

## Thank you!

Thank you for being a Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) Medicare Advantage member. This newsletter is designed to provide you with tools and resources to help meet your health care needs.

Additional resources are also available online at [Medicare.NebraskaBlue.com/MedicareAdvantage](http://Medicare.NebraskaBlue.com/MedicareAdvantage).

Would you like to receive this communication electronically? Please email [getstarted@NebraskaBlue.com](mailto:getstarted@NebraskaBlue.com) or call **888-488-9850** to provide your contact information and email address.

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## Meet Mike Keiser one of our Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska pharmacists

Mike Keiser is passionate about helping you live a longer healthier life. As a BCBSNE pharmacy program manager, Mike helps members stay healthy every day.

If you're a BCBSNE Medicare Advantage member on medication, Mike may call you to discuss potential side effects and to share the importance of taking your medications as directed.



"I went into the health care field to help people," Mike said. "It's important to me to be able to help members understand the importance of taking their medications. I helped one of our Medicare members by explaining the benefits of his heart medication. He was against taking it at first, but after our conversation, he said he would start taking it due to its immense benefits."

Mike can also help you locate a preferred pharmacy where you may have a lower copay and can identify generic medications that may be less expensive. You may receive a phone call from Mike soon, he looks forward to speaking with you!



As always, you can reach us by calling **888-488-9850 (TTY:711)**

# New benefits for you in 2020

Starting Jan. 1, 2020, several new benefits will be available to you at no additional cost. Your monthly premiums will stay the same as last year.

The new benefits will include:

- \$0 copay for certain diabetic supplies (CONTOUR® NEXT brand)
- Increased dental reimbursement amount
- Enhanced visitor/travel benefits for non-emergency services when you are outside the service area

You currently receive these benefits at no cost:

- Annual wellness exam
- Vision and hearing screening
- SilverSneakers™ fitness membership
- \$0 copay for 90-day mail-order supply of medications in tiers 1 and 2

We have also added a new PPO health plan that will be available to you starting Jan. 1, 2020. For more information on how this is different from your current health plan, please call our licensed representatives at 844-899-6060

For questions about your coverage, please call Customer Service at 888-488-9850.

Additional materials, such as the Evidence of Coverage (EOC), drug formulary, provider directory and pharmacy directory, can be found at [Medicare.NebraskaBlue.com](http://Medicare.NebraskaBlue.com).

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## SAFETY TIPS FOR WINTER



Winter weather makes life challenging for everyone.

- › **Avoid slipping on the ice:** Icy, snowy roads and sidewalks are a risk for falls. Make sure to wear shoes with non-skid soles. Don't hesitate to ask someone for help if you need to clear your property of snow and ice or arrange rides to the grocery store or clinic appointments. Take off your shoes when you return indoors because melted snow leads to a slippery floor.
- › **Dress for warmth:** Dress in layers with warm socks, a heavy coat, a warm hat, gloves and scarf. In very cold temperatures, cover all exposed skin and use a scarf to cover your mouth to protect your lungs.

› **Service the car:** Get your car prepared for winter by checking the oil, tires, battery and wipers.

› **Prepare for power outages:** Winter storms can lead to power outages. Make sure you have easy access to flashlights, battery-powered radio and plenty of warm blankets. In the event of a power outage wear several layers of clothing, including a hat and stay active to raise your body temperature.

› **Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:** Using a fireplace, gas heater or lanterns can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. Ensure your safety by purchasing an updated detector or replacing old batteries in your current detector.





## Four reasons **GENERIC DRUGS** are as good as brand- name drugs

Generic drugs have been around for years and are approved by the Federal Drug Administration to be just as effective as brand name drugs.

- Same key ingredients
- Same strengths
- Same dosages
- Taken the same way

For assistance with the cost of your prescriptions, call Prime Therapeutics 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at: 855-457-1349

Prime Therapeutics LLC is an independent company providing pharmacy benefit management services for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association.

## MANAGING YOUR DIABETES

At least once a year, your health care provider will assess how well you are managing your diabetes. A change in health, such as a new diagnosis or hospital stay may lead to changes to your diabetes management plan.

- › **Track your blood sugar levels:** Very high blood sugar levels (called hyperglycemia) or very low blood sugar levels (called hypoglycemia) can be risky to your health. Your provider will advise you on how often you should check your blood sugar and when to get your HbA1c test. If you are managing your diabetes without taking insulin, you may not need to check your blood sugar as often.
- › **Take your medicines:** You should take your medicine as prescribed even when you feel good. Tell your provider if you have any side effects or if you cannot afford your medicines.
- › **Manage your blood pressure:** Get your blood pressure checked often.
- › **Manage your cholesterol:** Get a blood test to check your cholesterol and triglyceride levels.
- › **Get yearly eye exams:** Finding and treating eye problems early will help preserve your vision.
- › **Check your kidney function:** Diabetes can affect your kidneys. Urine and blood tests will show if your kidneys are okay.
- › **Make healthy food choices:** The food you eat affects blood sugar levels, so it is important to learn what is best for you to eat, how much and when.
- › **Be active:** Walking and other forms of daily exercise can help improve blood sugar levels. Make a plan to be more physically active that is suitable for you.
- › **Look at your feet:** Take time to look at your feet every day for any skin changes. Ask someone else to check your feet if you can't. If you have sores, blisters, breaks in the skin, infections or a build-up of calluses, please inform your health care provider.
- › **Talk with your provider about your questions and concerns:** Make a list so you remember to get all your questions answered at your clinic visit.

Have you received your


**\$50**  
**GIFT CARD?**



If not, here's how:

- Make an appointment with your health care provider for your annual wellness visit
- Complete the annual wellness visit by Dec. 31, 2019
- Receive your \$50 Walmart® gift card (approximately 6-8 weeks after this annual wellness visit)

Walmart is an independent third party not affiliated with the offerings or promotions detailed herein.



BCBSNE hosts a variety of seminars about our products and benefits during the Annual Enrollment Period. To learn more about your health plan or if you have friends with questions, register at: **Medicare.NebraskaBlue.com/Seminars**



**IS YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION CORRECT AND UP TO DATE?**

- Please call **Customer Service at 888-488-9850**, TTY users call **711**
- **Oct. 1 - March 31**, we are available seven days a week from **8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CT**
- **April 1 - Sept. 30**, we are available **Monday through Friday** from **8 a.m. to 8 p.m. CT**