

Medicare's New Preventive Services Now Available

After 40 years of providing coverage for doctor visits, hospital stays, and surgeries, Medicare now covers preventive screenings in addition to soon offering prescription drug coverage. As part of the Medicare law, every new Medicare beneficiary can receive a free initial physical exam.

In addition to already covering screenings for glaucoma, as well as breast, cervical, colorectal, and prostate cancers, Medicare now covers new cholesterol, blood lipid, diabetes, and osteoporosis screening with new disease management programs. These screenings are important for seniors to maintain good health and a quality retirement.

For More Information on the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit, Please Contact:

Medicare

www.medicare.gov
1-800-MEDICARE
1-800-486-2048 (TTY users)
1-214-767-3407 (Dallas Region)

Social Security Administration

www.ssa.gov/organizations/medicareoutreach2
1-800-772-1213
1-800-325-0778 (TTY users)
1-214-767-6427 (Dallas Region)

Visit our web page at <http://burgess.house.gov>

How to Contact Congressman Michael C. Burgess

WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE

1721 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515
Phone: (202) 225-7772

LEWISVILLE DISTRICT OFFICE

1660 South Stemmons Freeway
Suite 230
Lewisville, TX 75067
Phone: (972) 434-9700

FT. WORTH DISTRICT OFFICE

Located at the Resource Connection of
Tarrant County campus
1100 Circle Drive · Suite 200
Fort Worth, TX 76119
Phone: (817) 531-8454

For North Texas Seniors

Update on Prescription Drug Coverage

This mailing was prepared, published, and mailed at taxpayer expense. It is provided as a service to the 26th Congressional District constituents.

OFFICIAL BUSINESS

WASHINGTON, DC 20515
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

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M.C.

Dear Fellow North Texan,

Last year, I sent you some information about the new Medicare law and how you can get help paying for your medications through the Medicare program. You may have already done so by signing up for a prescription drug discount card.

Now, I want to give you updated information about the comprehensive Medicare Prescription Drug benefit which will begin on January 1, 2006. The program is entirely optional. But, if you do not already have prescription drug coverage or you are looking for better coverage, the new benefit is worth considering.

Extra help will be available for those who need it, and a choice of plans will be available for you to pick the plan that meets your needs. Medicare Prescription Drug coverage can help you by covering both brand name and generic prescription drugs at participating pharmacies. I hope you will take a moment to read about the new benefit, talk it over with your family and friends, and consider how it can help you pay for your prescription drug costs.

Sincerely,

Michael C. Burgess
Michael C. Burgess



Congressman

Michael C. Burgess

Congressman Michael C. Burgess A Commitment to You

What Can I Do Now?

Starting November 15th, you can enroll for the new Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit. The benefit will become effective January 1, 2006.

You have many options when it comes to selecting a plan. You should have received information in the mail, but you are always welcome to attend one of my upcoming Medicare Prescription Drug Forums (see Important Dates for Prescription Drug Coverage).

Those who may qualify to receive extra help will soon receive a letter in the mail from Medicare and those who currently receive prescription drugs through the Medicaid program will also receive a letter in the mail explaining the new plan and enrollment options.

**find out more about these benefits
by calling 1-800-MEDICARE.**

For Those Who Receive Medicines through Medicaid

If you are eligible for Medicare, but currently receive your prescription drugs through Medicaid, Medicare will provide you with your prescription drug benefit beginning in 2006. You will soon receive a notice from Medicare that you automatically qualify for assistance in paying for your medications. You will still need to choose and enroll in a drug plan. If you do not enroll by December 31, 2005, Medicare will enroll you in a plan.

For Those Who May Qualify for Extra Help

This past summer, the Social Security Administration (SSA) mailed an application for extra help to people who may qualify. To be eligible, you had to have limited assets. If you did not receive an application in the mail and you think you may qualify, call SSA at 1-(800)-772-1213.

If your annual income is below \$12,920 (\$17,321 for couples), you will pay no deductible and no premium. Co-pays will be just a few dollars. If your annual income is below \$14,355 (\$19,245 for couples), you will pay reduced deductibles, premiums, and co-pays.

For Those Whose Employers Provide Prescription Drug Coverage

You may already have prescription drug coverage through your employer or former employer. To encourage employers to retain and enhance prescription drug coverage, Medicare will offer employers monetary incentives. Employers can use these funds to enhance current prescription drug coverage. This is the first time Congress has acted to slow the trend of employers reducing health care benefits.

In October, employers who provide prescription drug coverage to their retirees directly notified them to let them know if their current coverage is less than, as good as, or better than the new Medicare prescription drug coverage.

How The Prescription Drug Plan Works

- You will be responsible for paying the first \$250 in drug costs each year, called the deductible.
- The Medicare Prescription Drug plan will pay for 75% of your drug costs up to \$2,250. You will need to pay 25% of those costs.
- After you pay \$3,600 in out-of-pocket costs, Medicare will pay for 95% of the rest of your prescription drug costs. You will need to pay the rest—just 5%.
- This process starts over each year.
- Extra help will be available for people with limited income and resources. Some plans may charge lower premiums and have lower deductibles.

*Extra help will be available
for people with limited income
and resources.*



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Important Dates for Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage

November 11, 2005

Medicare Roll Out Prescription Drug Forum - Tarrant County
2:30-3:30 p.m.

Resource Connection of Tarrant County
Conference and Recreation Center
2300 Circle Drive • Fort Worth, TX 76119
(Off Campus Dr., turn west on Raymond Barber, right on Circle Dr.)

November 12, 2005

Medicare Roll Out Prescription Drug Forum - Denton County
10:00-11:00 a.m.

Denton ISD/C.H. Collins Athletic Complex
Stadium Banquet Room • 1500 Long Road • Denton, TX 76207
Loop 288, exit FM 428/Sherman Dr. north (NO entry from access road),
go past Water Park, turn left at 1st street – Long Rd.

Medicare Roll Out Prescription Drug Forum - Cooke County
2:00-3:00 p.m.

State Theater • 200 E. California Street • Gainesville, TX 76240
(corner of California & Rusk)

November 15, 2005 First day you can join a plan

January 1, 2006 Coverage begins for those who join by December 31, 2005

May 15, 2006 Last day to join a plan without paying a penalty



Congressman Burgess brought Health & Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Administrator Dr. Mark McClellan to North Texas to discuss the Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit at the Medical Center of Lewisville.

