

# Get more information about your doctor before you visit!

Specialists with the Aexcel® designation in the Aetna performance network

Our performance network gives you access to some high-performing specialists.

Specialty doctors and doctor groups with the Aexcel designation:

- are part of the Aetna network of health care providers
- have met certain industry-accepted practices for clinical performance
- have met Aetna's efficiency standards



## You'll find other advantages, too

When you visit one of these doctors, you can eliminate referrals. You may also be able to lower the costs you pay out of pocket.

Saving time and money — now that's a smart idea!

## Get care in 12 specialty areas

Visit doctors in these 12 areas:

- Cardiology (heart and blood)
- Cardiothoracic (heart and chest) surgery
- Gastroenterology (digestive system)
- General surgery
- Neurology (nervous system)
- Neurosurgery (spinal column, spinal cord, brain and nerves)
- Obstetrics and gynecology (pregnancy and women's reproductive system)
- Orthopedics (bones and joints)
- Otolaryngology/ENT (the ears, nose, throat (ENT), and head and neck)
- Plastic surgery
- Urology (urinary tract and urogenital system)
- Vascular (veins and arteries) surgery

**Consider Aexcel-designated doctors when you need specialty care.**

**They meet certain standards for clinical performance and efficiency.**

## Get the details about Aexcel

### Frequently asked questions:

#### How do we choose specialists for Aexcel designation?

We review clinical quality and efficiency.

We track:

- hospital readmission rates after 30 days
- rates of health complications during hospital care
- other treatments, by specialty, shown to improve outcomes

The above measures require that doctors have a certain minimum number of Aetna cases in order to be reviewed on these measures. The measures are based on recognized standards from organizations like the National Quality Forum (NQF), AQA, National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA), American Board of Medical Specialties, American Osteopathic Association, American Heart Association, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Agency for Health Research and Quality, Society of Thoracic Surgeons, and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Health insurance plans are underwritten or administered by Aetna Life Insurance Company (Aetna).

In addition, doctors may pass the clinical quality criteria if:

- At least 75% of specialists in a group are recognized by either Bridges to Excellence (BTE) or the NCQA in the areas of diabetes, cardiac/stroke or low back/spine; or
- At least 75% of specialists in a group have Board Certification in their Aexcel specialty (Note: Board-eligible status does not meet this requirement); or
- At least 75% of specialists in a group have earned BTE or NCQA Physician Office Link recognition or apply NQF-endorsed measures on using health information technology; or
- The doctor practices at an Aetna Institutes of Quality® (IOQ) facility and his/her primary specialty is the specialty for which the facility is recognized for IOQ.

### Efficiency

We also review the costs of treating Aetna members in each of the 12 Aexcel areas of care. We try to include all costs — not just visits to the doctor's office.

We review inpatient, outpatient, diagnostic, lab and pharmacy claims. Then we compare the total costs of care from each doctor to the costs of other doctors in the same region.

The doctors who best meet these qualifications are chosen to receive the Aexcel designation.

### How can I find an Aexcel-designated doctor?

You can look in your printed Aetna directory to find doctors with this designation. Aexcel-designated doctors have an asterisk next to their name.

Or you can visit our DocFind® online provider directory at [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com). Aexcel-designated doctors have a blue star next to their name.

This material is for information only and is not an offer or invitation to contract. Providers are independent contractors and are not agents of Aetna. Provider participation may change without notice. Aetna does not provide care or guarantee access to health services. **Aexcel designation is only a guide to choosing a physician. Members should confer with their existing physicians and the specialists they're selecting before making a decision. Designations have the risk of error and should not be the sole basis for selecting a doctor.** Not all health services are covered. See plan documents for a complete description of benefits, exclusions, limitations and conditions of coverage. Health insurance plans contain exclusions and limitations. Information is believed to be accurate as of the production date; however, it is subject to change. For more information about Aetna plans, refer to [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com).

Policy forms issued in Oklahoma include: GR-23 and/or GR-29/GR-29N.



More information is available on Aetna Navigator®, our secure member website, at [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com). Just log in, go to the "Provider Details" page, and click on the "View Clinical Quality and Efficiency" tab. It shows if the doctor meets standards for Aexcel designation.

You can find more information on Aexcel designation in our *Understanding Aexcel* brochure. For a complete description including performance measures, evaluation process and details regarding evaluation methodology, such as data sources, statistical significance and other technical information, refer to the *Aexcel Methodology* guide. It's all available online on [www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com). Just do a search for "performance networks."

### Do I need a referral to see an Aexcel-designated doctor?

Usually not. Please check the back of your Aetna ID card for referral requirements.

### Will I pay extra?

No. In fact, you'll reduce your out-of-pocket expenses compared to visiting a specialist who does not have the designation. Plus, doctors with the Aexcel designation have been shown to work efficiently within the health care system. That is good news for your health ... and your health care budget.

### What if a doctor is part of a group?

If a doctor is part of a group, we evaluate the entire group. In this case, performance-measurement results of other doctors in the group affect each individual doctor's evaluation.

### NCQA background

The NCQA is an independent not-for-profit organization that accredits and evaluates a wide range of health care organizations and recognizes physicians in key clinical

areas. Its mission is to improve the quality of health care. NCQA serves as an independent examiner for Aetna, reviewing how Aetna's Aexcel program meets criteria required by the State of New York and national principles of the Patient Charter established by the Consumer-Purchaser Disclosure Project.

The New York report is available on the NCQA website at

<http://nyrxreport.ncqa.org>

If you want to register a complaint about Aexcel and/or physician measurement activities with Aetna:

- Call our Member Services Department using the telephone number displayed on the member ID card, or
- Submit a request in writing to the Appeals Resolution Team address shown on your Explanation of Benefits (EOB) or the Member Complaint and Appeal form.

You may also register your complaint with NCQA by sending it in writing to [customersupport@ncqa.org](mailto:customersupport@ncqa.org) or to NCQA Customer Support, 1100 13th Street, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC, 20005.

**We regularly review specialists for the Aexcel designation. Please check your doctor's status before making an appointment.**

We want you to know®



[www.aetna.com](http://www.aetna.com)

©2009 Aetna Inc.