

TOP

10

**THINGS TO KNOW
BEFORE
ENROLLING IN
MEDICARE**

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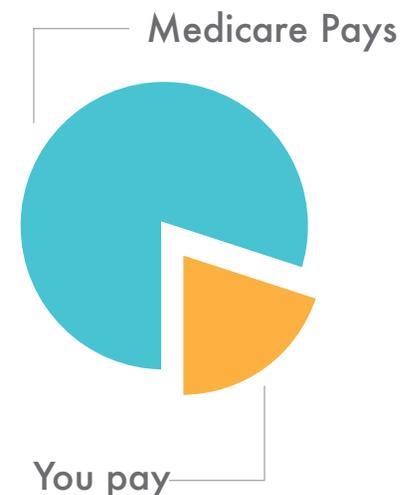
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1 ORIGINAL MEDICARE HEALTH INSURANCE IS NOT ENOUGH

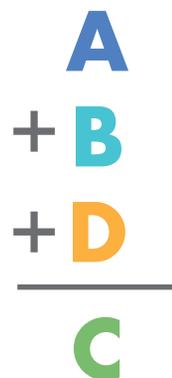
Medicare health insurance has a lot of parts and can be confusing. As a result, few people realize that the coverage offered by Original Medicare, or Parts A and B, is limited to hospital insurance and medical insurance. This covers around 80 percent of your medical costs, leaving the other 20 percent up to you. In the event of an unexpected illness or injury, you could put your savings at risk. Before signing up for Original Medicare, look into options like Medicare Advantage plans or Medicare supplements to help you cover what Original Medicare does not.



2 PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE IS NOT AUTOMATIC

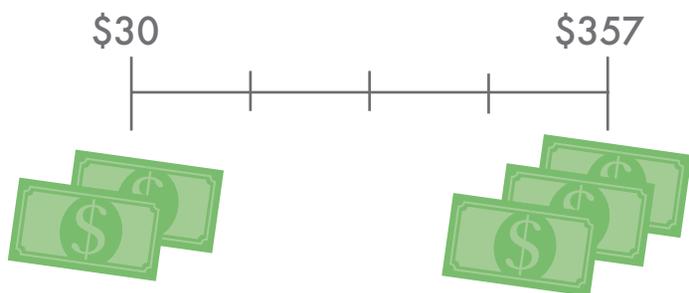
Original Medicare does not include prescription drug coverage, and prescription drugs can account for a large portion of your out-of-pocket costs. That's why many people choose to join a Medicare Advantage Plan that includes Part D prescription drug coverage, or sign up for a Medicare Part D prescription drug plan through a private company.

3 PART C OFFERS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WITH EXTRAS



One of Medicare's greatest features is its flexibility. With many available options, you can choose how you receive your Medicare benefits. One popular option, Medicare Part C, or Medicare Advantage, combines your Part A, B and D coverage for a more comprehensive plan. These plans are unique in that they often offer dental, vision and other extra benefits, as well. Premiums for these plans vary based on the coverage included, but many plans offer \$0 premiums.

Medicare Supplement Monthly Premium Cost



4 MEDICARE SUPPLEMENTS CAN BE EXPENSIVE

Medicare supplements are one way to help reduce your additional out-of-pocket medical expenses not covered by Original Medicare. However, they can be expensive. They have a monthly premium that ranges from \$30 to \$357 per month, depending on your health status and what type of supplement plan you choose. It's also worth noting that supplements do not offer prescription drug, hearing, vision or dental coverage. As a result, in addition to your monthly Original Medicare Part B premium, you'll be paying separate premiums for your Medicare supplement and prescription drug coverage. All these premiums can add up, while still leaving you without vision, dental and hearing coverage.

5 HAVING A GOOD PERSONAL PHYSICIAN IS IMPORTANT

As we age, it becomes more and more important to have a physician who can help us manage our health and wellness. Establishing a trusted relationship with an internal medicine or family medicine doctor will help you maintain your health, or manage chronic conditions. If you already have a primary care doctor whom you trust and have established a solid relationship with, you will want to make sure he or she accepts the insurance plan you choose. If you think you might prefer a different primary care doctor, use this opportunity to make a change.



6 NOT ALL PLANS OFFER OUT-OF-NETWORK COVERAGE

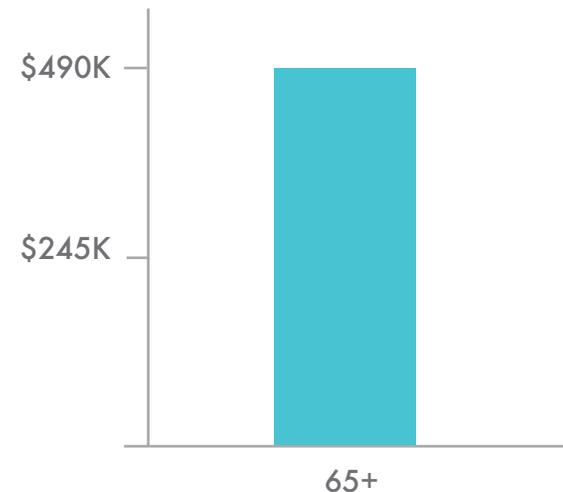
When choosing how to receive your Medicare benefits, it's important to consider your lifestyle. For the occasional traveler, most Medicare plans cover emergency or urgent care. However, if you spend large amounts of time away from home and have specialists that you need to see on a regular basis while out of town, you will want to make sure the plan you choose covers those costs.



8 NOW IS THE TIME FOR GREAT COVERAGE

According to HealthView Services, a software company that projects healthcare costs, an average 65-year-old couple can expect to pay almost \$490,000 in total health-related costs throughout retirement. That's why now is the right time to investigate plans, and ensure that you have all the coverage you need to enjoy your retirement, and minimize out-of-pocket spending.

Estimated Total Healthcare Expenses



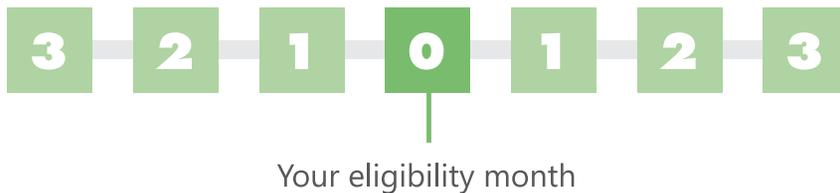
7 MEDICARE IS NOT PREMIUM FREE

Many assume that Medicare is premium free. However, Part B of Original Medicare has a premium that varies depending on your income. In most cases, the premium amount is deducted directly from your Social Security check. In addition, this premium does not cover prescription drugs. When signing up for Medicare benefits, look into exactly how much all of your premiums will be, and pick the right option for your budget.

9 SIGN UP FOR MEDICARE ON TIME

Medicare does put emphasis on signing up when first eligible. When you turn 65 or otherwise become eligible for Medicare, enrollment windows open, but some of these windows close quickly. If you wait too long, you may have fewer choices or face penalties and higher premiums. The initial enrollment period is a seven-month window that begins three months before your 65th birthday and ends three months after. You can enroll in Parts A, B, C and/or D during that time.

Initial Enrollment Period



10 LONG-TERM CARE IS NOT COVERED

While Medicare covers 80 percent of healthcare expenses, it generally does not cover long-term care. Under certain conditions, Medicare will pay for a skilled-nursing facility or home healthcare, but Medicare does not cover services that help you with daily activities such as dressing and bathing. With Original Medicare alone, those costs must be paid out of pocket. If you have concerns about these potential costs, you may want to investigate purchasing a long-term care insurance policy.

