



Information Partners Can Use on:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly known as Food Stamps)

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

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This tip sheet explains how the SNAP program works with Medicare prescription drug coverage. It's important for people with Medicare to review and compare their health care and prescription drug coverage each year.

What is Medicare prescription drug coverage?

Medicare prescription drug coverage is available to all people with Medicare. Medicare drug plans provide insurance coverage for prescription drugs. These plans are offered by insurance companies and other private companies approved by Medicare. Plans cover both generic and brand-name prescription drugs. Like other insurance, people with Medicare will pay a monthly premium and a share of the cost of the prescription drugs. Costs will be different depending on the Medicare drug plan chosen.

What do people need to know about Medicare prescription drug coverage if they participate in SNAP?

- Medical expenses, including prescription drug expenses, of more than \$35 a month are **deducted** from a person's income who participates in SNAP.
- Changes in medical expenses don't have to be reported until the SNAP benefit is renewed. However, if medical expenses go up for any reason, the increased cost may be reported any time.
- Enrollment in a Medicare drug plan is optional.
- Enrollment for Medicare drug plans is from October 15–December 7 each year for people who already have Medicare. Your coverage will begin on January 1 of the following year.
- There may be Extra Help paying Medicare prescription drug costs.
- Even if they don't qualify for Extra Help, they should consider joining a Medicare drug plan.



How does a person with Medicare get Extra Help paying for prescription drug costs?

A person may qualify for Extra Help paying for drugs if they have limited income and resources. If they have Medicaid, a Medicare Savings Program, or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), they will automatically get Extra Help and don't need to apply for it. Others will need to apply for Extra Help and can request an application from Social Security by calling 1-800-772-1213 or visiting www.socialsecurity.gov/i1020. TTY users should call 1-800-325-0778. After they apply, they will get a notice in the mail that tells them if they qualify. Social Security's application process is the quickest way to get a decision. A person with Medicare can also apply at his or her local State Medical Assistance (Medicaid) office. Each state determines who qualifies for Extra Help or any other assistance their state provides.

Will a person's SNAP benefits decrease if there was a decrease to his or her medical expenses because he or she qualifies for Extra Help?

A person isn't required to report changes to his or her medical expenses. If he or she reports higher medical expenses, the state will verify the higher costs. If a person reports lower costs, the state will decrease the SNAP benefit. Most people don't report a decrease in medical expenses.

For more information

- Visit www.medicare.gov/find-a-plan to get personalized information about Medicare drug plans.
- Call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Call your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). To get the phone number for your state, visit www.medicare.gov/contacts or call 1-800-MEDICARE.