

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Q: What is MedExtra?**

MedExtra is a Canadian company that helps people resolve their health problems with nurses, physicians and a network of affiliated physicians and clinics. We recognize that many people desire more time, information, medical resources than the healthcare system and their physicians are equipped to provide.

## **Q: Is MedExtra a clinic?**

No, MedExtra is a client centric medical business. Our clients work closely with our in house physicians & nurse Care Managers and client care advocates. Although we do not examine or assess our clients we have literally thousands of close working relationships with physicians, clinics and hospitals. In effect we are a giant virtual clinic.

## **Q: What is Care Management?**

Care Management is the process whereby our in house physicians and nurses provide empathy, understanding and insight into your problem with a goal towards diagnosis and/or treatment. They provide direction to and liaison with the physicians, clinics and hospitals which are most suited to fulfill your particular needs.

## **Q: I have an excellent family physician, can MedExtra help me?**

Yes, MedExtra can definitely work cooperatively with your family physician to help you. When you have a concern, a worry or a problem MedExtra can provide understanding, a world class Remote Second Opinion, access to difficult to reach specialists or diagnostic tests. In many instances MedExtra can provide the time that you need for peace of mind.

## **Q: Does MedExtra replace my family physician?**

MedExtra does not replace your family physician or your specialist. We work cooperatively with treating physicians and with the existing healthcare system for those problems which are complex and are not resolving as anticipated, where you want more information as to your options, where you are waiting too long for care.

## **Q: I do not have a family physician, can MedExtra find me one?**

We all know how overburdened family physicians are. Although MedExtra cannot find a family physician to follow you on an ongoing basis, we can help you find resources to help with many of the more difficult problems that a family physician normally would.

## **Q: Does MedExtra replace 911 for emergency problems?**

NO! MedExtra is a resource to use in non emergency situations to help resolve a problem or to provide information once you have seen a physician.

## **Q: For years I have been going to a local walk in clinic, should I continue to do so?**

Most definitely. Walk in clinics can provide excellent care for minor problems that are self limiting (that get better on their own). However, in many cases, walk in clinics are not ideal for treating more complex problems. Also, waiting times may be too long. In these cases, MedExtra can work cooperatively or independently of the clinic to assist you in accessing care.

## **Q: If I wake up ill or become ill during the day, should I call MedExtra?**

MedExtra is not an emergency or urgent care resource. If you wake up ill or become ill, depending on the gravity of the situation, you will be best served either in a hospital emergency department, a walk in clinic or by your family physician. Once assessed, treated and discharged home, we recommend that you request that

a copy of your file be faxed to MedExtra for future reference.

**Q: Do I need to go to MedExtra for them to help me?**

No, MedExtra is not a clinic. All communications with our nurses and physicians is done over the phone, by fax or by email.

**Q: Will MedExtra help me with any problem even if it is very minor?**

Yes, MedExtra's nurse and physician Care Managers are trained, empathetic professionals who will deal promptly and efficiently with any from simple, minor problems to life threatening illnesses.

**Q: Will MedExtra help me, even if my problem has been going on for a long time and I have been seen by many physicians?**

Yes. MedExtra is very successful in helping our clients with unresolved or long-standing medical problems. Since MedExtra is not insurance, having a pre-existing illness or condition does not preclude you from using our services. In fact we encourage it. In some cases you may need to redo some of the assessments and diagnostic tests that you have already done.

**Q: Can MedExtra help me with a long-standing problem when all the specialists who have seen me cannot find out what the cause is?**

Yes we can. Unfortunately in our overburdened healthcare system physicians do not have the time to see you in the comprehensive way you wish to be seen. Many of our clients have said that each specialist looks only at his area of expertise and that this fails to take into account their total being. From the beginning our care managers strive to understand your problem and your goals so as to provide personalized comprehensive 'whole person' care and not just a series of very narrow interventions looking at only one single issue.

**Q: I have been diagnosed with cancer and am starting treatment, how can MedExtra help me?**

Cancer is a complicated disease with many different treatments currently in use. For years, MedExtra has been helping Canadians procure second opinions from world class cancer centres to confirm the diagnosis and treatment. In many cases we work with your physicians to monitor treatment to ensure that you get the most appropriate up to date care. This can all be done without you ever having to travel.

**Q: I am on a waiting list for a specialist, a test or surgery, can MedExtra help?**

There are many people waiting to see a specialist, waiting for a test or waiting for surgery. MedExtra can submit a clear concise summary to your own doctor, or one of our associated physicians. This is often very helpful in resolving the problem, reducing anxiety and in ensuring that scheduling is done in a medically appropriate timeframe, rather than just according to the waitlist. Alternatively MedExtra has many private resources available to accelerate access to care.

**Q: Won't my existing physicians be upset or mad at me if I use MedExtra?**

No, not at all. Our client care advocates, nurses and physicians are specially trained to work cooperatively with physicians. In our 6 years of providing help to our clients, this has never happened. Physicians' primary goal is to help their patients get better. In difficult or complex cases, they welcome MedExtra's involvement and meticulously detailed communications. Many of our clients are sent to us by their physicians.

**Q: Do I need to tell my physician that I am using MedExtra?**

This choice is entirely yours. The cooperative involvement of the treating physician always has a positive impact.

**Q: Do I need to fill out any forms when I use MedExtra?**

Yes, you will be asked to sign a mandate and release of information.

These forms are necessary for us to obtain any necessary medical records, while also allowing us to seek medical assistance on your behalf. As soon as you fax us back signed copies of the mandate and release, one of our care managers will contact you to get an overview of your situation and recommend the appropriate steps to take.

Returning these forms to us creates no obligation, financial or otherwise.

**Q: What happens when I call MedExtra?**

When you call MedExtra you will speak with one of our Client Care Advocates, and one of our nurse Care Managers to gain an understanding of your case in order to create a plan of action to diagnose your problem, or to find treatment. *Working closely with one of our physician Team Leaders, your Care Management team will prepare the plan of action and within a 72 hours your Care Manager will get back to you, by phone or email to finalize the action plan.*

**Q: What happens next?**

Your Care Manager will explain the action plan and provide choices as to where you can have the necessary diagnostic tests, assessments, consults, treatments etc. Choices provided in the public or private systems, as they are available. Our Client Care Advocates can then book all the required appointments for you.

**Q: If I choose to use private resources, does MedExtra pay?**

Members are responsible for payment of all private tests, procedures, consults arranged by MedExtra and provided by our network physicians and clinics. These and any out of pocket costs are identified in writing to



our members prior to MedExtra arranging any appointments. In many cases, some or all of the costs are reimbursable under health benefit plans.

**Q: Are these private tests and procedures covered by my health benefit plan?**

Before incurring any expenses, you should always check with your benefit plan administrator to verify if the particular expenses are covered.

**Q: What happens once I have had a test, where do the results go?**

If you have a requisition for this test, the results will go back to the physician who requested the test and to MedExtra if you wish for us to follow your care.

**Q: What happens if I have no family physician, or if a certain test or consult is required and I do not have a requisition or consult?**

In some cases where you have not been seen by a physician, we may feel a certain plan of action is required. In order that this is confirmed, an assessment by one of our network physicians will be arranged whereby the appropriate tests will be ordered. This review by MedExtra and assessment by a physician are key parts in our process to ensure that you have a high level of comprehensive care.

**Q: How much Care Management time do I have available?**

The amount of Care Management that you have available depends on the MedExtra package that has been purchased. The actual amount varies from 1 hr to an unlimited number of hours.

**Q: What is Cancer Care Management?**

When cancer strikes or recurs, many people look to nationally or internationally recognized cancer centres to confirm the diagnosis and treatment, to research the



latest in treatment options and to monitor ongoing their treatment.

MedExtra's Cancer Care Management's remote second opinion at nationally and internationally renowned cancer treatment centers provides confirmation of diagnosis, treatment and available treatment options.

To ensure that these high standards of care are available to our clients in Canada, our Care Managers then provide liaison between the world renowned centres and the local treating physicians.

**Q: I know someone who is not a member who could use your services. What should they do?**

Other than Cancer Care Management, MedExtra services are available to anyone, regardless of age, pre-existing conditions or delay from diagnosis. A non-member can simply purchase a HealthMinder membership or Care Management at \$180 per hour.

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