

How does TennCare decide if it will pay for your child's health care?

(What is Medical Necessity?)



TennCare only pays for health care for a child if the care is:

- Ordered by a doctor*, **and**
- Needed to find out what's wrong or to treat it, **and**
- Safe and it works (effective), **and**
- Not an experiment, **and**
- The cheapest care that is enough (adequate).

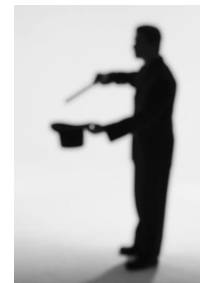
When someone's care meets these rules, TennCare calls it **medically necessary**.

Your child has a right to get the care she needs. There's a law that can help!

(What is EPSDT?)



"**Medically necessary**" are the magic words that make TennCare pay for a child's care. But TennCare cannot use "not medically necessary" as an excuse to deny kids care.



* When we say "doctor," it means a doctor, nurse practitioner, midwife, physician's assistant, therapist, dentist, etc.

What can you do if TennCare says a child cannot get care because it's not medically necessary?

Use a law called "**EPSDT**."

EPSDT is a federal law that TennCare must follow. You can use this law to help kids on TennCare get the health care they need.

EPSDT stands for Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment. It gives kids on TennCare, up to age 21, the right to the treatment they need. This includes treatment for **physical health** and **mental health**. EPSDT says a child should get treatment even if it won't make them better, if it will keep them from getting worse.

While the state may deny care for adults, it must cover all medical care that children on TennCare need.



TennCare must cover medically necessary care for kids. This includes:

- Case Management
- Dental Care
- Home Health Care
- Hospice Care
- Medical Equipment
- Mental Health Services
- Organ Transplants
- Physical Therapy
- Private Duty Nursing
- Rehabilitation
- Respirator Care
- Speech Therapy
- Any other type of remedial care recognized by state law and done by someone licensed to do it.

The last thing on the list is a catch-all. It covers the things a child may need that are not on the list.

Did TennCare say your child can't get care that her doctor* said she needs? You should **appeal!**

You should appeal if:

- Your child has to wait too long for treatment, **or**
- Your child has to travel too far to get treatment, **or**
- Your child needs more treatment than TennCare says it will cover.

To appeal, call TennCare Solutions at 1-800-878-3192. You can get an appeal form at www.state.tn.us/tenncare/mem-appeal.html



You can appeal by phone, mail, or fax. Keep a record of the date and time that you appeal. Keep a copy of your appeal form if you appeal by mail or fax. Then you will have proof that you appealed.



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Legal Aid Society of Middle Tennessee and the
Cumberlands helped make this brochure easy to read.