

## February is American Heart Month

**February is American Heart Month** ~ Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the United States. Approximately every 25 seconds, an American will have a coronary event. Yet many cases of heart disease can be prevented. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) reminds health care professionals that Medicare provides coverage of cardiovascular screening blood tests for eligible Medicare beneficiaries. These tests can help determine a beneficiary's cholesterol and other blood lipid levels such as triglycerides. CMS recommends that all eligible beneficiaries take advantage of this coverage, which can determine whether beneficiaries may be at risk for cardiovascular disease.

### Medicare Coverage:

The following cardiovascular screening blood tests are covered by Medicare for eligible beneficiaries for the early detection of cardiovascular disease:

- Total Cholesterol Test
- Cholesterol Test for High Density Lipoproteins
- Triglycerides Test

These blood tests are covered once every 5 years for people with Medicare who have no apparent signs or symptoms of cardiovascular disease. The tests must be ordered by a physician or qualified non-physician practitioner (physician assistant, nurse practitioner, or clinical nurse specialist) treating the beneficiary.

### What Can You Do?

CMS needs your help to ensure that all eligible people with Medicare take advantage of the cardiovascular screening blood tests that can help identify beneficiaries who may be at risk for cardiovascular disease.

### More Information:

For more information about Medicare coverage of cardiovascular screening blood tests, please refer to the following resources:

- Expanded Benefits brochure – This Medicare Learning Network® (MLN) brochure provides Medicare Fee-For-Service providers with an overview of the Medicare-covered cardiovascular screening blood tests as well as the “Welcome to Medicare” Visit and the ultrasound screening for abdominal aortic aneurysms. [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/expanded\\_benefits.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/expanded_benefits.pdf)
- Quick Reference Information: Medicare Preventive Services – This chart provides coverage and coding information on Medicare-covered preventive services including the cardiovascular screening blood tests [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MPS\\_QuickReferenceChart\\_1.pdf](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/MLNProducts/downloads/MPS_QuickReferenceChart_1.pdf)
- Cardiovascular Disease Screening Web Page – This CMS web page provides an overview of the cardiovascular screening blood tests covered by Medicare as well as information on educational resources for health care providers. <http://www.cms.gov/CardiovasDiseaseScreening/>
- The MLN Preventive Services Educational Products Web Page – This web page provides a list of MLN educational products related to Medicare-covered preventive services. These resources are specifically for Medicare Fee-For-Service providers and their staff. [http://www.cms.gov/MLNProducts/35\\_PreventiveServices.asp](http://www.cms.gov/MLNProducts/35_PreventiveServices.asp)

For more information about American Heart Month, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website [http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/american\\_heart\\_month.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/american_heart_month.htm).

Thank you.