

# MCBS

Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey

Winter  
2018

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# What is the MCBS?

The Medicare Current Beneficiary Survey (MCBS) is a continuous survey of people who receive Medicare benefits. It includes individuals living in the community or in long-term care facilities that are representative of the entire population of those receiving Medicare benefits.

The survey's main goal is to determine all costs associated with health care services provided to people with Medicare. MCBS is the only comprehensive source of information on the health status, health insurance coverage, health care use and expenditures of the Medicare population. It is sponsored by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

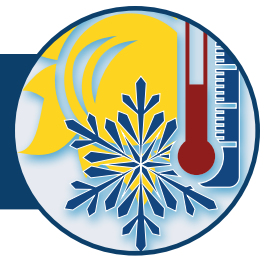
You are receiving this newsletter because as a MCBS respondent, you are an important supporter of the MCBS. The success of the survey depends upon the cooperation of every MCBS participant! We welcome your feedback on this newsletter and hope you find this issue informative.



## About NORC

NORC is an independent, nonprofit organization whose mission is to conduct high quality social science research in the public interest. NORC has offices in Chicago, IL; Bethesda, MD; Atlanta, GA; Boston, MA; and San Francisco, CA. In addition, we have interviewers across the nation working on the MCBS. NORC is deeply committed to protecting the privacy of all respondents' personal information; therefore, all information about participants will be kept private and confidential as required by law. To learn more about NORC or reach the MCBS team, please call NORC toll-free number 877-389-3429 or e-mail NORC at [mcbs@norc.org](mailto:mcbs@norc.org). You can also visit the website: <http://www.mcbs.norc.org>.

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at the UNIVERSITY of CHICAGO



# Health in Any Weather

Your health can be affected by the weather, largely due to the temperature and activities associated with each season. See below for health tips to keep in mind whatever the weather is like where you live.<sup>1</sup>

## WINTER



- » Older adults are not necessarily more likely to fall during the winter months. However, a fall during this time period is more likely to cause a hip break, as the rate of hip fractures is 12% higher in colder weather months versus the rest of the year.
- » Make sure to keep an eye out for anything that could cause trips or slips in colder weather. Wearing socks or shoes with grips can also help ensure solid footing.

## SPRING



- » Once the weather turns warmer, everyone is ready to get moving but might forget that their bodies may be out of conditioning. Overdoing physical activity results in injuries related to overuse and strain, such as pulled muscles and sprained ankles.
- » Something as simple as bending over to tend to a plant can result in an injury if you don't have proper form. Remember to bend at the knees rather than the waist and always use a soft pad when kneeling on the hard floor or ground.

## SUMMER



- » Extreme heat can be especially dangerous for older adults, as medications, reduced mobility, high blood pressure, and disabilities are factors that may increase the risk for heat exhaustion and heat stroke.
- » Stay cool in air conditioning when possible and drink more fluids than usual to keep yourself hydrated when heat hits your area.

# New Medicare Cards are Coming Soon!



*The text below is an excerpt from a blog post on the CMS website written by Seema Verma, CMS Administrator.<sup>2</sup> You can find the full text here: <https://blog.cms.gov/2017/09/14/new-medicare-cards-are-coming-soon/>*

As you may have heard, or perhaps you've seen a recent TV commercial, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services will soon be issuing every Medicare beneficiary a new Medicare Card, without Social Security Numbers, to prevent fraud, fight identity theft, and keep taxpayer dollars safe,

and to help ensure that we always put the needs of patients first.

To help combat this, we'll be sending all Medicare beneficiaries a new card with a unique, randomly-assigned Medicare number. It will consist of eleven characters, a combination of numbers and uppercase letters. This new number will replace the Social Security-based number currently used on all Medicare cards, and it's designed to protect the personal information of Medicare beneficiaries.

We'll begin mailing the newly designed Medicare cards in April 2018, and we'll replace all cards by April 2019. You don't need to do anything and you can start using your new card as soon as you get it. We want to make this process as easy

as possible for everyone involved. Above all, we want to ensure that people with Medicare and healthcare providers know about these changes well in advance and have the information needed to ensure an easy transition to the new card.



## Eating Healthy Tips and Tricks

The New Year is a great time to renew your commitment to healthy living. Here are some healthy food tips for 2018 and beyond related to fiber intake and other nutrients you need.

- » The average adult only eats 15 grams of fiber per day but according to the Institute of Medicine, women are recommended to consume 25 grams of fiber per day, and men are recommended to consume 38 grams of fiber per day<sup>3</sup>.
- » Eating a variety of plant-based foods with naturally occurring fiber, such as vegetables, beans, fruit, whole grains and nuts is the best way to get the fiber you need<sup>3</sup>.
- » Replacing refined grains, such as white flour, bread, pasta, or rice with whole grains, such as oatmeal or whole wheat flour, is a great way to boost the amount of fiber in your diet as well<sup>3</sup>.
- » Calcium is important to keep bones strong and can be found in milk, yogurt, hard cheeses, fortified cereals, and kale. Men 51-70 years old need 1000 milligrams per day. Women 51+ and Men 71+ years old need 1200 milligrams per day<sup>4</sup>.
- » Vitamin B12 plays an essential role in red blood cell formation and is found in fish, poultry, meat, dairy products, and fortified cereals. All adults need at least 2.4 micrograms per day<sup>4</sup>.

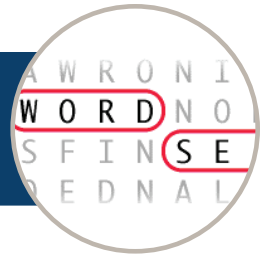
*Craving something filling but healthy to warm you up in the morning?  
This **Banana Walnut Oatmeal** is just the thing you need!*

### INGREDIENTS

- » 1/3 cup milk (nonfat or any non-dairy milk works)
- » Dash of salt
- » 1/3 cup water
- » 1/2 cup oats (quick cooking or old fashioned)
- » 1 banana, mashed
- » 1/2 tablespoon maple syrup or honey, if desired
- » 1 tablespoon walnuts, chopped

### DIRECTIONS

- 1** In a small saucepan, combine milk, salt, and water. Heat on medium until steaming hot but not boiling.
- 2** Add oats and stir to cook until creamy, about 2 minutes.
- 3** If using old fashioned oats, you will need to cook for 5-10 minutes.
- 4** Remove the pan from the heat and stir in the mashed banana and sweetener. Pour into a bowl, top with walnuts, and serve.<sup>5</sup>



# Word Search

## Words to find:

- |           |            |
|-----------|------------|
| HEALTH    | RESPONDENT |
| MCBS      | CALCIUM    |
| SURVEY    | VITAMIN    |
| MEDICARE  | CMS        |
| INSURANCE | NORC       |
| WINTER    | FIBER      |
| POLICY    | CARDS      |
| OATMEAL   |            |

Q	F	H	J	P	O	L	I	C	Y	X	I	O	H	Y
R	A	M	O	R	F	W	J	N	C	O	P	T	P	F
F	U	E	E	N	I	G	V	I	T	A	M	I	N	M
S	E	D	Q	H	B	T	G	F	L	T	P	Y	D	Y
A	W	I	N	T	E	R	S	H	I	M	C	B	S	W
C	S	C	R	U	R	B	U	O	W	E	V	Q	O	T
F	Z	A	U	R	L	E	R	R	E	A	U	K	C	M
G	G	R	A	Z	K	H	V	Q	X	L	J	A	A	I
H	E	E	D	Q	V	Z	E	S	G	W	C	N	L	Y
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## Meet the Field Interviewer: Willene Miles



My home is in a small town in Georgia known as Tifton. Yes, I am definitely a southern lady! I am delighted to say I have worked on the MCBS since 2013 as well as various other survey projects in the past. MCBS has been the most rewarding work, allowing me to meet an array of people from all walks of life. My MCBS work has taken me from the low country of Louisiana to the northeast with six feet of snow to the heart of the Midwest. Everywhere I go, I meet remarkable respondents. I am continually humbled by the dedication and openness MCBS respondents show when sharing their health care matters.

The data these respondents provide is helping policy makers improve healthcare for millions of Americans in this country. Each of my respondents' needs and experiences are unique, and all respondents' opinions are essential in order to get a complete picture of the Medicare population. I love what I do and enjoy meeting with respondents every day. I quite often remind myself of this quote, "Choose a job you love, and you will never have to work a day in your life."

### References:

- <https://www.htstherapy.com/seasonal-impact-on-older-adults-health/>
- <https://blog.cms.gov/2017/09/14/new-medicare-cards-are-coming-soon/>
- "Dietary, Functional, and Total Fiber." Dietary Reference Intakes for Energy, Carbohydrate, Fiber, Fat, Fatty Acids, Cholesterol, Protein, and Amino Acids (Macronutrients), Institute of Medicine, 2002/2005, pp. 339–421, <http://nap.edu/10490>.
- <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/guide/vitamins-and-minerals-good-food-sources#1>
- <https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/recipes/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/banana-walnut-oatmeal>