

# What Does Medicare Cover?

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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. You can receive Medicare coverage either by enrolling in Original Medicare or a Medicare Advantage Plan (typically an HMO or a PPO).

Original Medicare is divided into hospital insurance (Part A) and medical insurance (Part B), which are run by the federal government. 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. 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).

Each Medigap plan offers a different set of benefits. All cover certain out-of-pocket costs, including Medicare coinsurance amounts. Some plans also cover other costs, such as all or part of Medicare Part A deductibles, skilled nursing facility care coinsurance, and foreign travel emergency costs. Two additional options, Plans C and F, may be available to you if you were eligible for Medicare before Jan-

uary 1, 2020 but have not yet enrolled in a plan, or if you already have either of these plans. These plans cover the Medicare Part B deductible, which new plans are not allowed to do. Medigap policies do not cover certain health-care expenses, including long-term care, vision care, or prescription drugs (to obtain prescription drug coverage you can purchase a Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Plan). You can buy the Medigap plan that best suits your needs. But it's important to note that not all Medigap plans are available in every state.

As for dental coverage, none of the standard Medigap plans available in most of the states offer dental care as a covered service. Federal law does permit the states to allow Medigap insurers to add new benefits to the standardized plans, so it's possible your Medigap policy might now cover dental care. To find out for sure, read your policy or ask your insurer. For more information about Medicare coverages and costs, visit [Medicare.gov](https://www.Medicare.gov).

If you are interested in learning more about this subject, please call me at 803-223-7008 or send an e-mail to [cstanley@janney.com](mailto:cstanley@janney.com). Chip Stanley is an Accredited Investment Fiduciary, Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor, Certified Wealth Strategist, Certified in Long-Term Care, and a Financial Advisor in the Columbia, S.C. office of Janney Montgomery Scott, LLC. He is a member of the Great South Advisory Group, [www.greatsouth-advisorygroup.com](http://www.greatsouth-advisorygroup.com). ■