



'Care Share

Special Fraud Watch: Genetic Tests in Montana



WARNING!

Genetic tests must be ordered by your doctor to be covered by Medicare.

Some labs may offer a cheek swab for genetic testing as part of a “free” health screening in order to obtain your Medicare information for identity theft or fraudulent billing purposes.

Before you agree to genetic testing, be sure:

- The test is ordered by your doctor
- The genetic test is medically necessary and covered by your plan

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM THIS SCAM

A booth at a local health fair, senior housing, community center or home health agency is offering free health screenings, including genetic testing. The representative falsely promises that Medicare will pay for the test, and you simply need to provide a cheek swab, your ID and Medicare information to receive your test

results. They may even ask for your doctor’s name, implying that they will send your results to your doctor.

Unfortunately, now they have your health plan or Medicare number, and they can bill Medicare thousands of dollars for medically unnecessary tests or even services that you never receive. They also have personal genetic information regarding your health.

**Beware: This is a scam.
Don’t be a victim of Medicare fraud.
Protect yourself and your benefits.**

- Never give out your Social Security, Medicare or health plan numbers or banking information to someone you don’t know.
- Do not consent to any lab tests without your doctor’s order.
- Keep in mind, it is illegal to accept anything of value in exchange for medical services.

For questions about Medicare or for more information, call: 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or your local SMP at 1-800-551-3191.



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DME Fraud Continues Across Montana

Cases of durable medical equipment fraud continue across Montana with people on Medicare receiving unnecessary medical supplies. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General is alerting the public about a fraud scheme involving orthotic braces and other medical equipment.

Scammers are offering Medicare beneficiaries orthotic braces that are supposedly free to them and covered by Medicare. Fraudsters (1) may call beneficiaries directly to offer braces or (2) use television or radio advertisements to encourage beneficiaries to order free braces by calling the phone number provided.

If a beneficiary provides or verifies personal or Medicare information, a brace is sent even if it is not requested by the beneficiary or medically necessary. Often, a beneficiary receives multiple braces. Medicare is then billed for each brace using the beneficiary's information.

If a beneficiary has received unwanted or unneeded braces, and that equipment is billed to Medicare, then Medicare may deny a brace that the beneficiary needs in the future. If Medicare pays for an item you don't need, it's adding to the \$60 billion a year lost to Medicare waste, fraud and abuse. That's a big chunk of change.



If you receive a call that pressures you to buy medical equipment you don't want or need, HANG UP. It is recommended to not pick up the phone in the first place if you don't know who is calling. Once you are on a call list, the longer you stay on the line, or even the more calls you pick up, the more attractive you are to sell to other lists, resulting in even more calls to you.

If you receive items in the mail you didn't order, please report it to your local SMP office at 1-800-551-3191. Steps to take include sending all items back to sender immediately; call SMP and provide details on the supplier; and provide copies of your MSN that shows the order. Once compiled, we will refer the case directly to the Office of Inspector General who is charged with investigating Medicare fraud.

National Headlines

Click on the links for more information. These are great stories to share.

[Special Agent Discusses 'The Largest Medicare Fraud Scheme in US History'](#)

WLRN

South Florida has long been a target for **Medicare fraud**. Last week, the U.S. Department of Justice announced 24 people had been charged in a \$1.2 ...

[Former doctor, business partner get prison time for Medicare fraud scheme](#)

News3LV

LAS VEGAS (KSNV) — A former doctor and his business partner have been sentenced to nearly three years in prison for their roles in a \$7.1 million ...

[Former Coatesville LPN charged in health care fraud sting](#)

Daily Local News

"Whether it's the unlawful diversion of Medicare funds or prescription drugs, the FBI will continue to crack down on all manner of **health care fraud**," ...

The Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) helps to educate Medicare beneficiaries about ways to prevent, detect, and combat Medicare fraud. For more information about Medicare fraud, visit the Stop Medicare Fraud website at www.stopmedicarefraud.org.