on whether or not to go to an Urgent Care facility or schedule an appointment with the base clinic. 3) You get the referral for one of the two TRICARE authorized facilities in town. 4) The nurse puts the authorization in TRICARE. 5) Keep your receipt and bring it to the TRICARE Service Desk at the Vance Clinic when you're able or you can fax it to: (580) 237-2515.

POTENTIAL PROBLEM/SOLUTION: Nurse advice line tells you to call TRICARE in order to get the referral - this is NOT correct. The nurse should put in the authorization with TRICARE. If you can't get them to agree to do this - please clarify with them on the phone that they are ADVISING you or RECOMMENDING that you go to Urgent Care - keep asking until they say those words. If they say something like, "well if you feel like you need to go..." - no, they need to feel like you need to go and they need to say it. If there's no authorization, Ms. Odom will pull the tapes which record every Vance nurse advice line conversation and see if you were advised to go before authorizing payment of the visit.

You can always contact Ms. Odom at 213-6343, one of our key spouses or me if you have any issues with the clinic. Here's a link to an article outlining the process:

<http://www.vance.af.mil/71stmedicalgroup/urgentnon-emergentafter-hoursare.asp>

SICK AFTER HOURS – EMERGENCY ROOM (as of 15 Sep 15)

If you have time and aren't convinced you have an ER visit type issue –

1) Call the Nurse Advice Line at 1-800-874-2273 and follow their instructions. For visits other than the ER, see SICK AFTER HOURS – URGENT CARE POST.

2) You do not need prior approval to visit the Emergency Room. You might pick up the bill though if it's determined that your issue didn't warrant an ER visit. If you go to the ER, at the next earliest opportunity during normal clinic duty hours, call the appointment line and inform the nurse (your PCM) about the visit. Your PCM will make any needed authorizations and plans for follow-up care.

3) You can always contact Ms. Odom (TRICARE) 213-6343 to discuss TRICARE issues.

TRICARE – WOMEN'S HEALTH CHECK-UP (as of 15 Sep 15)

While you can go off base for your annual women's health check-ups from a TRICARE network provider without a referral - the base has several new female doctors who are seeing patients for these exams.. So, it's now much easier to get taken care of here in the clinic!

TRICARE – OPTOMETRY CHECK-UP (As of 15 Sep 15)

You do not need a referral to go off base to see get an optometry check-up under certain conditions: the eye doctor takes TRICARE and you only once per 12-month period. Check on TRICARE site for children. The Vance Clinic has an optometry clinic – you can book an appointment there for yourself or your kids. Call the appointment line – 213-7416.

TRICARE DENTAL – MetLife (as of 15 Sep 15)

The TRICARE Dental Program for family members is a voluntary dental plan. You must be enrolled by your sponsor – the enrollment fees are taken directly from the sponsor's paycheck each month. The program is contracted to MetLife. Once enrolled, you can make an appointment from any network Dentist (check the website). You will need your sponsor's SSN and your dependent ID card.

Enrollment and Dentist Search: <https://employeedental.metlife.com/dental/public/EmpEntry.do>

See what services will cost you: <http://www.tricare.mil/CoveredServices/Dental/TDP/Costs.aspx>

TRICARE DENTAL – ANNUAL MAXIMUM BENEFIT

Each plan year begins on May 1 and ends April 30. You are covered for 2 cleanings in any 12 month period (separate from the annual maximum benefit reset date of May 1). If you get more than 2 cleanings during a 12 month period – you will pay for the extra cleaning. Your dental office – especially as you PCS – may not be aware or take this into account when scheduling you visits.

Example: I had a cleaning in June 2014 then I was having a tooth issue in December and since I had moved, the dentist wanted to do a cleaning with the exam. The office then scheduled my next cleaning for May 18 & I went. Now I'm stuck paying for the cleaning because it was my third in a 12 month period.

So lesson learned- keep track of when you have your dental cleanings!