

MediCare Basics

A Quick Guide From [MedicalRecords.com](https://www.MedicalRecords.com)TM

What's in this guide?

This guide will help you will help you understand some of the basics of Medicare, and some of the options available to you, as a Medicare beneficiary.

Ultimately, the choices you make about your own Medicare coverage are up to you. And this guide can give you a solid foundation to help you make these important decisions.

Rest assured, we are standing by to answer your questions and assist you in any way we can.



Parts of Original Medicare

Original Medicare consists of Part A and Part B.
Most Medicare beneficiaries pay a premium for Part B coverage.



Part A

Part A is hospital coverage.



Part B

Part B is medical coverage.



Optional Parts of Medicare

Medicare Part C and Part D are important options* that can help you pay some of the out-of-pocket costs not covered by Original Medicare.



Part C

Part C is also known as Medicare Advantage.



Part D

Part D is prescription drug coverage.



You have three choices as a Medicare beneficiary.

1. You can rely on Original Medicare alone to provide your coverage. However, it's important to know that Original Medicare covers only about 80% of most people's medical expenses. You are responsible for the rest—and there is no limit to the out-of-pocket costs you may be required to pay. Original Medicare does not include prescription drug coverage.
2. You can purchase a Medicare Supplement insurance plan in addition to Original Medicare to fill the gaps not covered by Medicare alone. Generally, people with Medicare Supplement insurance plans can see any doctor they want, so they are not limited to a particular insurance plan's network. Medicare Supplement insurance plans do not include prescription drug coverage. For prescription drug coverage, a separate Medicare Part D drug plan must be purchased.
3. You can choose a Medicare Advantage plan (Medicare Part C) to provide all of the benefits you are entitled to under Medicare—plus extra benefits. Most Medicare Advantage plans include Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage. Medicare Advantage plans, provide these benefits through a contract with the government. With a Medicare Advantage plan, you may have to pay more if you see a doctor or provider who is not in the plan's network. However, with a Medicare Advantage plan, there will be an annual limit to the out-of-pocket costs you pay.

Original Medicare doesn't cover everything.

And it doesn't include prescription drug coverage at all.

- Original Medicare was not designed to cover all of your health care expenses.
- Original Medicare only covers about 80% of your medical expenses.
 - You are responsible for paying the other 20% of your medical costs.
 - Original Medicare generally pays for your hospital care minus a deductible.
 - You are responsible for 100% of your prescription costs.

Annual Election Period

Except under special circumstances, you may only choose or change your Part C (Medicare Advantage) plan or Part D prescription drug plan during certain times of the year. During the Medicare Annual Election, you can join, switch or drop a Medicare health or drug plan for the following year.



The choices you make during the Annual Election Period will take effect on January 1 of the upcoming year.

Special Election Periods

You may join a Part C or Part D plan at other times of the year, under certain circumstances, including, but not limited to:

- When you first become eligible for Medicare.
- If you are on both Medicare and Medicaid.
- If your current plan is terminated.
- If you move to an area not served by your current plan.

The Advantage of Medicare Advantage

Medicare Advantage providers have a contract with the federal government to provide your Medicare benefits in one simple plan, including additional coverage you may need.



When you join a Medicare Advantage plan,

you are still enrolled in Medicare, although you won't have to use your Medicare card to obtain services.

- Your Medicare Advantage plan will provide your Part A (hospital) and Part B* (medical) coverage and other medically necessary services.
- Most Medicare Advantage plans include your Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage as well as additional benefits.
- Because Medicare pays the insurance companies to provide this coverage, Medicare Advantage premiums are generally lower than what you might pay for a Medicare Supplement insurance plan.
- You'll find that some Medicare Advantage providers offer plans with a \$0 monthly premium.

* You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium

Which type of plan is best for you?

Now that you know the basic types of additional coverage available to you as a Medicare beneficiary, you'll be better prepared to make the right choice for your situation.

Medicare Advantage plans (Part C)

- Are provided by companies with a Medicare contract
- Most INCLUDE prescription drug coverage
- You may only join during specified enrollment periods

Medicare Supplement plans

- Are NOT a part of Medicare
- You may join these plans at any time of year, but you may have to answer health questions or take a physical exam to be accepted
- Do NOT include prescription drug coverage, so you'll probably want to add a Part D plan to complete your coverage

* You may join a Part D prescription drug plan ONLY during specified enrollment periods.

Compare your options

The Annual Election Period is your yearly opportunity to compare your options and choose a Medicare Advantage plan that best meets your needs and budget.

To help get you started, here are some things to consider:

- Does the plan offer a \$0 monthly premium*?
- Are the doctors and specialists that you see included in the plan's network?
- Does the plan formulary include your prescription drug

* You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B premium.