

# SMP FRAUD ALERT



## Back Brace Scam

### Beware of Offers for “Free” Braces Covered by Medicare

Scammers are broadcasting TV commercials or contacting Medicare beneficiaries by phone to offer “free or low cost” knee, back and other braces. If you disclose your Medicare number, you can end up with boxes of unwanted and unneeded braces, a compromised Medicare number, and potential denied Medicare claims if you require such braces in the future. **Medicare only pays for durable medical equipment based on medical necessity — meaning it’s an item you really need for your medical condition – and requires a prescription from your doctor, not a doctor you’ve never met or a doctor on TV.**

#### Remember:

- » **If you receive a call from someone offering you a “free” brace covered by Medicare, hang up immediately.**
- » **If medical equipment is delivered to you, don’t accept it unless it was ordered by your physician. Refuse the delivery or return it to the sender. Keep a record of the sender’s name and the date you returned the items.**
- » **Be suspicious of anyone who offers you free medical equipment and then requests your Medicare number. If your personal information is compromised, it may be used in other fraud schemes.**
- » **Only your doctor should prescribe and/or approve any requests for durable medical equipment.**

## COVID-19 SCAMS

### Beware of these COVID-19 Scams

- Sending faxes to Doctor’s office for signature for COVID test kits or N95 masks.
- Free virus test kits in exchange for Medicare number
- Imposter scam using COVID 19
- Grandchild needs money; stuck in Philadelphia because of the virus
- Unauthorized test kits sold online (always consult your MD)
- At-home serology tests sold online (no FDA approval)
- Phony coronavirus contact tracers
- Selling fake cures on social media
- Email or text message
  - Claims senior was in contact with someone who had COVID
  - Ask people to follow links to capture private information
- COVID-19 Vaccine scams

**Guard your Medicare card from scammers who may be contacting you through phone calls, unannounced home visits, colorful postcards, TV and newspaper ads, solicitations in public places, and/or presentations and health fair events.**

**Please report any suspicious contacts to TN SMP at 1-866-836-7677**