

# Treatment Decision Support

Helping you get the care you need



- What are my treatment options?
- What can I expect from treatment?
- What resources do I have available?

back pain  
enlarged prostate spinal stenosis  
hip/knee problems • uterine problems  
angina fibroids bypass surgery  
hysterectomy osteoarthritis  
herniated disc prostate cancer  
chest discomfort prostate disease angioplasty  
endometriosis hip/knee replacement  
coronary artery disease



## The best decision is the one that is right for you.

Having a health condition poses many challenges. When your provider goes over a variety of options, you may find yourself thinking:

- Who can I talk with about this?
- Where can I find good information to help me think through this decision?
- What outcomes am I hoping for?
- What is my next best step?

Many people feel overwhelmed at this time, but Medica can help. Medica has a team of coaches with special training. These health coaches have clinical or nursing backgrounds and can help you sort out the many facets of your situation. They will partner with you and your doctor to ensure the best outcome. We invite you to work with one of the coaches in our Treatment Decision Support program to get the help you need.

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#### Coach's Tip

This workbook is designed to be a guide for you during the treatment decision process. It will help you document important thoughts and identify next steps for making your treatment decision. Use the space on the following pages to reflect on your personal situation.

# Overview

## WHAT CAN DECISION SUPPORT DO FOR ME?

- Offer resources so you can become better informed about your condition and the treatments available for your condition
- Provide a sounding board for support
- Help you clarify all of your options so **you** can decide which direction will be best for you
- Brainstorm a list of questions that you may need or want to know about your condition or your treatment options before your next visit with the doctor
- Talk over lifestyle changes that may help you manage your condition more effectively
- Talk over next steps toward an action plan

When there are many treatment options, how will you know which direction to turn? The Treatment Decision Support team is here to listen and to help you come to the decision that is **best for you**.

Medica's Treatment Decision Support program is confidential, included in your health plan and completely voluntary. Call **1-888-992-3875** today to speak with a Medica representative who will explain the program and schedule a one-on-one phone visit with a health coach specializing in decision support.

## WHAT AM I UNSURE ABOUT?

**Start by listing the decisions you expect to encounter as you manage your health condition:**

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## What do I already know about my condition and my treatment options?

My health condition(s):

Date of diagnosis:

Current treatment(s):

Provider(s):



## Do I have unanswered questions?

**GATHER INFORMATION BY ASKING YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:**

**Do I know the potential benefits?**

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**Do I know the likelihood of various outcomes?**

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**Do I know the potential harms?**

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**Do I know the potential consequences of my decisions?**

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Creating a support system and communication plan is helpful for managing a health condition. Here are some things to consider when making your decision. Use this space to reflect on your current situation:

**Who are my caregivers and trusted partners?**

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**Is there a timeline for making this decision?**

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**How far along am I in the process?**

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**What type of support do I have for making this decision?**

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## What are my views and how is this influenced by my values?

Values are important because they affect our thinking and decisions. They are the things that are really important to us in life—not necessarily what we think *should* be important, but what actually *is* important to us.

**As you prepare to make a treatment decision, it is helpful to clarify your values. To the right is a list of words that suggest a value. Take some time to acknowledge which of the following are your key values.**

- Look over the list and circle 5 words that you feel best define your values.
- Now from the list of 5 words, place a star by 3 of the 5 words that you want to focus on in your life.
- Are there other words that you wish to add? Write them on the blank lines.

Family	Physical challenge
Fitness	Power
Freedom	Purpose
Friendship	Religion
Health	Responsibility
Helping others	Risk taking
Job satisfaction	Security
Joy	Trust
Knowledge	Wealth
Love	_____
Loyalty	_____
Personal growth	_____

### Coach's Tip

The art of working with values is to consciously recognize them and align your time and energy with the ones you hold the highest, your key values. Your values can influence your decisions and tell others the story of you!



## What are the risks and benefits of my decision?

Consider the *risks* and *benefits* of making a decision. Also, think about any fears or concerns you may have.

Making treatment decisions often means giving something up or taking on new activities to produce the best outcome. It is helpful to consider the risks and benefits of making the decision. Use the chart and questions to explore the balance.

### RISKS

What will I give up by making this decision? Are there any disadvantages to my choice?

### BENEFITS

What will I gain from this approach? What are the advantages?

### FEARS OR CONCERNS

Explore any fears (failure, unknown, etc.) you have or barriers (time, resources) you may encounter as you make this decision and any ideas you have to overcome them.

**My fears or concerns are:**

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**What can I do to overcome them?**

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**Things I may have to give up**

**Risks – personal, financial and other**

**Benefits**



**New things I may have to do**

**Risks – personal, financial and other**

**Benefits**



## Do I have the right provider?

Consider what type of primary care provider best suits your general needs.

Your very first step is to make sure that you have a primary care doctor. He or she can treat your routine illnesses, perform regular tests and help coordinate your care.

- Family and general practitioners care for a wide range of health concerns. They may be able to treat family members of any age.
- Internists treat adults and may have additional training in specialties, such as cardiology.
- Geriatricians specialize in the care of older adults.
- Gynecologists specialize in women's health issues. They often serve in the primary care role, as well.

### DO I NEED TO SEE A SPECIALIST?

For certain situations, your primary care doctor may recommend that you see a specialist. Or, you may decide to seek the help of a specialist on your own. The specialist you see will depend upon your specific condition and needs.

For example, there are many types of doctors who can help patients who need treatment for low back pain:

- Family or general practitioners may do most of the initial evaluation, order tests and prescribe medications.
- Physical therapists or chiropractors can provide therapy to the soft tissues of the back. And, they may advise someone who has low back pain about exercises to assist their recovery.
- Orthopedists or neurosurgeons usually perform any necessary surgery.
- Physiatrists, orthopedists or pain management specialists may perform other interventions, such as injections.

### FINDING A DOCTOR

**Once you know what you need, it's time to start looking.** Check to see if your Medica plan has a physician designation program. Usually, these doctors have been evaluated and recognized for the care they provide.

**Pull together a list of doctors. Call each office to get more information.** Ask about office hours, cancellation and payment policies. Confirm that the office takes your health insurance. Find out how billing works. Ask how the office handles urgent or after-hour concerns. Ask who covers for the doctor when he or she is out of town.

**Schedule an appointment with your top choice.** Bring a list of all pre-existing conditions and medications you're taking. Prepare a list of concerns. Make sure the doctor takes time to talk about your health history. Get answers to any questions you have. Are you comfortable with the doctor's communication style? Do you feel that you have his or her complete attention?

### WHAT IF I NEED HELP FINDING A DOCTOR?

Medica offers resources to assist you in finding a doctor.

- Find a Doc online  
<http://www.medica.com/findadoctor>
- Call Medica Customer Service  
Use the number on the back of your Medica ID card.

### WHAT QUESTIONS SHOULD I ASK MY DOCTOR?

Today, it's possible for individuals to take a more active role in their health care. Think of you and your doctor as a team, working together to achieve your best possible level of health. Keep in mind that good communication is a very important part of this relationship. Most conditions have several treatment options. It's important to be aware of the risks and benefits of each choice. This way, you can be an informed partner when choosing what's right for you.

Questions to ask your doctor to get your discussion started:

■ **What treatment do you recommend?**

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■ **What are the benefits of this treatment, and how successful is it?**

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■ **What are the risks and side effects of this treatment?**

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■ **Are less invasive or non-surgical treatments available?**

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■ **What happens if I do nothing?**

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■ **When do I need to come back for a follow up?**

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■ **Will I need to have any tests?**

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■ **What do you expect to find out from these tests?**

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■ **How will I find out the results of any tests done?**

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■ **Are there self-care or complementary measures that I can use at home?**

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**Questions to ask your doctor if you're considering surgery or another invasive procedure:**

- Why is surgery or an invasive procedure better than more conservative treatments such as an exercise program or medication?
- What is the likely success rate? What will success mean for me? (For example, complete relief of pain or partial relief of pain.) Is there a risk of complications?
- What type of operation or invasive procedure do you recommend? Why is this preferred to other options?
- Is the treatment considered proven? Will the treatment be covered by my health plan?

**Write down other questions you'd like to ask:**

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**What else do you want to learn about your condition?**

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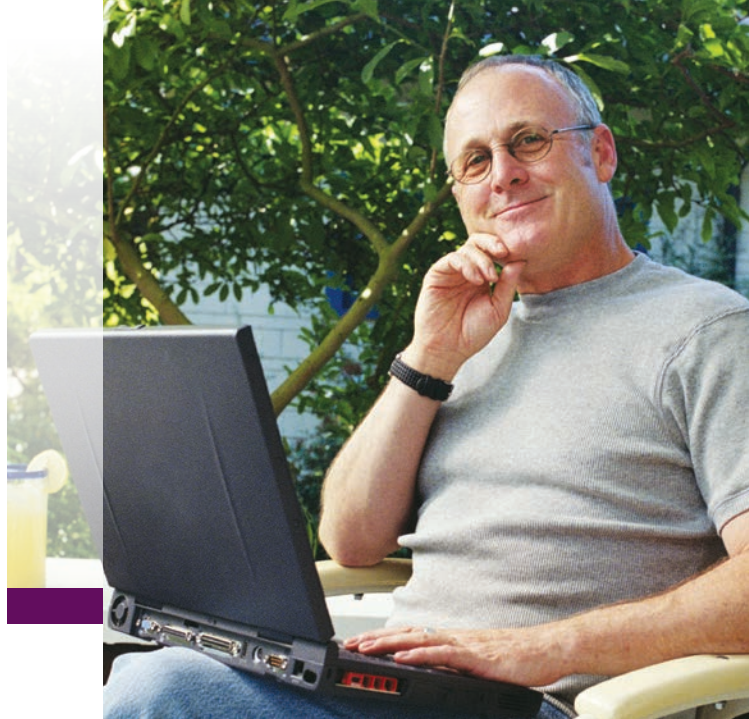
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## Where can I learn more?

Oftentimes people go to the various websites to get information. Make sure the sites you use are from a reputable source.

- The information found on your health plan website, or made available through that site, has been carefully screened for content and accuracy.
- Be cautious about information found on other websites, especially those that carry advertisements for, or links to, medications or products. The information on those sites may be biased.

### HERE ARE SOME REPUTABLE WEBSITES THAT MAY BE USEFUL TO YOU:

#### ■ mymedica.com

[www.mymedica.com](http://www.mymedica.com)

Sign in with your membership card and take advantage of all of the personalized information available to you about your health care.

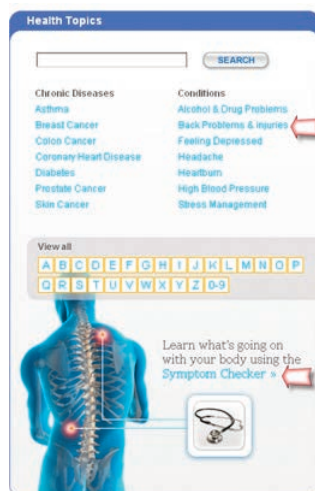
- Look up benefits
- Search for providers
- Order ID cards
- Inquire about claims status
- Check your plan co-pay, deductible and out-of-pocket information

#### ■ mymedica Health and Wellness Center

[www.mymedica.com](http://www.mymedica.com)

Click on *Health and Wellness* tab at the top

Find hundreds of articles and trustworthy information on health and wellness topics. Use the Symptom Checker to look up your symptoms and receive direction on next steps. Review the Health Topics to learn about a variety of health conditions.





■ **Main Street Medica**

[www.mainstreetmedica.com](http://www.mainstreetmedica.com)

The more you know about cost and quality, the better prepared you'll be to discuss care recommendations with your physician. Use Main Street Medica to get straightforward information that can help you:

- Make smart choices about your care
- Learn how to stretch your healthcare dollar
- Get the most from your healthcare benefits

■ **MedlinePlus®**

[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

This website from the National Institutes of Health has general information on more than 700 conditions. It offers a medical dictionary, encyclopedia, health news and other resources.

■ **U.S. Preventive Services Task Force**

[www.ahrp.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm](http://www.ahrp.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm)

This website has scientifically reviewed information on maintaining good health and preventing diseases.

■ **Taking Charge of Your Health**

[www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu](http://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu)

This University of Minnesota website has information about creating a healthy lifestyle, exploring alternative and integrative healing practices, and navigating the healthcare system.

**Note other resources you've heard about and want to explore here:**

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**SEARCH TIPS**

When using the internet for research, you will get better results by using specific search terms. Here are terms for conditions that often require a decision or decision support:

**Back problems:**

- Back pain
- Bulging disc
- Herniated disc
- Low back pain
- Spinal stenosis
- Spondylolisthesis

**Chest discomfort:**

- Angina
- Angioplasty
- Bypass surgery
- Coronary artery bypass graft (CABGO)
- Coronary artery disease
- Percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI)

**Hip and knee problems:**

- Hip/knee arthritis
- Hip/knee replacement
- Osteoarthritis

**Prostate issues:**

- Benign prostate hypertrophy
- Enlarged prostate
- Prostate cancer
- Prostatic cancer
- Prostate disease
- Prostate hypertrophy
- Prostatic hypertrophy

**Uterine issues:**

- Adenomyosis
- Benign uterine condition
- Dysfunctional uterine bleeding (DUB)
- Chocolate cysts
- Endometrial ablation
- Endometrioma
- Endometriosis
- Fibroids
- Hysterectomy
- Menorrhagia
- Metrorrhagia
- Myomectomy
- Uterine artery embolization
- Uterine myoma



## What are my next steps?

We hope this workbook has been helpful in exploring whatever is important to your decision process. The workbook is just one part of Medica's Treatment Decision Support Program. We hope you also will consider working with a health coach who can recommend specific resources so you can address your concerns and confidently arrive at the decision that is best for you.

**List your next steps here:**

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### YOU DON'T HAVE TO TACKLE THIS CHALLENGE ALONE

Medica Treatment Decision Support is:

- Voluntary
- Confidential
- Included in your health plan
- Designed to help you make the right decision
- All done over the phone, no travel necessary

Call us at **1-888-992-3875** to speak with a Medica representative who will explain the program and schedule a one-on-one phone visit with a health coach specializing in decision support.

**MEDICA®**

PO Box 9310  
Minneapolis, MN 55440-9310

[www.medica.com](http://www.medica.com)

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