

Back Brace Fraud Alert

2019

CALIFORNIA SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL WARNING!

Beware of Offers for “Free” Braces Covered by Medicare

Individuals offering Medicare ‘free or low-cost’ knee, back and other orthotic braces could be using the medical equipment benefit to commit Medicare fraud and abuse.

855-613-7080

For additional information
on healthcare fraud, visit
cahealthadvocates.org



Find additional details on this fraud alert on the reverse side.

CALIFORNIA SENIOR MEDICARE PATROL WARNING!

Back Brace Scam

Beware of Offers for “Free” Braces Covered by Medicare

Scammers are broadcasting TV commercials or contacting Medicare beneficiaries by phone to offer “free or low cost” knee, back and other orthotic braces. If you disclose your Medicare number, you can end up with boxes of unwanted and unneeded braces, a compromised Medicare number, and potential denied Medicare claims if you require such braces in the future. Medicare only pays for durable medical equipment based on medical necessity — meaning it’s an item you really need for your medical condition – and requires prescription from your doctor, not a doctor you’ve never met or a doctor on TV. Guard your Medicare card from scammers who may be contacting you through cold calls, unannounced home visits, colorful postcards, TV and newspaper ads, solicitations in public places, and/or presentations and health fair events.

Remember:

- » If you **receive a call from someone offering you a “free” brace covered by Medicare, hang up immediately.**
- » **If medical equipment is delivered to you, don’t accept it unless it was ordered by your physician.** Refuse the delivery or return it to the sender. Keep a record of the sender’s name and the date you returned the items.
- » **Be suspicious of anyone who offers you free medical equipment and then requests your Medicare number.** If your personal information is compromised, it may be used in other fraud schemes.
- » **Only your doctor should prescribe and/or approve any requests for durable medical equipment.**
- » **Be cautious of unsolicited requests for your Medicare number.** Do not give your Medicare information to anyone you don’t know.

Medicare pays for services and items based on medical necessity — meaning a service or item you really need for your medical condition. Also, most durable medical equipment requires a prescription from your doctor.



If you do come across such a scam, please report it to our **Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP)** at **855-613-7080**