

## Important Pill Splitting Facts

- Unison compensates hundreds of specially contracted pharmacists to split pills for your Unison patients to assure that the split is conducted safely and professionally
- Unison requires contracted pharmacists to perform the professional services related to half-tablet dispensing; including any necessary physician/prescriber interface, patient education & counseling, and performing the splitting in the appropriate setting.
- The program is entirely voluntary; pill-splitting occurs only when the patient, pharmacist and physician/prescriber concur that pill splitting is safe and acceptable.
- The program operates under consent of DPW
- Pill splitting is backed by a scientific study conducted at Stanford University Medical Center by Randall Stafford, M.D., PhD. Our program is strictly limited to pills such as those identified in the study that have a wide therapeutic window (not enteric-coated or slow-released) and otherwise have physical characteristics that lend them to split cleanly.
- Pill splitting is routinely endorsed by AARP. In fact, their adviser on the wise use of medications, William H. Thomas, M.D., promotes pill splitting in a recent edition of AARP Magazine.
- Pill splitting saves state and federal tax dollars and helps to preserve the medical assistance pharmacy benefit. This is especially important concerning behavioral health medications which are both expensive and increasing in utilization.
- Pill splitting is routinely practiced by the VA and as one VA physician aptly put it: "If pill splitting is good enough for our military heroes, it ought to be good enough for all other Americans."
- Requires very little work by the physician. When the prescriber orders a half-tablet Rx for the above drugs or responds to a call from a pharmacist, no additional paperwork is necessary, the pharmacist will do the rest.
- The program is free from mandates or punitive measures.
- Our automated data system will identify each time the participating pharmacist splits an eligible drug and this will be detailed in a pill split Explanation of Benefits (EOB) with the exception of Risperdal, Topamax and Lamictal. Because of the tendency towards BID dosing, these prescriptions are not accurately identified by our automated system. Consequently, the pharmacist will need to print an extra bottle label and affix it to a "BID Redemption Sheet" (supplied by the Plan) and simply FAX this to our dedicated FAX (412-457-1499) to get credit.
- Payment to the pharmacist for the prior month's splits is usually made near the close of the following month and includes an "Explanation of Benefits" type statement. Payment will be made via a check that is sent directly from the Plan and is separate from any payments from the PBM.
- Unison has a dedicated employee to help you should you have any questions on the EOB or about the administration of the program (including signing up for those who have not already done so). Deanna Whetsel can be reached Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. directly by telephone at 412.349.6177.
- Unison also offers an on-site "in service" whereby we will come to your practice or pharmacy and provide all of the necessary information regarding the administration of the program to you and your staff.

Stewardship of the available funding for the Medical Assistance population is an important responsibility. Active and disciplined endorsement in support of this Voluntary Pill Splitting Program is ethically sound and fiscally prudent. Please help by routinely ordering half-tablets of the medications listed on the Unison's Tablet Splitting Initiative document.