

HOUSE CALL

KelseyCare Advantage

October 2015

PAIN MEDICATION: What You Don't Know Can Kill You

If you've ever been treated for severe pain from an injury, illness or surgery, you probably know first-hand the relief you got from pain medication.

Pain relief treatments come in many forms and strengths. Some are available as over-the-counters (OTCs) while others are only available by prescription. They treat all sorts of physical pain, including the type caused by chronic conditions (heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, obesity and arthritis) or sudden trauma. Your doctor always considers the cause and intensity of your pain before prescribing pain medication.

OTCs relieve the minor aches and pains that patients typically get with conditions like headaches, fever, colds, flu, arthritis, toothaches and menstrual cramps. There are basically two types: acetaminophen and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Acetaminophen is found in pain relievers, cough suppressants and cold medications. NSAIDs are common medications used to relieve fever and minor aches and pains. They include aspirin, naproxen, and ibuprofen, as well as cold/sinus/allergy medicines.

Prescription medications include what are called opioids and non-opioid medications. Opioid drugs are very powerful products and include names you'll probably recognize:

- Morphine, often used before and after surgery to relieve severe pain
- Oxycodone, often prescribed for moderate to severe pain
- Codeine, often prescribed for mild to moderate pain
- Hydrocodone, prescribed for moderate to moderately severe pain



Donnie Aga, MD, KelseyCare Advantage Medical Director

Pain medications are safe and effective when used as directed. However, misusing or abusing these products can be extremely harmful and even deadly. Consumers who take pain medications must follow their doctor's instructions carefully. Never change the dose without first talking to your doctor. Also, pain medications should never be shared with anyone else.

The bottom line when it comes to pain medication is to understand it, respect it and always discuss the correct way to use it with your doctor.



Marnie P. Matheny
*President,
KelseyCare Advantage*

We're a 4.5 out of 5 star-rated Medicare plan for 2016!*

It's official, your KelseyCare Advantage Medicare plan is one of the highest rated plans in the Houston area for 8 years in a row!

Without our members, we would not continue to receive these high ratings from Medicare. Each year, a group of you is asked by Medicare to rate your plan services. Your satisfaction is important to us, and it's rewarding to know you value the quality healthcare and services you receive from KelseyCare Advantage.

Another reason we continue to receive a high rating from Medicare is our affiliation with Kelsey-Seybold Clinic. Medicare also rates us on how well the Kelsey-Seybold doctors and staff keep you healthy and how they help you recover if you have an illness. Everyone at Kelsey-Seybold is passionate about preventive care to keep their patients healthy. Kelsey-Seybold has been offering patients their nationally recognized collaborative-based medical care for 66 years.

Kelsey-Seybold also enables us to offer you online services to manage your health through MyKelseyOnline. But when you need one-on-one personal help with your healthcare, you have KelseyCare Advantage Concierge Service to answer your questions and get you the care you need. The Concierge Service is "real people" who answer the phone to help you, not a voice-activated system. Our Concierge Service helps make KelseyCare Advantage unique among Medicare Advantage plans.

Please accept my personal "thank you" for trusting us with one of your most valuable possessions, your health. We take your trust seriously. Each individual on our staff understands the KelseyCare Advantage mission: to provide affordable, quality Medicare services to members. This was the foundation for our Medicare Advantage plan and it's still our goal today.

We look forward to keeping you healthy for many years to come.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marnie P. Matheny".

Marnie

* Medicare evaluates plans based on a 5-star rating system. Star Ratings are calculated each year and may change from one year to the next. For more information regarding star ratings, please go to www.Medicare.gov.

BUILDING SOCIAL CIRCLES FOR SENIORS

Remember *The Golden Girls*, the TV show starring Betty White and Beatrice Arthur about four 60-plus women living together in Florida? If so, you'll recall how they provided one another companionship, friendship and emotional support, even if they drove each other a little crazy at times.

Unfortunately, in real life, many seniors lack that kind of social circle. In fact, loneliness is a serious problem for seniors today. However, it's a problem that can be overcome. We hope you find the following tips helpful.

MAKE FRIENDS

Try meeting new people. At first, you may simply enjoy the companionship of a casual acquaintance. But over time, some of these relationships will grow into close friendships, the kind you can turn to for emotional support.

Your local senior center and area agency on aging are great resources, often organizing classes, outings and social functions for people who want to enjoy life with other seniors. Churches, health clubs, civic and service organizations, educational classes, travel clubs, and special interest groups are good places to meet people of all ages.

Take advantage of opportunities to introduce yourself. Ask others about themselves and let people know something about you. Most people are happy to include newcomers, but growing new friendships requires ongoing contact.

Meanwhile, don't ignore old friends and neighbors. Invite a friend you

lost touch with to lunch or organize a neighborhood get-together. Someone always has to take the initiative. It might as well be you.

VOLUNTEER

Volunteering can help put your own situation in perspective, bringing to light the positives and the things you can be thankful for. Check your local phone book or online under "volunteering" for organizations such as RSVP (Retired Senior Volunteer Program). You also can check with your local senior center, area agency on aging and hospital for volunteer opportunities.

TAKE UP A HOBBY

Hobbies can keep you motivated and help you set goals, like finding that rare stamp to add to your collection or knitting a stocking for your grandson's first Christmas. Plus, many hobbies are possible if your mobility is challenged. Here are some ideas:

- gardening
- model trains
- arts and crafts
- needlepoint
- playing an instrument
- reading
- writing
- puzzles
- pen pals
- Adopt a pet

Most people don't feel so alone in the company of a pet. Pets love unconditionally, they are accepting, they don't criticize, they don't judge, they forgive and they give

pleasure. Plus, caring for a pet can renew meaning and purpose in your life. Not a bad combination at all!

HOMEBOUND SENIORS

Meeting people can be challenging if you are homebound. Call your area agency on aging or place of worship to inquire about home-visitation services as well as community transportation for elderly people.

LOOK OUT FOR DEPRESSION

Loneliness can indicate depression, a disease causing mental and physical deterioration. Feelings of sadness and despair, loss of appetite, apathy, reluctance to make decisions, suicidal thoughts, and trouble sleeping are signs of depression and should be discussed with your healthcare provider.



ASK DENISE

Q. *When I'm released from the hospital, how can I get help with follow-up appointments, transportation, and medication once I get home?*

A. KelseyCare Advantage Member Service representatives are available to help you with follow-up issues after you've been discharged from the hospital. You may contact them by calling 713.442.CARE (2273) or toll-free at 1.866.535.8343 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. They can assist in scheduling follow-up appointments, arranging transportation and connecting you with the Pharmacy Services team to discuss your medication(s).

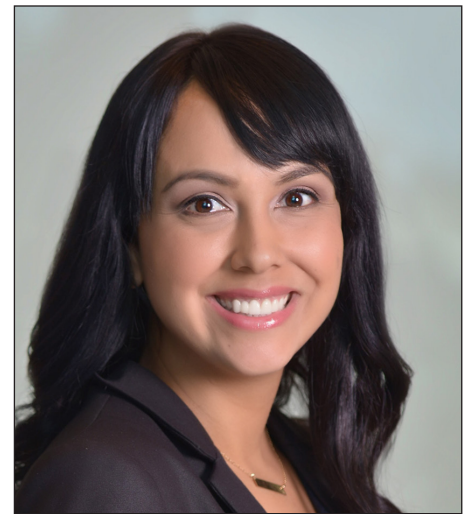
Q. *I've been discharged with new medications; do I take these in addition to the medications I was taking before I went to the hospital?*

A. Before you left the hospital and returned home, your doctor should have explained exactly what medication(s) he or she prescribed for you, how to take the medication(s) and how often. The doctor knows your medical history. That means your doctor

knows what medication(s) you were taking before your hospital stay and which work correctly in your body. He or she should also have explained if or how to take your original medication(s) with any new prescription(s). In addition, when you picked up your medication(s) at the pharmacy, the pharmacist should have made sure the instructions for taking your medication(s) were clear. Both the doctor and the pharmacist understand which medications work well together and which do not. Their job is to make sure the medications are the correct combination to make you feel better and stay healthy. They also know what foods you might need to avoid while using certain medications.

Q. *What are other helpful tips to manage my medications once I get home?*

A. Keep an updated list of your medications handy, including over-the-counter and herbal medications you may take. Make a note of any allergies you may have. You should take that list with you to all doctor appointments and review it with the doctor.



Denise M. Jonathan,
Pharm. D., R.Ph.

Only take your medications as directed. It is important for you to know why it is important to take your medications and how they are helping you with your condition. The medications the doctor has prescribed are designed to help you continue to get better once you're home. If for some reason they are causing any problems, be sure to let your doctor know right away.

DO YOU HAVE A QUESTION FOR DENISE?

With each quarterly newsletter, Denise answers questions that are submitted by KelseyCare Advantage members. If you have a general pharmacy or prescription question, please submit them to HouseCall@KelseyCareAdvantage.com.

Advice provided by Denise is for educational purposes only and does not constitute medical advice or a guarantee of treatment, outcome, or cure.

DISCHARGE PLANNING CHECKLIST

Medicare has put together a helpful discharge planning checklist that's available online here: <https://www.medicare.gov/Pubs/pdf/11376.pdf>. In case you have trouble accessing it, here are some highlights:

- Ask where you'll get care after leaving the hospital and whether you will have home health care.
- Ask the staff about your health condition and what you can do to help yourself get better.
- Ask about problems to watch for and what to do about them, and make sure you have the name and number of a person to call if you experience problems.
- Make a list of medications you'll be taking after discharge and be sure to review with the medical staff.
- Find out whether you will need medical equipment, like a walker or wheelchair, and if so, who can help arrange to get hold of that equipment.
- Ask whether you are physically ready to perform various activities like bathing, dressing, using the bathroom, climbing stairs, cooking, shopping, cleaning the house, etc.
- Ask the staff to demonstrate for you (and your caregiver) how to do special tasks like changing a bandage or giving an injection.
- Request to speak to a social worker if you're concerned about how you and your family are coping with your illness.
- Ask for written discharge instructions that you can read and understand and a summary of your current health status.
- Get prescription and any special diet instructions early so you won't have to make extra trips after discharge.

2016 PLAN COVERS MORE THAN YOU THINK

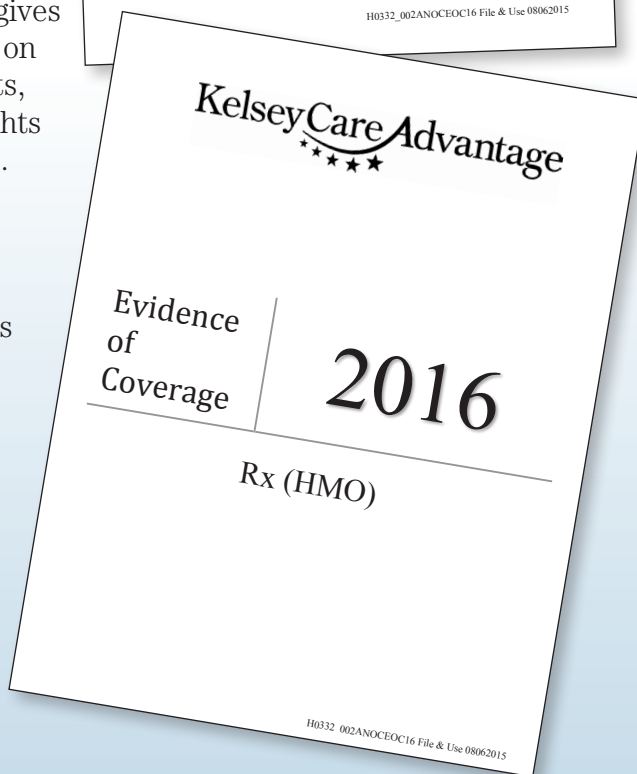
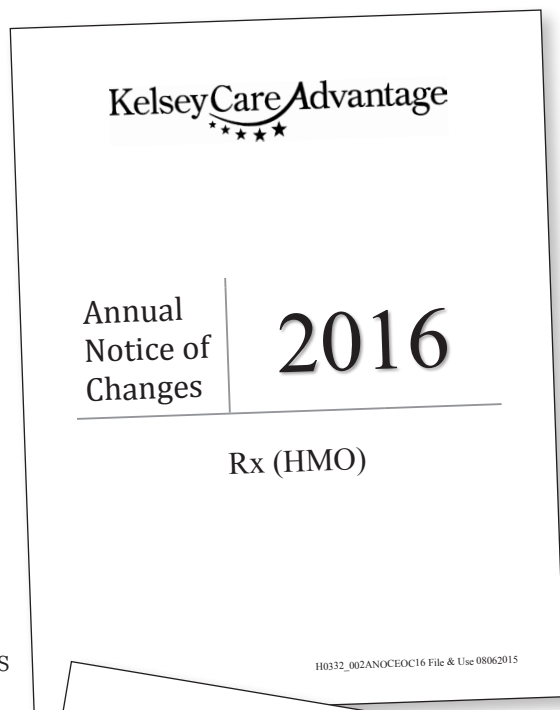
Has your KelseyCare Advantage plan made any changes for 2016? Find out by reading your 2016 Annual Notice of Changes and Evidence of Coverage.

We've recently mailed you a large white envelope containing the 2016 Annual Notice of Changes and 2016 Evidence of Coverage (EOC) booklet.

We want to encourage you to carefully read through both booklets to understand *all* the great benefits that are available to you! Take a few minutes to read through these important information resources. When finished reading, store them in a safe place for future reference! The EOC booklet is a legal document providing you pertinent information on how to access the health care services offered by the plan. Inside the EOC booklet, you'll find the Benefit Chart that gives you up-to-date information on 2016 benefits and their costs, explanations about your rights and helpful phone numbers.

For questions about your plan, contact the concierge department at KelseyCare Advantage Member Services at 713-442-CARE (2273), option 2 between 8:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. For 24/7 access, visit our website at www.kelseycareadvantage.com and click on the "For Members" tab. You'll discover a myriad of information designed

specifically to assist our valued members. We appreciate you selecting KelseyCare Advantage. Let us know how we can serve you now, throughout 2016 and in the future!





Did you know?



Open Enrollment for the Health Insurance Marketplace on Healthcare.gov is November 1 - January 31. Stay informed to protect yourself from fraud.

- If you already have Medicare, it is against the law for someone to sell you a Marketplace plan.
- Protect your personal information. No one should ask you for your personal health information.
- Do not sign anything you don't fully understand.
- If you feel like you gave your personal information to someone you should not have, report it!

To discuss benefits, coverage or claims payment concerns, contact
Customer Service at: 713-442-CARE (2273)

To report suspected fraud, call: 1-877-7SAFERX (1-877-772-3379)

Do your part

You can protect your identity and your benefits - Do Your Part.

- Never give out your Social Security, Medicare, health plan numbers or banking information to someone that you don't know.
- Carefully review your plan statement to ensure that all of the information is correct.
 - Know that free services DO NOT require you to give your plan or Medicare number to anyone.
 - Share this information with your friends.

To discuss benefits, coverage or claims payment concerns, contact
Customer Service at: 713-442-CARE (2273)

To report suspected fraud, call: 1-877-7SAFERX (1-877-772-3379)



OPTUM RX ANNOUNCEMENT

Catamaran, the KelseyCare Advantage Pharmacy Benefits Management vendor, has entered into an agreement to be acquired by Optum and will be combined with OptumRx, its pharmacy care services business.

We do not anticipate any changes in our current service. However, we want to make you aware that you will begin to see references to OptumRx in your benefit materials for KelseyCare Advantage.

UPCOMING MEMBER MEETINGS

10/12 at 3:00 PM
Katy Branch Library
5414 Franz Rd. | Katy, TX 77493

10/23 at 12:00 PM
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, Clear Lake
1010 South Ponds Dr. | Webster, TX 77598

10/16 at 2:00 PM
First Colony Branch Library
2121 Austin Pkwy. | Sugar Land, TX 77479

11/7 at 10:00 AM
Humble Civic Center
8233 Will Clayton Pkwy | Humble, TX 77338

10/23 at 10:00 AM
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, Clear Lake
1010 South Ponds Dr. | Webster, TX 77598

11/13 at 3:00 PM
Kelsey-Seybold Clinic, Main Campus
2727 West Holcombe Blvd. | Houston, TX 77025

