

Section 10 —

Get More Information

Where can I get personalized help?

1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)

TTY users call 1-877-486-2048

Get information 24 hours a day, including weekends

- Speak clearly, have your Medicare card in front of you, and be ready to provide your Medicare number.
- To enter your Medicare number, speak the numbers and letter(s) clearly one at a time. Or, enter your Medicare number on the phone keypad. Use the star key to indicate any place there may be a letter. For example, if your Medicare number is 000-00-0000A, you would enter 0-0-0-0-0- 0-0-0-0-*. The voice system will then ask you for that letter.
- Use 1 or 2 words to briefly say what you're calling about.

Helpful tips:

- You can say "Agent" at any time to talk to a customer service representative.
- If you need help in a language other than English or Spanish, or need to request a Medicare publication in an alternate format, let the customer service representative know.

Important!**Do you need someone to be able to call 1-800-MEDICARE on your behalf?**

You need to let Medicare know in writing. You can fill out a “Medicare Authorization to Disclose Personal Health Information” form so Medicare can give your personal health information to someone other



than you. You can do this by visiting [Medicare.gov/medicareonlineforms](https://www.medicare.gov/medicareonlineforms) or by calling 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) to get a copy of the form. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. You may want to do this now in case you become unable to do it later.

Did your household get more than one copy of “Medicare & You?”

If you want to get only one copy in the future, call 1-800-MEDICARE. If you want to stop getting paper copies in the mail, visit [Medicare.gov/gopaperless](https://www.Medicare.gov/gopaperless).

What are State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs)?

SHIPs are state programs that get money from the federal government to give local health insurance counseling to people with Medicare at no cost to you. SHIPs aren’t connected to any insurance company or health plan. SHIP volunteers work hard to help you with these Medicare questions or concerns:

- Your Medicare rights
- Billing problems
- Complaints about your medical care or treatment
- Plan choices
- How Medicare works with other insurance
- Finding help paying for health care costs

Definitions of blue words are on pages 125–128.

See page 121 for the phone number of your local SHIP. If you would like to become a volunteer SHIP counselor, contact the SHIP in your state to learn more. To find a SHIP in another state, visit shiptacenter.org or call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Where can I find general Medicare information online?

Visit Medicare.gov

- Get detailed information about the Medicare health and prescription drug plans in your area, including what they cost and what services they provide.
- Find doctors or other health care providers and suppliers who participate in Medicare.
- See what Medicare covers, including [preventive services](#).
- Get Medicare appeals information and forms.
- Get information about the quality of care provided by plans, nursing homes, hospitals, home health agencies, and dialysis facilities.
- Look up helpful websites and phone numbers.

Where can I find personalized Medicare information online?

Register at MyMedicare.gov

- Manage your personal information (like medical conditions, allergies, and implanted devices).
- Sign up to get your “Medicare Summary Notices” (eMSNs) and this handbook electronically. You won’t get printed copies if you choose to get them electronically.
- Manage your personal drug list and pharmacy information.
- Search for, add to, and manage a list of your favorite providers and access quality information about them.
- Track Original Medicare claims and your Part B [deductible](#) status.



Get access to your personal health information using Medicare’s Blue Button. This feature lets you download 12–36 months of claims information for Part A and Part B and 12 months of claims information for Part D. This information can help you make more informed decisions about your care and can give your health care providers a more complete view of your health history. Visit [MyMedicare.gov](#) to use the Blue Button today.

How do I compare the quality of plans and providers?

Medicare collects information about the quality and safety of medical care and services given by most [Medicare plans](#) and health care providers. Medicare also has information about the experiences of people with the care and services they get.

Compare the quality of care and services given by health and prescription drug plans or health care providers nationwide by visiting [Medicare.gov](#) or by calling your State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP). See page 121 for the phone number.

You can use the tools on [Medicare.gov](#) to get a “snapshot” of the quality of care and services some plans and providers give. Some of these tools feature a star rating system to help you compare plans and quality of care measures that are important to you. Find out more about the quality of care and services by:

- Asking what your plan or provider does to ensure and improve the quality of care and services. Each plan and health care provider should have someone you can talk to about quality.
- Asking your doctor or other health care provider what he or she thinks about the quality of care or services the plan or other providers give. You can also talk to your doctor or other health care provider about Medicare’s information on quality of care and services.

Open Payments Program

Sometimes doctors and hospitals have financial relationships with drug, device, biological, and medical supply manufacturers. These relationships can include money for research activities, gifts, speaking fees, meals, or travel.

Open Payments is a federally run transparency program that collects information about these financial relationships and makes it available to you so you can be more informed about how these relationships may impact your health care decisions. Visit [CMS.gov/openpayments](#) for more information.

Definitions of [blue](#) words are on pages 125–128.

What's Medicare doing to better coordinate my care?

Medicare continues to look for ways to better coordinate your care and to make sure that you get the best health care possible.

Here are examples of how your **health care providers** can better coordinate your care:

Electronic Health Records (EHRs)—EHRs are records that your doctor, other health care provider, medical office staff, or hospital keeps on a computer about your health care or treatments.

- EHRs can help lower the chances of medical errors, eliminate duplicate tests, and may improve your overall quality of care.
- Your doctor's EHR may be able to link to a hospital, lab, pharmacy, or other doctors, so the people who care for you can have a more complete picture of your health.

Electronic prescribing—This is an electronic way for your prescribers (your doctor or other health care provider who's legally allowed to write prescriptions) to send your prescriptions directly to your pharmacy. Electronic prescribing can save you money, time, and help keep you safe.

Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs)—An ACO is a group of doctors and other health care providers who agree to work together with Medicare to give you more coordinated service and care.

If you have Original Medicare and your doctor has decided to participate in an ACO, you'll know when you visit the office. A poster with information about your doctor's participation in an ACO will be displayed. At your request, the doctor will also give you this information in writing or you may get a letter in the mail.

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Privacy Rule allows Medicare to share data with other entities as part of "health care operations." ACOs working with your doctors and other health care providers to coordinate service and care qualify as "health care operations." We have important safeguards to make sure the ACO uses the data appropriately.

The poster in your doctor’s office will also let you know that Medicare will share certain information with the ACO about the care you got from your doctors and other providers. With the information Medicare shares, the doctors and health care providers in the ACO can have a complete picture of your health and be better able to coordinate your care.

You can ask Medicare not to share certain information with the ACO about the care you got from your doctors and other health care providers. To do this, call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048. and tell us you don’t want us to share this information. You can change your data sharing preferences at any time.

Your Medicare benefits, services, costs, and protections won’t change if your doctor participates in an ACO or if you prefer that Medicare not share your information. You still have the right to visit and get care from any doctor or hospital that accepts Medicare at any time, the same way you do now.

For more information, visit [Medicare.gov/acos.html](https://www.Medicare.gov/acos.html), or call 1-800-MEDICARE.

Are there other ways to get Medicare information?

Publications

Visit [Medicare.gov/publications](https://www.Medicare.gov/publications) to view, print, or download copies of publications on different Medicare topics. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE and say “Publications.” Alternate formats are available at no cost. See page 13 for more information.

Social Media

Stay up-to-date and connect with other people with Medicare by following us on Facebook ([facebook.com/Medicare.gov](https://www.facebook.com/Medicare.gov)) and Twitter (twitter.com/MedicareGov).

Videos

Visit [YouTube.com/cmshhsgov](https://www.YouTube.com/cmshhsgov) to see videos covering different health care topics on Medicare’s YouTube channel.

Blogs

Visit blog.medicare.gov for up-to-date news from our website.

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State Health Insurance Assistance Programs (SHIPs)

For help with questions about appeals, buying other insurance, choosing a health plan, buying a Medigap policy, and Medicare rights and protections.

This page has been intentionally left blank. The printed version contains phone number information. For the most recent phone number information, please visit shiptacenter.org, or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.