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One Flu Shot Protects You

You only need one flu shot this year: the 2010 flu shot will protect you from both H1N1, and the seasonal flu.



Open Enrollment Starts November 15

Are you ready to review your Medicare coverage? You can compare and change your Medicare plan from November 15 to December 31.

New benefits in 2011 include free wellness check-ups, cancer screenings, and better ways to protect you from fraud. There'll also be lower drug costs for people who reach the Part D donut hole in 2011.

Learn more about the new benefits and compare plans at www.medicare.gov, or read your 2011 "Medicare & You" handbook coming in October. You can also call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). TTY users call 1-877-486-2048.



Want to Quit Smoking? Medicare Can Help!

Medicare now covers counseling sessions to help you stop smoking, even if you haven't been diagnosed with an illness caused by tobacco use. Starting January 1, 2011, you pay nothing for smoking cessation counseling. Ask your doctor about Medicare-covered smoking cessation programs near you, or visit the [National Institutes of Health](http://www.nia.nih.gov) for more information about quitting smoking.

Visit www.medicare.gov/caregivers for the latest news and broadcasts.

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4 Ways to Prevent Medicare Fraud

YOU are the first line of defense against Medicare fraud. Here's how you can help protect your benefits:

- Watch for fake claims on your bill
- Be alert for ads for fake Medicare plans
- Don't let anyone use your Medicare card
- Protect your Medicare number - NEVER give it out in exchange for a free offer

If you suspect fraud, call 1-800-MEDICARE. Or, your Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program can help you make a report. Find the SMP program in your state at www.smpresource.org.

Your 2011 Part D Premium

Starting January 1, monthly premiums for Medicare drug coverage (Part D) could be higher based on income. People with incomes of more than \$85,000 (\$170,000 for married couples) will have to pay an extra amount for their Medicare drug coverage.

However, this change will affect fewer than 5 percent of all people with Medicare. This means most people will continue to pay only the Part D premium their plan charges in 2011. If you have questions about the extra amount you have to pay, visit www.socialsecurity.gov or call 1-800-772-1213.



Long-Distance Caregiving

Whether you live an hour away or across the country, this free booklet from the [Family Caregiver Alliance \(FCA\)](#) offers a roadmap to help with the challenges of caring for ill or elderly loved ones from afar.

Booklet includes information on how to assess your care situation; develop a care team; hold a family meeting; access community organizations and private agencies; and balance work and caregiving. Download FCA's [Handbook for Long-Distance Caregivers](#) today.

Caring from a Distance

[Caring from a Distance](#) offers long distance caregivers a bridge to a full spectrum of eldercare resources through their free, one-stop website.

Resources include a [Service Directory](#) for local help, a [library](#) of basic information, and a secure [Personal Health Records](#) tool that lets caregivers store vital information for emergencies. Visit them at www.cfad.org.



Lower Costs for Medical Equipment

If you live in one of [nine areas of the country](#), a new Medicare program will save you money when you get medical equipment and supplies from certain Medicare-contracted suppliers. The program starts in January.

If you or your loved one lives in one of the program areas and use medical supplies like oxygen or power wheelchairs, you should check with your current supplier to make sure they're a Medicare contract supplier. Visit www.medicare.gov for more information.

Tell us what YOU care about!
Email caregiver_comments@cms.hhs.gov.



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