HealthWise

SAMBA
FEDERAL EMPLOYEE BENEFIT ASSOCIATION

PUT YOUR HEALTH FIRST

SAMBA Is Here To Help

Get Back on Track with Routine Vaccinations

The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted all aspects of life, including our ability to attend important medical appointments and receive routine vaccinations.

SAMBA encourages you to talk to your healthcare provider to ensure that you and your family are protected against serious diseases by getting caught up on routine vaccinations.

As children head back to school this fall, it's particularly important for you to work with your child's doctor or nurse to make sure they are up-to-date on well-child visits and recommended vaccines.

If your provider is part of the Cigna network, these services are covered at no cost to you.

And remember to take care of yourself too! Be sure to receive any recommended vaccines you need to stay healthy. Visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) website to view the current Adult Immunization Schedule[1] to see which vaccines might be right for you.

Get a COVID-19 Booster to Increase Your Protection

You may be wondering why a booster shot is needed if the vaccines are working.

The CDC states that COVID-19 vaccines are working well to prevent severe illness, hospitalization, and death.[2] However, public health experts are starting to see reduced protection over time, especially among certain populations.

You are best protected when you stay up-to-date with COVID-19 vaccinations; this includes getting a booster shot when eligible.

Booster shots have been approved for everyone ages 5 years and older after completing their COVID-19 vaccine primary series.[2]

Make this year healthier for everyone in the family. Schedule an appointment to get your COVID-19 vaccine or booster today.

NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION
AWARENESS MONTH
AUGUST

[1] https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html
[2] https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/booster-shot.html

COVID-19 Tests Available Through Your Pharmacy Benefit

Did you know that you can now get at-home over-the-counter COVID-19 tests for free?

SAMBA has made it possible for you to receive up to eight tests every 30 days at your local in-network retail pharmacy or by home delivery for a $0 copay.

To get your free at-home COVID-19 tests, simply use your Express Scripts pharmacy benefit available through your SAMBA Health Benefit Plan. Here's how:

› Visit a participating pharmacy with your SAMBA ID card.

› Select an at-home COVID-19 test and bring it to the pharmacy counter, not the general check-out register.

› Present your SAMBA ID card and the pharmacist will process the test for a $0 copay.

› To purchase your COVID-19 tests by mail, visit **express-scripts.com** and click on "COVID-19 Tests and Resources" to find more information about ordering at-home tests.

If the at-home COVID-19 test does not process for a $0 copay at the pharmacy and you have not used your allotment of eight tests per month, do not worry. You can submit a paper claim for reimbursement. Follow these easy steps:

› Visit the "Prescription Center" at **SambaPlans.com/health-benefit-plan**

› Download and complete the Express Scripts claim form

› Mail it, along with your receipt, to the address listed on the form

Please know that SAMBA will continue to cover COVID-19 tests ordered and/or performed by your health care provider or pharmacist at 100%.

Patients who get sick from the COVID-19 virus may need a variety of inpatient and outpatient services. Normal copay, coinsurance and deductible amounts would apply to these services.

SAMBA Health Plan Achieves Reaccreditation

SAMBA is pleased to announce that we were awarded accreditation for another three-year term by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC).

This is an important milestone in the continuing growth and success of the SAMBA Health Plan.

Pursuing accreditation demonstrates our commitment to providing the highest levels of quality care and service to our members, and the same high level of quality in our business practices. Achieving AAAHC Accreditation is proof that we have met the rigorous standards of a nationally recognized third party.

We are proud to have met the challenge of accreditation and intend to consistently uphold the principles of quality service to our members.

Health Plan Accredited by

AAAHC

Be Antibiotics Aware

Antibiotics are powerful drugs, but they are not always the cure for all that ails you.

Antibiotics are drugs that fight infections caused by bacteria, such as strep throat, whooping cough, or urinary tract infection.

Antibiotics are **not** effective against viral infections such as those that cause common colds, most sore throats, and the flu.

Any time antibiotics are used they can cause side effects and contribute to the development of antibiotic resistance. Antibiotic resistance happens when the bacteria no longer responds to the antibiotics designed to kill them. It does not mean our body is resistant to antibiotics.

Antibiotic resistance is one of the greatest public health challenges of our time. In U.S. doctors' offices and emergency departments, at least 28% of antibiotic courses prescribed each year are unnecessary.[1]

What is unnecessary antibiotic use? This happens when a person is prescribed antibiotics when they're not needed.

When antibiotics aren't needed, they won't help you, and their side effects could still cause harm. Ask your doctor or pharmacist about steps you can take to feel better when an antibiotic isn't needed.

If your doctor decides an antibiotic is the best treatment when you are sick:

- Take the antibiotic exactly as your doctor tells you.
- Do not share your antibiotic with others.
- Do not save them for later.
- Do not take antibiotics prescribed for someone else.
- Never pressure your doctor to prescribe an antibiotic.

Taking antibiotics only when they are needed is an important way you can protect yourself and your family from antibiotic resistance.

Talk to your healthcare provider about the best treatment if you are sick.

Complete Your Health Assessment Today

Earn a $25 deductible credit with this easy-to-use tool. It can help you assess your current health and potential health risks. You will receive individualized feedback and specific recommendations on how to promote health and prevent disease.

Begin your journey to better health — take your health assessment today.

Visit **SambaPlans.com** to get started.

- Click on *Health Benefit Plan*
- Choose "Health Assessment" under the *Health & Wellness Center*
- Follow the steps to reach and sign in to your myCigna.com account (or register as a new user)
- Select the "Wellness" tab and click on "My Health Assessment"

[1] CDC; https://www.cdc.gov/antibiotic-use/index.html

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NEWSLETTER

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