



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

WASHINGTON, DC 20201



CONSUMER ALERT

Fraud Alert for People with Diabetes

Criminals who plot to defraud the Government and steal money from the American people have a new target: people with diabetes.

Although the precise method may vary, the scheme generally involves someone pretending to be from the Government, a diabetes association, or even Medicare, calling you. The caller offers "free" diabetic supplies, such as glucose meters, diabetic test strips, or lancets. The caller may also offer other supplies such as heating pads, lift seats, foot orthotics, or joint braces, in exchange for the beneficiaries' Medicare or financial information, or confirmation of this type of personal information. Additionally, you may receive items in the mail that you did not order.

The call is a scam.

If you receive such a call, OIG recommends the following actions:

1. Protect Your Medicare and Other Personal Information

Do not provide your Medicare number or other personal information. Be suspicious of anyone who offers free items or services and then asks for your Medicare or financial information. These calls are not coming from Medicare, diabetes associations, or other similar organizations. While the caller says the items are "free," the items are still billed to Medicare. Once your Medicare information is in the hands of a dishonest person or supplier, you are susceptible to further scams. Alert others about this scheme, and remind them not to provide strangers Medicare numbers or other personal information.

2. Report the Call to Law Enforcement

Report the call to the OIG Hotline at 1-800-HHS-TIPS or online at <http://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/report-fraud/>. As part of your report, provide the name of the company that called you, the company's telephone number and address, and a summary of your conversation with the caller.

3. Check Your Medicare Summary Notice and Medicare Bills

Check your Medicare Summary Notice and other medical information to see if you were charged for items you did not order or did not receive. Also, check for items that were billed multiple times, such as glucose meters, diabetes test strips and lancets, and other supplies. Report any irregular activity to your health care provider and the OIG Hotline at 1-800-HHS-TIPS or online at <http://oig.hhs.gov/fraud/report-fraud/>.

4. Do Not Accept Items That You Did Not Order

You are under no obligation to accept items that you did not order. Instead, you should refuse the delivery and/or return to the sender. Keep a record of the sender's name and the date you returned the item(s) to help OIG catch any future illegal billing.

The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Inspector General (OIG) fights fraud in Government programs. As part of this effort, the OIG relies upon alert citizens to help them catch those who steal from American taxpayers.