



Medicare 101, The ABCs (and D)

Your alphabet guide to the parts of Medicare

Four letters, one health program. Here's what each one actually does.

WHAT IT IS

Medicare is the federal health insurance program for people 65+ (and some younger people with disabilities). It's broken into four parts, **A, B, C, and D**, each covering a different piece of healthcare. Knowing the alphabet is step one for every decision that comes after.

THE FOUR PARTS

A Hospital

Inpatient, skilled nursing, hospice. Most pay \$0 premium. **2026 deductible: \$1,736 per benefit period.**

B Doctor & Outpatient

Doctor visits, preventive care, durable medical equipment. **2026: \$202.90/month** (more with IRMAA). **\$283 annual deductible.**

C Medicare Advantage

Private bundled plan combining A, B, and usually D. Networks apply. Often \$0 premium.

D Prescription Drugs

Drug plan added to Original Medicare. **2026: \$615 deductible, new \$2,100 annual out-of-pocket cap.** IRMAA also applies.

HOW THE PIECES FIT

- **Path 1:** Original Medicare (A + B) + Part D + a Medigap supplement like Plan G.
- **Path 2:** Medicare Advantage (Part C), bundled A, B, usually D in one plan.
- You can't have both Medigap AND Medicare Advantage. Pick one path.

THE 3 THINGS PEOPLE GET WRONG

- 1 "Medicare is free."**
Part A is usually \$0, but Part B has a real monthly premium (\$202.90 standard in 2026, more with IRMAA). Part D and supplements cost extra. Plan for it.
- 2 "I'm automatically enrolled at 65."**
Only if you're already collecting Social Security. Otherwise YOU have to enroll during your Initial Enrollment Period or you'll face permanent late penalties.
- 3 "Medicare covers everything."**
It covers 80% of most Part B services. The other 20% is on you, unless you have a supplement (Medigap) or an Advantage plan with an out-of-pocket maximum.

Turning 65 soon? Or already on Medicare?

Call or text Craig, I'll help find the best plan that fits your medical and financial needs.

*Don't go underinsured
when you can be Insured AF.*

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