General

Q: What is the service that Best Doctors® provides?
A: Best Doctors, an independent third-party vendor, offers an expert second opinion when you or a covered family member receives a serious medical diagnosis. The service uses physicians who are recognized experts to help you confirm your diagnosis and better understand your treatment options. The whole process takes place over the phone, so you can call in the privacy of your home.

Q: Why is my Company offering this service?
A: The Home Depot recognizes the complexity of the medical system and the challenges and stresses that can occur when someone is uncertain about a medical diagnosis or the appropriate treatment. The Home Depot is providing this new service as part of the Company’s initiative to help you make more informed decisions about your health care. It is intended to supplement the work of your own doctor, not replace it, and most doctors find that collaboration with other experts can only help in complex situations.

Q: Do I have to use this program?
A: No. Participation is completely voluntary.

Q: What kinds of medical diagnoses would qualify for this service?
A: Typically, Best Doctors provides services to individuals who have recently received a diagnosis of a medical condition for which they are unsure of, or face a difficult medical decision regarding treatment. Best Doctors will review the diagnosis and help the individual understand treatment options. Best Doctors does not provide consulting services for behavioral/mental health issues. Additionally, Best Doctors does not provide consulting services for occupational injuries or illnesses (i.e. Workers Compensation).

Q: Do I have to follow the Best Doctors recommendations?
A: No. You remain in full control of your health care decision making. The information you and your treating physician receive from Best Doctors is intended to help you make informed decisions regarding your treatment.

Q: Who are the doctors that Best Doctors uses?
A: Best Doctors physicians are medical specialists selected by their clinical peers. As of 2009, the program includes about 5 percent of physicians across the United States covering more than 40 specialties and 375 subspecialties of medicine. Best Doctors identifies the expert(s) best qualified to work on each case.

Q: Do I have to pay anything to participate in this program?
A: No. The program is funded by The Home Depot. If you decide to get additional tests or other services as a result of a recommendation from Best Doctors, charges for those services will be paid according to the provisions of your health plan.

Q: Can you give me an example of how Best Doctors has helped someone?
A: Yes. Roslyn’s doctor discovered a lump in her throat during a routine check-up. She saw a number of specialists who performed many tests, including a biopsy that was normal. After months of treatment with medications, the lump grew larger and Roslyn felt worse. Her doctors continued to recommend “just keeping an eye on it.” So Roslyn called Best Doctors.

As they do in all cases where there has been a biopsy, Best Doctors re-tested the original biopsy tissue. The Best Doctors pathology expert determined that her biopsy did not appear to be normal. The Best Doctors thyroid expert recommended immediate removal of her thyroid. Roslyn and her doctor took the Best Doctors advice, and a test from her surgery indicated that she did in fact have cancer. Thanks to Best Doctors, Roslyn’s cancer was caught in time. Today she is well on the road to full recovery and has a bright future ahead.

Eligibility

Q: Who is eligible to use the service?
A: All associates & their dependents who are enrolled in a The Home Depot medical plan.
About the Process

Q: How does the process work?
A: Best Doctors is an easy-to-use, confidential program that begins with a phone call to Best Doctors at 1-866-904-0910. The service is convenient because you can do everything over the phone instead of having to make a trip to a doctor’s office. The process works as follows:

- A dedicated Best Doctors Member Advocate (nurse) will conduct an in-depth discussion with you about your medical condition, including obtaining a full health history of you and your family.
- After the discussion, following your written authorization, medical records concerning your present condition and diagnosis are gathered by Best Doctors.
- When the records are received, the Best Doctors medical team conducts a comprehensive analysis of your clinical information. They select the appropriate expert(s) for your medical condition to evaluate your case based on the most up-to-date medical thinking.
- Your Member Advocate sends you a report of the expert’s findings, summarized in an easy-to-read format, as well as a comprehensive Expert Report for your treating physician’s reference.
- Best Doctors speaks with you about the report's findings and then delivers the report to your treating physician, if you authorize it.
- Throughout the process, the Member Advocate is available to answer your questions. At both six weeks and six months after you receive the report, the Member Advocate will follow up with you to see if you need any other help.

Q: How long does the process take?
A: Depending on the complexity of the case and responsiveness of an individual’s current physician(s) to medical records requests, the Best Doctors process can take anywhere from two to eight weeks.

Q: How will Best Doctors work with my treating physician?
A: Best Doctors first speaks with you about the report’s findings. Then, provided you authorize it, Best Doctors will share the report with your treating physician. The goal is to provide useful and actionable information so that you and your physician can make more informed decisions together regarding treatment.

Q: What if my doctor tells me that I need to have a significant medical procedure right away? Can Best Doctors help?
A: For urgent medical situations where immediate intervention is required, the Best Doctors analytic process is not an option. In these situations, Best Doctors may be able to provide you with appropriate questions to ask your provider before you proceed with treatment. Once your condition is stabilized, Best Doctors can evaluate your case for future treatment options.

Confidentiality/Privacy

Q: How will the Best Doctors organization and its expert physicians maintain my privacy?
A: Your privacy is guaranteed just as it is today for your other health information. Reporting of information adheres to strict Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy laws. Your specific name and medical information will NOT be shared with anyone, including your employer, without your written consent. Only de-identified and aggregate information will be used for program evaluation and improvement purposes.

Q: Will Best Doctors be talking to anyone at my health plan?
A: Best Doctors can release your report to the appropriate individuals involved with your care—for example, a health plan case manager—but only if you request that the information be shared.