

5 Timely Tips for Turning 65 in 2018

Medicare eligibility begins at age 65 for most people. Here's what you need to know.

1. You Have a Set Time to Enroll in Medicare

Your Medicare Initial Enrollment Period (IEP) is 7 months long. It includes:

- The 3 months before the month you turn 65
- The month you turn 65
- The 3 months after the month you turn 65

2. You Can Delay Medicare Part B

Most people get Part A (hospital insurance) premium-free because they or a spouse worked and paid taxes. Part B (medical insurance) has a monthly premium.

You may want to delay signing up for Part B if you have other health care coverage, such as through an employer or union. You must qualify for a Special Enrollment Period to avoid a **late enrollment penalty** if you delay Part B.

3. There Are Two Ways to Get Medicare

Medicare gives you two ways to get your **benefits**:

- Original Medicare (Parts A & B), the traditional way
- Medicare Advantage (Part C), an alternative to Original Medicare

Original Medicare is administered by the federal government. Medicare Advantage plans are offered by private insurance companies approved by Medicare. They must provide all the same benefits as Original Medicare Parts

A and B. Many plans include additional benefits, such as prescription drug coverage and more.

4. Medicare Doesn't Cover Everything

Original Medicare doesn't include coverage for prescription drugs. You may buy a standalone **prescription drug plan (Part D)** to get this coverage.

Some people also buy a **Medicare supplement insurance plan (Medigap)** to help with some costs not paid by Original Medicare. **(If you would like a Medigap plan please call LEHB 215-763-8290 and ask for Joe)**

Generally, you don't need additional coverage if you choose a **Medicare Advantage plan**.

5. You May Qualify for Help with Medicare Costs

Several programs offer **financial assistance** with Medicare premiums and other costs. You may want to look into them, even if you think you might not be eligible.

Conclusion

Don't let Medicare enrollment sneak up on you. Use these 5 tips and get a head start on **learning the basics about Medicare** so you can make an informed decision when the time comes. And to stay up to date, get Medicare news and information delivered right to your inbox.

For more information, call LEHB at 215-763-8290 or contact the Medicare helpline 24 hours a day, seven days a week at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227),