

# The Three Most Common Medicare Options

If you're nearing the Medicare enrollment window, you've probably discovered what most Medicare beneficiaries already know: Medicare is confusing, and the endless supply of information out there can further muddy the waters. To help you avoid information overload and better understand Medicare and all the benefits available to you, we created this guide, any many others, that covers everything from what to look for when you're researching options to what happens if you wait too long to enroll and everything in between. Our goal is to help you find and enroll in a plan that meets your lifestyle, budget and health care needs.

One of the most common and possibly harmful misconceptions about Medicare, is that many people assume that when they enroll in Original Medicare or Parts A and B, their health care expenses are covered. However, in most cases, Original Medicare pays 80 percent of all medical bills and offers no prescription drug coverage. This leaves 20 percent of medical bills and 100 percent of the cost of most prescription drugs up to you. These expenses can add up quickly, and without extra protection, an unexpected illness or injury can put your savings at risk. That's why many choose to add coverage to Original Medicare. It's also

the reason Medicare offers you a variety of coverage options. These options are covered more completely in other guides, but here's a brief overview of the Medicare coverage options available to you.

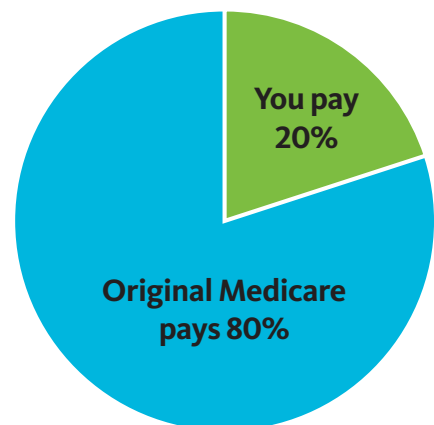
## Medicare Advantage



One popular option is a Medicare Advantage (MA) plan. MA plans are a popular choice because of their convenience, coverage options and extra benefits. Most MA plans feel like the insurance plan you're used to because they offer comprehensive benefits through one company. In general, MA plans cover the 20 percent Medicare doesn't cover while offering Part D prescription drug coverage and valuable extras like dental, vision and hearing benefits. They also come with a maximum out-of-pocket limit that guarantees you'll never have to spend over a certain amount on your medical care. MA plans generally have more than one coverage option to choose from, and many plans start out with a \$0 premium option.

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*Medicare doesn't have to be complicated. And the best part about Medicare is all the options you have.*

## Original Medicare + Part D Prescription Drug Plan



Because prescriptions are often an incredibly costly part of health care, most Medicare beneficiaries look for prescription drug coverage. One option is to sign up for a Medicare Part D prescription drug coverage plan. These plans also come with monthly premiums that vary depending on the type of coverage you choose. With Part D, you'll have prescription drug coverage, but you're still vulnerable to the 20 percent of medical costs Original Medicare doesn't cover.

## Original Medicare + Part D Prescription Drug Plan + Medicare Supplement



Medicare supplements are another way to cover the 20 percent of medical costs that Original Medicare doesn't cover. Supplements are paid for through monthly premiums which can vary significantly based on age, location, health status and many other factors. One of the biggest differences between a Medicare supplement and an MA plan is that supplements don't offer Part D prescription drug coverage or dental, vision and hearing benefits. If you'd like to combine a supplement with drug coverage, you'd have to sign up for a separate Part D plan. This can be costly since each plan comes with its own premium. You'll also have to deal with three separate insurance companies to get all your coverage.

