



## What You Need to Know About Medicare

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Medicare is a federal program that provides health insurance to retired individuals, regardless of their medical condition, and some younger people with disabilities or certain health conditions.

Part A (hospital insurance) helps cover inpatient care in a hospital (but not physicians' fees), a limited amount of post-hospital care in a skilled nursing facility, hospice care and some home health care.

Part B (medical insurance) helps cover physicians' services, inpatient and outpatient medical services, outpatient hospital care and diagnostic tests. Part B covers medically necessary services or supplies and preventive services.

Part C (Medicare Advantage) plans provide benefits and services covered under Parts A and B and may offer additional coverage such as vision, hearing, dental and other health and wellness services. Many plans include prescription drug coverage.

Part D (prescription drug coverage) plans help cover the cost of prescription drugs and are available from private, Medicare-approved insurance companies. Each Medicare Prescription Drug Plan has its own list of covered drugs.

Of course, Medicare doesn't cover everything. You may need to purchase supplemental health insurance such as a Medigap plan (if you're enrolled in Original Medicare) or specialized insurance (such as a long-term care policy).

If you are already receiving Social Security, you will be automatically enrolled in Medicare when you turn 65.

Although there's no cost to enroll in Medicare Part A (Hospital Insurance), you'll pay a premium to enroll in Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance). If you've been automatically enrolled in Part B, you'll be notified that you have a certain amount of time after your enrollment date to decline coverage.

Medicare Advantage Plans (Part C) are offered by private, Medicare-approved insurance companies. Medicare Prescription Drug Plans (Part D) may also be available at an additional cost to those enrolled in Original Medicare or included in Medicare Advantage Plans.

If you decide to postpone applying for Social Security past your 65th birthday, you can still enroll in Medicare when you turn 65. The Social Security Administration suggests that you call [\(800\) 772-1213](tel:8007721213) at least three months before you turn 65 to discuss your options. You can apply for Medicare online at the Social Security website, [ssa.gov](https://ssa.gov), in person at a local office, or by phone.

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