

Medicare Part D

Prescription drug coverage

What you need to know

All people with Medicare should review their drug coverage options this fall and choose the coverage that's best for them.

You may qualify for Extra Help!

Situation #1

You are single with monthly income less than \$1,103 and assets less than \$7,620... **OR...**

You are a couple with monthly income less than \$1,485 and assets less than \$12,190.

You will qualify for extra help! You are not subject to the coverage gap known as the doughnut hole! You will not owe a monthly premium, annual deductible or high out-of-pocket costs. You will pay no more than \$5.15 for prescription drugs.

To get the extra help, call the Social Security Administration (SSA) at 1-800-772-1213 or go online to www.socialsecurity.gov and complete the *Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs*.

Not everyone must complete the application.

The extra help is automatic for you IF:

- You qualify for full Medicaid benefits.
- OR Medicaid pays your Medicare Part B premium.
- OR you receive Supplemental Security Income from SSA.

Situation #2

You are single with monthly income less than \$1,275 and assets less than \$11,710... **OR...**

You are a couple with monthly income less than \$1,711 and assets less than \$23,410.

You will qualify for extra help! You are not subject to the coverage gap known as the doughnut hole! You will **not** owe a monthly premium, annual deductible or high out-of-pocket costs. You pay a minimal amount for generic or brand name drugs.

To get the extra help: call the Social Security Administration (SSA) at 1-800-772-1213 or go online to www.socialsecurity.gov and complete the *Application for Help with Medicare Prescription Drug Plan Costs*.

If you qualify for extra help, you should enroll in a plan that best suits your prescription drug needs.

Please note: People who receive Extra Help can change plans anytime. The new coverage starts the first day of the month after you enroll.

Other Situations

You have Original Medicare and a private Medicare Supplement (MedSup) policy.

Original Medicare covers few prescription drugs, and MedSup plans no longer have a drug benefit. You can choose to enroll in a stand-alone Part D prescription drug plan.

You receive your benefits from a Medicare Advantage plan, which may include coverage for prescription drugs.

If the Medicare Advantage plan does not include drug coverage, you may choose any stand-alone Part D plan.

You have a retirement benefit.

The employer or union will notify you of your options. *Read their literature carefully and call them with questions.*

You are eligible for drug coverage through the Veteran's Administration (VA).

Enrollment in a Part D plan is optional. Your VA benefit is as good as Part D coverage, which allows you to delay enrolling in Part D. If you do enroll, you will not lose VA coverage.

Special Situations

- New to Medicare
- Moving
- Going into or leaving a nursing facility
- Losing retirement coverage

These situations (*and others*) give you different options. Call OSHIIP for more information.

How do I know which Medicare drug plan is right for me?

- Run your plan comparison at www.medicare.gov
- Or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to have a plan comparison done for you
- Or call OSHIIP for your plan comparison: 1-800-686-1578

Have your Medicare card and prescriptions ready!

The Ohio Senior Health Insurance Information Program — OSHIIP — can help you compare the prescription drug plans available in Ohio and tell you about any other programs that may help you pay drug costs. Call 1-800-686-1578.

What is Medicare Part D?

Part D is Medicare's prescription drug coverage. A comprehensive drug benefit that began Jan. 1, 2006, Part D is available to anyone eligible for Medicare Part A or Part B. People with Medicare may enroll in Part D coverage through either a stand-alone plan or a Medicare Advantage plan. People on Medicare who choose not to enroll and have no other drug coverage may pay more for late enrollment.

How Do I Choose a Part D Plan?

Each year you should review your plan options and look for three things:

- Convenience - Know what pharmacies you can use.
- Cost - Know all the possible out-of-pocket expenses you may have to pay.
- Coverage - Make sure the list of covered drugs (formulary) includes your prescriptions.

The Part D “Doughnut Hole” or “Gap”

In 2008, you enter the “doughnut hole” or “gap” once your total drug costs reach \$2,510. This amount includes any money the plan paid for your drugs as well as your out-of-pocket expenses. While in the gap, you are responsible for 100 percent of your drug costs. The doughnut hole ends when your total drug costs reach \$5,726.25. The plan then pays about 95 percent of your drug costs for the remainder of the calendar year. People who qualify for extra help do not have this coverage gap.

You May Qualify for Extra Help!

See pages 1-2 for details.

Important Dates:

October Announcement of plans. Visit www.medicare.gov and run plan finder to compare plans.

November Annual coordinated election period begins Nov. 15. If you want to make a change, you can do it now.

December Annual coordinated election period ends Dec. 31. It is recommended that you make any changes by Dec. 8.

January Any plan change will take effect Jan. 1.