

THE LEWISBORO LEDGER

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How to Navigate the System

By Jackie Perry

Written by Martin Rosen and Abbie Leibowitz M.D., *The Healthcare Survival Guide* may be a small paperback but it's loaded with useful and valuable information. The authors are cofounders of Health Advocate, the nation's leading independent healthcare advocacy and assistance company.

Subtitled "Cost-Saving Options for the Suddenly Unemployed and Anyone Else Who Wants to Save Money," a brief review of its chapters gives you a sense of its broad coverage. Consider COBRA: a temporary safety net that might be right for you. Comparison shop: private health insurance plans are not all alike, weigh them carefully. Keep a watch on your bills: are your doctor or hospital charges correct? Discover health advocacy: Get real help to navigate the maze. Look into government-sponsored programs: government programs can be low-cost or even free. Find out if you qualify. Uncover cost-cutting strategies: Trim doctor fees, 'visit free clinics'. Take charge of your health: Eat better, exercise more, stop smoking, reduce your level of stress. Get drugs at a discount: You may not have to pay full price for your medications.

Money-saving tips include checking pharmaceutical Web sites for free trial offers for medications, or asking about the cost of a medical procedure. Prices can range from several hundred to several thousand dollars within the same zip code. As the authors say in their introduction, "We've written this book to provide immediate information all in one place about affordable and, often, little-known healthcare resources.

The book is simple to navigate - bright red type highlights important points and resources, and distinctive graphics make it enjoyable to read and easy to access information. The book is available at its Web site. healthcaresurvivalguide.com or at Amazon.com. The site itself lists many of the Helpful Resources found in the book.