

HEALTH MATTERS

Federal Drug Plan Changes Coming

Seniors urged to shop around

(AP) -- Federal health officials have encouraged Medicare participants to shop around for their prescription drug coverage next year because it could include significant price increases or changes regarding which drugs the plans will cover.

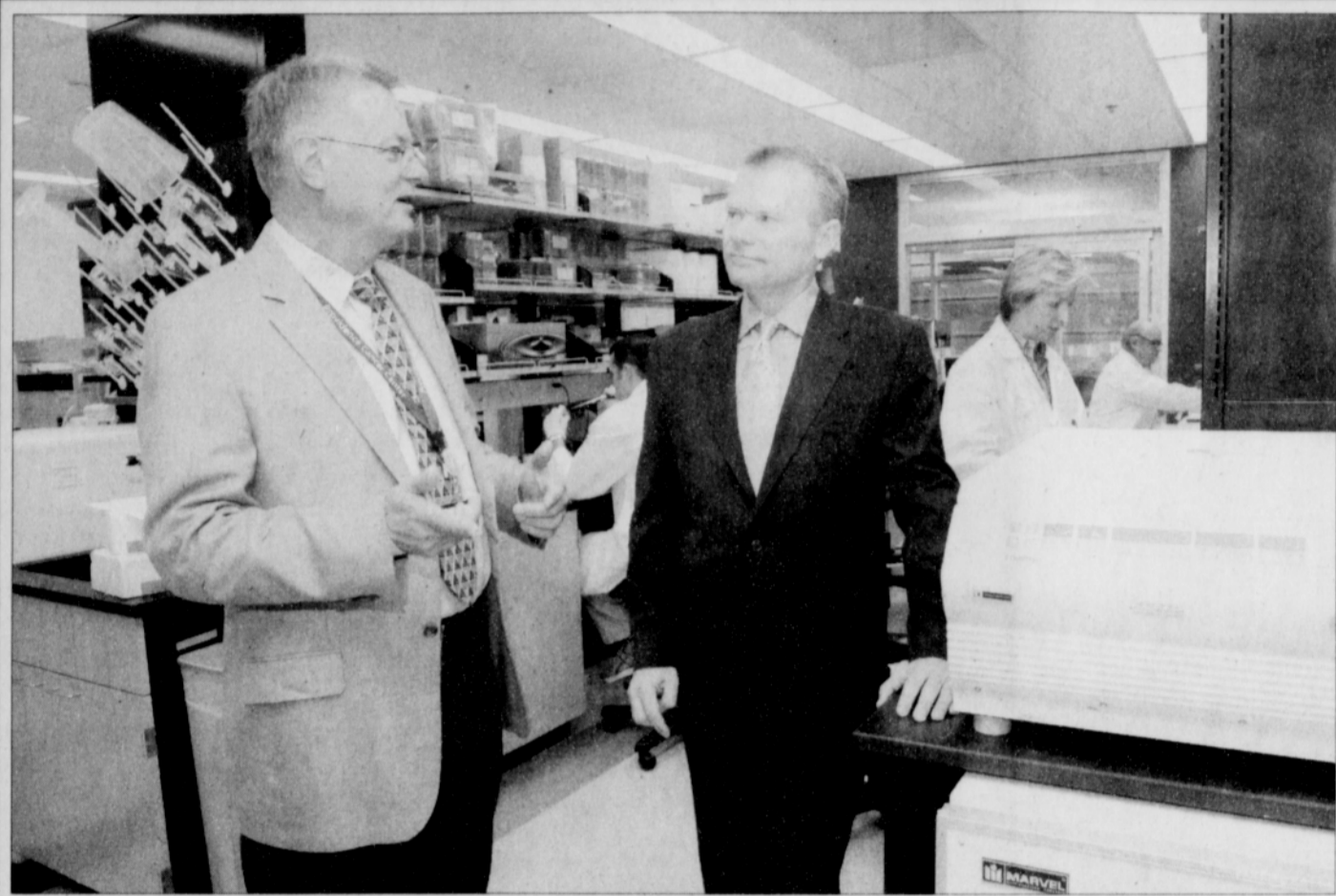
For those enrolled in the 10 most popular drug plans, cost increases will range from 8 percent to as much as 64 percent, according to an analysis by Avalere Health, a consulting firm.

The monthly premium for the most popular Medicare Part D plan, the AARP Medicare Rx Preferred Plan, will increase 15 percent, from \$32 to \$37. The next most popular plans come from Humana Inc. The premium for the standard Humana plan will go up 60 percent, from about \$25 to \$40, while the premium for the enhanced Humana plan will go up

from about \$23 to \$38. Still, the vast majority of participants will have access to prescription drug coverage for the same amount or for less than they're paying now. They will, however, have to do some searching to find those offerings, said Kerry Weems, acting administrator for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The nation's 44 million Medicare beneficiaries can choose a drug plan only, or they can choose to get all of their health benefits through a Medicare Advantage plan. The drug-only plans offering standard coverage will rise from \$27 to \$32 next year, on average. Meanwhile, Medicare Advantage plans will rise from \$18 to \$21 on average, CMS officials said. Also, the poor are eligible for drug coverage with no monthly premiums.

Medicare participants can begin enrolling in drug coverage for next year from Nov. 15 through Dec. 31.



Supporting Breast Cancer Research

Dr. Walter Urba (left), director of research at the Providence Cancer Center and Steve Frisby, Portland division president for Safeway, discuss the research potential of a new Safeway Breast Cancer Research Laboratory at the center. Safeway pledged \$1 million toward development of the research lab.

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HEALTHWATCH

Cancer Prevention and Survival Cooking Courses -- Thursday, Oct. 9, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., learn how to live longer by eating healthier; free. To register, call 503-256-4000.

Infant CPR Class -- Monday, Oct. 13, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., this class will address issues specific to infant CPR, including rescue breathing, CPR and choking maneuvers from infant 1 to 12 months. This is a non-certifying adult-only class; \$34 fee. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Stress and the Working Parent -- Tuesday, Oct. 14, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., learn how to balance juggling a career and family while dealing with the special challenges and concerns it presents for working parents; \$20 fee. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Shoulder Spoilers -- Thursday, Oct. 16, from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m., learn about the most common cause of shoulder pain and dysfunction including bone spurs, labral tears and rotator cuff tears, and the latest minimally invasive treatments presented by Dr. David Huberty, free. To register, call 503-692-2411.

Expectant Couples, New Parents -- Legacy Good Samaritan Hospital offers the workshop Lasting Relationships for New Parents, helping couples keep their relationships strong and happy in the transition to parenthood. Presented by Northwest

Family Services, upcoming sessions are scheduled Oct. 11 and Oct. 18. To register, visit lastingrelationships.org.

Heart Savers CPR/AED -- Saturday, Oct. 18, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., this American Heart Association course will teach participants CPR for all ages, AED operations, relief of airway obstruction. Course meets OSHA requirements for workplace CPR certification; \$45 fee. To register, call 503-335-3500.

Smoking Cessation -- Beginning Monday, Oct. 20, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., this 11-week series will teach a systemic approach to quit smoking through behavior modification techniques, coping skills, social support and more. Eight weeks of nicotine patches will be provided free to participants; fee \$225. To register, call 503-574-6595.

Welcome to Medicare -- Thursday, Oct. 23, from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., this two-hour class will help people who are eligible to receive Social Security Disability benefits or nearing age 65, to make informed decisions regarding Medicare options; free class, for more information call 503-988-3646.

Stroke Alert Screening -- Check your carotid arteries with a painless ultrasound to assess your risk. Fee \$40. To schedule a screening, call 503-251-6137.

Chronic Pain Support Group -- Meets the first Wednesday at 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. and the third Wednesday of each month, from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. For more information, call 503-256-4000.



Consumers are warned of chemical contamination in White Rabbit Candy.

Chinese Candy Contaminated

Oregon health officials are warning consumers to avoid eating White Rabbit Candy because it may be contaminated with the chemical melamine.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration reported that the candy, imported from China, is distributed to retail stores in Oregon, Washington and other states.

The distributor, QFCO Inc., of Burlingame, Calif., has voluntarily recalled the product.

Consumers who have purchased White Rabbit Candy are urged to return it to the place of purchase for a full refund or discard it in their trash.

AIDS Traced Back 100 Years

(AP) -- The AIDS virus has been circulating among people for about 100 years, decades longer than scientists had thought, a new study suggests.

Genetic analysis pushes the estimated origin of HIV back to between 1884 and 1924, with a more focused estimate at 1908.

Previously, scientists had estimated the origin at around 1930. AIDS wasn't recognized formally until 1981 when it got the attention of public health officials in the United States.

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Health Equity Initiative

Help shape public policy on health equity

Please join us at a Health Equity Initiative solutions workshop. Learn what your neighbors and community leaders think about health issues and help shape Multnomah County's health equity agenda.

Report Back Sessions will be held:

Sept. 20	Gresham Library	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Sept. 27	New Columbia Community Center	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Sept. 29	Central Library	12:30 pm - 2:30 pm
Sept. 30	Multnomah Arts Center	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm
Oct. 1	Multnomah Building	10:30 am - 12:30 pm
Oct. 11	PCC Cascade Campus	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
Oct. 28	Midland Library	5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

For more information and screening locations, visit www.mchealth.org/healthequity or call 503-988-3030 Ext. 22068

Josiah Hill III Clinic Presents...

FREE Lead-Safe Kids Fair

Fun Activities & Resources to Protect Kids From Lead Hazards

- ▶ Blood lead testing for children
- ▶ Lead-free toy giveaway & kids activities
- ▶ Lead screening for toys/pottery (4 items per family)
- ▶ Lead poisoning prevention workshop
- ▶ Tenant rights workshop
- ▶ Healthy food & beverages

Saturday, October 25th, 11am - 2pm

IRCO Community Room, 10301 NE Glisan, Portland, OR 97220

Event Sponsors: Portland Water Bureau & BHCD

Protecting children from environmental hazards and promoting community action for healthy homes.

Contact us at (503) 803-7880 or visit www.jhilliclinic.org