

WHEN YOU NEED A REFERRAL OR PRIOR APPROVAL

Referrals

A referral is when your primary care provider (PCP) sends you to some other provider for care. You'll need to see your PCP for a referral before you see a specialist.

Prior approval

A prior approval is when your PCP gets an OK from us before treating you or referring you to another provider. Your PCP will get any needed prior approvals.



When do I need a prior approval?

You'll need a prior approval before:

- Inpatient hospital visits — care where you have to spend the night
- Some outpatient hospital visits — care where your doctor doesn't expect you'll need to spend the night
- Some ambulatory surgical care — same-day surgery where you don't need to spend the night at a hospital
- Some infusion therapies — medicine given through a needle or catheter
- CT, CTA, MRI, MRA, PET, special X-rays and tests
- Genetic testing
- High-cost and custom-made durable medical equipment like wheelchairs, special beds, breathing machines for sleep apnea, etc.
- Home health care — when a nurse or therapist visits you at home
- Therapy services (after your first visits) — speech, occupational and physical therapy to help you get better after a sickness or injury
- Care from an out-of-network provider

Self-referrals

We'll pay for some care without prior approval. These are called self-referral services. For most self-referrals, you'll go to your PCP or another provider who works with us. You don't need your PCP's OK for a self-referral if the provider works with us.

Self-referral services include:

- Family planning
- OB/GYN care from providers who work with UniCare
- Pregnancy care
- Emergency care
- Vision care
- Dental care
- Behavioral health care

We'll also pay for related lab work and most medicines you get at the same place as the self-referral service.



Family planning

Family planning can help teach you how to:

- Prevent diseases
- Avoid pregnancy
- Be as healthy as you can before pregnancy



All members (including minors) may see a licensed family planning provider without getting an OK from us first, even if the provider doesn't work with us.

Licensed family planning providers could be:

- Clinics
- OB/GYNs
- PCPs
- Certified nurse-midwives

Pregnancy care

If you were in your third trimester when you joined UniCare and already saw a provider who doesn't work with us, you can keep seeing that provider through delivery until two months after your baby is born.

This is as long as the provider agrees to keep seeing you. The provider will need to get an OK from us.

Emergency care

If you have a medical emergency, you don't need a referral to go to the emergency room (ER). A medical emergency is a health issue that could end in death or very serious harm to your body. If you're not sure if you should go to the ER, call your PCP or call the 24-hour nurse help line at 1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424).

Vision care

We cover routine vision services for children including:

- An exam once a year
- Lenses and frames once a year
- Repairs to eyeglasses
- Contact lenses (if medically necessary)
- Eye surgery (not cosmetic)

We do not cover prescription sunglasses or designer frames. Routine vision services are provided by Vision Service Plan (VSP).

Vision benefits for adults are limited to medical treatment only. This includes:

- Treatment of cataracts, including surgery
- First pair of glasses after cataract surgery
- Treatment of other problems with the eyes, like glaucoma or macular degeneration

If you have diabetes, you may see an optometrist or ophthalmologist who works with us once a year for a diabetic retinal exam. You can do this without an OK from your PCP. Any future exams within a year will need an OK from your PCP.

Dental care

Children under age 21 get routine dental care and medically necessary treatment. Scion Dental provides this care for us. Services include:

- Diagnostic treatment
- Preventive treatment
- Treatment of diseases of the teeth
- Repair or replacement of damaged teeth
- Root canals
- Treatment of the gums
- Surgical procedures and/or tooth removals
- Orthodontic treatment. (Orthodontic care will be covered for the whole treatment plan even if the child is no longer eligible.)
- Whole and partial dentures — including partial denture relines and repairs
- Oral and maxillofacial (jaw) surgery care
- Secondary dental care such as injectable medicines

Dental care may be given by a:

- Dentist or oral surgeon
- Orthodontist — a dentist who:
 - Fixes bites and how teeth touch
 - Straightens teeth
- Periodontist — a dentist who treats gum disease



Emergency dental care

We cover emergency dental care for adults age 21 and older. Care may be given by a dentist or oral surgeon.

Services include:

- Treatment of fractures of the upper or lower jaw
- Biopsy
- Removal of tumors
- Removal of a tooth when it's an emergency
- General anesthesia for dental procedures when medically necessary because the:
 - Member has a developmental disability
 - Member has other medical issues that may complicate the dental work

Behavioral health care

You don't need a referral from your PCP to get behavioral health care. You may go straight to any UniCare provider. If you have questions, call us at 1-800-782-0095 (TTY 1-866-368-1634). Behavioral health care includes:

- Inpatient psychiatric care for children younger than age 21
- Outpatient behavioral health and psychiatric care
- Substance abuse treatment
- Psychiatric residential treatment

Some of these services may need prior approval.

We can translate this for you at no cost. Call the Customer Care Center at 1-800-782-0095. If you have speech or hearing loss, call the TTY line at 1-866-368-1634.

