



The truth about referrals

They help you stay healthy!

The referral process is often misunderstood. Requesting a referral may seem like an unnecessary step to see a specialist but referrals actually help you get the care that is right for you.

Getting the right care

As a member of an HMO plan, your Primary Care Physician (PCP), is responsible for coordinating all the care you receive. This includes referring you to a specialist for services your doctor can't provide. Only your PCP can refer you to a specialist. This way, your PCP knows all the care you are getting and can make informed decisions about your health. This process helps your PCP keep track of all the care you receive in order to ensure you get the care that is right for you. By coordinating your care, your PCP can also help you avoid unnecessary expenses such as duplicate tests, and identify any safety concerns such as harmful drug interactions.

You need a referral to see a specialist

In an HMO plan, you need a referral from your PCP in order for the specialist visit to be covered. If a specialist refers you to another specialist, you need to check with your PCP first. Only your PCP can refer you to a specialist. By issuing all your referrals, your PCP is able to make sure you get the care that is right for you.

Your PCP only works with certain specialists known as a "referral circle"

A referral circle is the team of specialists your PCP works with. Not all Tufts Medicare Preferred HMO physicians are included in your PCP's referral circle. In other words, not all of the specialists listed in the Provider Directory are in your PCP's referral circle. You are only able to see a specialist within your PCP's referral circle. Your PCP must give you a referral before you can see a specialist. This process helps your PCP keep track of all the care you receive.

How do you know which specialists are in your PCP's referral circle?

The Provider Directory lists PCPs by medical group. The medical group section in the Provider Directory shows which specialists and facilities are in your PCP's referral circle.

For more information: contact Customer Relations at 1-800-701-9000 (TTY 1-800-208-9562) Mon - Fri, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. (From Oct 1- Feb 14, representatives are available 7 days a week, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) After hours and on holidays, please leave a message and a representative will return your call on the next business day.

Tufts Health Plan is an HMO plan with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in Tufts Health Plan depends on contract renewal. The provider network may change at any time. You will receive notice when necessary. Tufts Health Plan complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-800-701-9000 (TTY: 1-800-208-9562). ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-701-9000 (TTY: 1-800-208-9562). ATENÇÃO: Se fala português, encontram-se disponíveis serviços linguísticos, grátis. Ligue para 1-800-701-9000 (TTY: 1-800-208-9562).