

Covering High-Value Preventive Services Including New Services for Women and Children

Plans covered by these rules must offer coverage of a comprehensive range of preventive services that are recommended by physicians and other experts without imposing any cost-sharing requirements. Specifically, these recommendations include:

Evidence-based preventive services: The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, an independent panel of scientific experts, ranks preventive services based on the strength of the scientific evidence documenting their benefits. Preventive services with a “grade” of A or B, like breast and colon cancer screenings, screening for vitamin deficiencies during pregnancy, screenings for diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure, and tobacco cessation counseling will be covered under these rules.

Routine vaccines: Health plans will cover a set of standard vaccines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices ranging from routine childhood immunizations to periodic tetanus shots for adults.

Prevention for children: Health plans will cover preventive care for children recommended under the *Bright Futures* guidelines, developed by the Health Resources and Services Administration with the American Academy of Pediatrics. These guidelines provide pediatricians and other health care professionals with recommendations on the services they should provide to children from birth to age 21 to keep them healthy and improve their chances of becoming healthy adults. The types of services that will be covered include regular pediatrician visits, vision and hearing screening, developmental assessments, immunizations, and screening and counseling to address obesity and help children maintain a healthy weight.

Prevention for women: Health plans will cover preventive care provided to women under both the Task Force recommendations and new guidelines being developed by doctors, nurses, and scientists, which are expected to be issued by August 1, 2011.

Guidelines for preventive services are regularly updated to reflect new scientific and medical advances. As new services are approved, health plans will be required to cover them with no cost-sharing for plan years beginning one year later. A full list of the covered services is available at www.HealthCare.gov/center/regulations/prevention.html.