

HOUSE CALL

KelseyCare Advantage

January 2017

KELSEY-CARE ADVANTAGE AWARDED MEDICARE'S HIGHEST RATING FOR SECOND TIME

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has awarded KelseyCare Advantage an overall 5-out-of-5 Star rating for the 2017 plan year* – a significant achievement that carries tremendous prestige in the healthcare industry.

Day after day, KelseyCare Advantage and Kelsey-Seybold Clinic focus on delivering high quality care and service. Now comes confirmation from Medicare that we are one of the best in the United States.

The 5-star rating is CMS's highest ranking for excellence in quality of healthcare and service to our members. Very few Medicare Advantage plans achieve this level of excellence. In fact, only 14 out of 548 Medicare Advantage plans in the nation with Part D coverage have achieved a 5-star rating for 2017.

KelseyCare Advantage's strongest areas of performance out of the 47 categories that CMS evaluated involved diabetes Care (blood sugar controlled), controlling blood pressure and medication adherence for hypertension. We are one of only

three plans in the nation to receive 5 stars in Part C, Part D and Overall plan categories.

Each year, CMS uses information from member satisfaction surveys, clinical data and health care providers to give overall performance ratings to Medicare health and prescription drug plans. These ratings help Medicare beneficiaries choose a plan based on quality and performance.

"Earning the highest rating for quality and service from CMS for a second time demonstrates the commitment of each KelseyCare Advantage team member. We continuously strive to provide the highest level of customer service and member experience," said Marnie Matheny, president of KelseyCare Advantage. "KelseyCare Advantage gets to work with the nation's first Accountable Care Organization. The great doctors at Kelsey-Seybold help us deliver high quality health care and to achieve the 5-Star level through measured health outcomes rated by Medicare."

"We are very excited to once again be designated as a Medicare Advantage 5-Star health plan. KelseyCare Advantage and the Kelsey-Seybold Clinic work hard to provide a high quality health care experience for our patients," said Donnie Aga, M.D. and Medicare Director for KelseyCare Advantage. "We do this through health care innovations, concierge style customer service and access to outstanding physicians, nurses, pharmacists and cutting edge technology."

Do you have a friend or relative that would like to join KelseyCare Advantage? Now they can! Medicare allows 5-Star rated plans to enroll Medicare-eligible individuals throughout the year.

To read more about Medicare Star Quality ratings, visit medicare.gov. KelseyCare Advantage thanks you, our valued members, for making our leading-edge and 5-star services, such an important part of your lives.



COLORECTAL SCREENING MAY SAVE YOUR LIFE

In years past, a cancer diagnosis was often a death sentence. Protection against cancer – especially colon cancer – seemed unlikely. Treatment options were limited and little was known about early detection. Today, physicians have developed lifesaving colorectal screening guidelines for everyone.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Although anyone can have colon cancer, studies show that as a person ages the risk becomes higher in developing the disease. The risk becomes even higher for individuals who do not have regular screening tests.

SCREENING GUIDELINES:

- Age 50 or older (age 45 if African American)
- You have a personal or family history of colorectal cancer or polyps
- You have an inflammatory bowel disease

- Carry a gene for hereditary colon cancer

IMPORTANCE OF COLORECTAL SCREENINGS

According to the American Cancer Society, colon cancer (cancer of the large intestine or rectum) is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States.

Screening tests can find polyps before they become cancer -- or detect cancer in early stages when it is easier to treat. Once the cancer spreads outside the colon, your survival rate decreases. Regular screenings have shown to reduce colon cancer as much as 90%.

Dr. Tushar Dharia, a Kelsey-Seybold Clinic gastroenterologist agrees. "Screening tests to detect colon cancer are vitally important in the prevention of colon cancer. They are used to identify polyps, or precancerous lesions, which can then be removed," he states.



Dr. Tushar Dharia, MD
Gastroenterology

Note: If you have blood in the stool, regular stomach cramps or aches, or unplanned weight loss, call your doctor to make sure it is not cancer related.

Lifestyle choices may increase your chance of colon cancer.

- Lack of exercise
- Poor diet – high fat content; low fiber
- Smoking
- Alcohol use

KelseyCare Advantage offers programs to help you overcome lifestyle choices that may affect your health (smoking cessation, nutritional plans, etc.). Call your Kelsey-Seybold Clinic doctor today about getting your colon screening. Colon cancer really is a matter of life and death!

PREVENTION



EYE EXAMS ARE VITAL FOR PATIENTS WITH DIABETES

Having diabetes poses a risk to your vision. It can damage the small blood vessels in your retina, or the back of your eye. This condition is known as diabetic retinopathy. Diabetes may also increase your risk of glaucoma and other eye problems.

According to KelseyCare Advantage Medical Director Donnie Aga, M.D., the key to preventing eye problems related to diabetes is controlling blood sugar. “Blurry vision can be a sign of elevated blood sugar,” says Dr. Aga. “As blood sugar rises, it can deposit on the lens of the eye and cause a rapid change in vision.”

But such changes are not always easy to notice. “You may not even realize that your vision has been affected until the problem is very bad,” warns Dr. Aga. “Your doctor should be able to detect symptoms early on IF you get regular eye exams.”

REGULAR EYE EXAMS ARE ESSENTIAL

Dr. Aga explains that even if the doctor who treats your diabetes checks your eyes, it’s important that you have your eyes examined **every one to two years** by an eye care specialist who treats people with diabetes. That specialist has equipment that can check the back of your eye more thoroughly than your regular doctor can.

If you have vision problems as a result of diabetes, you will probably be visiting your eye doctor more often. You may need special treatment to prevent those problems from getting any worse.

There are two different types of eye doctors:

- An **ophthalmologist** is a medical doctor who is an eye specialist trained to diagnose and treat eye problems.
- An **optometrist** is a health care provider trained to diagnose and treat problems with your vision. Many can do screening exams for damage from diabetes. Once you have eye disease caused by diabetes, you need to see an ophthalmologist.

THE DILATED RETINAL EXAM

The doctor will check your vision using a chart of random letters of different sizes. This is called the Snellen chart.

You will then be given eye drops so that the doctor can better see the back of the eye. You may feel stinging when the drops are first placed. You may have a metallic taste in your mouth.

To see the back of your eye, the doctor looks through a special magnifying glass using a bright light. The doctor can then see areas that may be damaged by diabetes:

- Blood vessels in the front or middle parts of the eye
- The back of the eye
- The optic nerve area

Another device called a slit lamp is used to see the clear surface of the eye (cornea).

The doctor may take photos of the back of your eye to get a more detailed exam.



FOLLOWING YOUR EYE EXAM

If you had drops to dilate your eyes, your vision may be blurred for up to six hours. It will be harder to focus on things that are near.

Sunlight can damage your eye. Make sure to wear dark glasses or shade your eyes until the effects of the drops wear off.

Dr. Aga notes, “The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) and the American Diabetes Association (ADA) have recognized many of Kelsey-Seybold Clinic’s primary care physicians and specialists for providing exceptional care for diabetic patients through the NCQA’s Diabetes Recognition Program (DRP). In fact, Kelsey-Seybold’s 98 NCQA-certified physicians represent the most of any healthcare provider in the Houston area.” For a complete list of doctors and locations, go to www.kelsey-seybold.com.

KELSEYCARE EXPRESS

It's Medical Care @ Your Desktop!

Introducing E-visits exclusively for KelseyCare Members!

When you're sick, often the last thing you feel like doing is driving to the doctor's office. So we're introducing a **new** service – exclusively for our KelseyCare members called – **KelseyCare Express E-visits!** With E-visits, you'll communicate online with a Kelsey-Seybold Physician Assistant about your medical situation. You can access E-visits through your **MyKelseyOnline (MKO)** account and you'll receive a response in an hour or less! It's Fast. It's Convenient.

IT'S KELSEY-SEYBOLD QUALITY!

You can have a conversation with a board-certified provider via our secure, confidential email platform on MKO for symptoms related to:

- Allergy
- Back pain
- Cough
- Cold
- Flu
- Sinusitis
- Urinary tract infection
- Pink eye
- Gastroesophageal reflux
- Vaginal discharge

The E-visit charge is **\$25** (paid via secure site with a credit card). This value-added service is not covered by your KelseyCare Advantage insurance and it does not count toward your maximum out-of-pocket amount. For patients 18 years and older only.

E-visits are available Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. **Learn more about how you can get medical care delivered right to your desktop! Go to: <http://info.kelsey-seybold.com/evisit>.**

Important Plan Information