

Turning 65 and Medicare

Congratulations, you are 1 of 10,000 Baby Boomers turning 65 each & every Day! The milestone of your 65th birthday may be here or just over the horizon but you know very little, if anything, about **Medicare**. Do you need it? What does it cover? When should you sign up? Etc. Etc. Etc.

You Have Questions.... You Need Answers!

Please read the following carefully and note any questions you have.

For most people, turning 65 means you're eligible for original Medicare Part A and Part B. This federal program provides hospital insurance and some medical insurance to Age 65 Plus Americans and those under 65 in certain special cases.

You have options and choices available for healthcare coverage when you are turning 65.

At this time, you could add a stand-alone Medicare Prescription Drug Plan to your **original Medicare** to receive Prescription Medication Coverage.

Or

You may choose to enroll in Medicare Part C, also called **Medicare Advantage**. These plans are available from private insurance companies and must offer the same benefits as Part A and Part B, but may add more coverage such as Vision, Dental, or Prescription Drug Benefits.

Or

You may choose to enroll in **Medicare Supplement** Insurance (called Medigap) that is also available to add to your Medicare coverage and help little bit in advance, especially when you cover the "gaps" in Original Medicare.

If you're still working and have healthcare coverage, Medicare may not be your answer. However, it is important to think about it if you are Turning 65. If you plan to stay on your group health insurance plan when you turn 65, then **PLEASE DO NOT let anyone try and convince you** to elect your Medicare Part B benefits (Medical Insurance). You could be making monthly payments that you don't need to do yet.

Filing for Medicare isn't automatic. Although Medicare eligibility begins at age 65, enrollment is only automatic for those who already have begun receiving Social Security benefits. In that case, the government mails a **Medicare card three months before the date of eligibility**. Those who aren't already receiving Social Security can apply for Medicare through the Social Security Administration, online or by visiting a local office.

Be aware of the late enrollment penalty— If you don't enroll in Medicare when you are first eligible, you may face stiff penalties when you do go to enroll – and those penalties will be with you for as long as you have Medicare. **Now is the time to find out, NO SURPRISES!!!!**

Turning 65 To Do List

7 - 9 Months *Before* Your 65th Birthday

- **Contact the Social Security Administration** at 1-800-772-1213, TTY: 1-800-325- 0778, or go online to ssa.gov to confirm your eligibility for Medicare benefits. ☐
- **Review Your Current Health Care Insurance Coverage** to find out what happens after you become Medicare eligible. If you are working, contact your Human Resources department. **4 to 6 Months Before Your 65th Birthday** ☐
- **Check with your current doctors** to see if they accept Medicare. ☐
- **When you Turn 65, if you have only a few assets** and / or they are of minimal value (not including your home), and your income meets federal or state minimum requirements, **you may qualify for medical and financial assistance.** Through Medicaid, you can be fully covered for the costs of healthcare, long-term home care and, if you qualify, nursing home residence care. In addition, you may qualify for Supplemental Security Income, which is a small monthly cash assistance. **Ask your Medicare Specialist for qualifications and how to apply.** ☐
- **Contact Social Security at 1-800-772-1213** (Toll Free), or visit your local Social Security office to confirm your eligibility for Medicare again and to determine the earliest date when you can request your Medicare Card. ☐
- **Plan to enroll on time to avoid penalties** and delays in coverage; depending on when it is best for you and whether or not you are still working. ☐
- If you plan to enroll in your **Initial Enrollment Period**, set a reminder for yourself for 3 months before your 65th birthday. ☐
- **Review your current health insurance policy** to find out what happens with that coverage when you turn 65. ☐
- **Become familiar with Medicare** and its various parts: A, B, C and D. ☐
- **Contact your Medicare Specialist** to receive a **Free, No-Obligation Informational Healthcare Benefits Review** for Healthcare Choices, Options & Solutions. You can reach your **Medicare Specialist** 5 days a week, 9AM - 7PM. ☐

3 Months *Before* Your 65th Birthday

- **Enroll in Medicare Part A and Part B.** If you haven't received your automatic enrollment packet (Medicare Card) in the mail, contact the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213, TTY/TDD: 1-800-325-0778, or go online to ssa.gov. ☐
- **Research Medicare Plan Insurance Options** with your Medicare Specialist. ☐
- **Select your Medicare Coverage Option** and reach out to your Medicare Specialist for Choice, Options & Solutions and to ask **ANY** questions you may have. **Enroll in a Medicare Plan / Option** that fits your needs. ☐

Helpful Tips

Give yourself plenty of time to learn about medicare choices, options & solutions:

It's a system with many choices and deadlines. Being informed is the best way to avoid mistakes that cost money.

Don't expect to be notified when it's time to sign up: Unless you're already receiving Social Security benefits, you must apply for Medicare. But you won't get any official notice on when or how to enroll.

Enroll when you're supposed to: To avoid permanent late penalties, enroll at age 65 if you're not working, don't have employer insurance or live abroad; or, beyond 65, enroll within eight months of stopping work – perhaps even if you continue to receive COBRA or retiree health benefits from an employer.

Don't despair if you haven't worked long enough to qualify: You may qualify for Medicare on your current or former spouse's work record. Or you may be able to buy into the program.

Don't worry that poor health will affect your coverage: If you qualify for Medicare, you receive full benefits. You can't be denied coverage or charged higher premiums because of current or past health problems.

Remember that medicare is NOT free: You pay premiums for coverage and copayments for most services, unless you qualify for a low-income program or have other, extra insurance.

Don't assume that medicare covers everything: It covers a wide range of health services (including expensive ones like organ transplants), prescription drugs and medical equipment. But there ARE gaps.

Don't expect medicare to cover your dependents: Nobody can get Medicare under age 65, except those who qualify through Social Security Disability.

Prepare legal documents: If you haven't already, now is a good time to get documents in order (Such as a Will, Power of Attorney for Finances, or Living Will). Even though you have many years to live, decision-making could become difficult due to a sudden change of events. That's why it's important to make your health care, end-of-life care, finance and estate decisions now.

This is an important time so make sure you ask questions and give careful consideration to what is important regarding your health coverage.

There are **SO** many choices Each plan has something a little different to offer and each one has pluses and minuses to their coverage.

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