Guide to Understanding Health Insurance









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Health insurance is important to have when it comes to the health and wellbeing of an individual and their family.



Approximately 77% of Americans are confused by health insurance terms.¹

These terms are universal when it comes to healthcare coverage. Understanding them can help prepare you when choosing a plan.



More than half of the U.S. adult population does not understand basic health insurance terms.²

It is important to understand health insurance. From defining health insurance terms to walking through how you get coverage, this guide serves as your basic introduction to health insurance.

- 1. Edward J, Thompson RA, Wiggins A. Health Insurance Literacy Levels of Information Intermediaries: How Prepared Are They to Address the Growing Health Insurance Access Needs of Consumers?. Health Lit Res Pract. 2022;6(1):e30-e36. doi:10.3928/24748307-20220201-01
- 2. Bailey V. More than Half of Americans Have Low Health Insurance Literacy. HealthPayerIntelligence. Published July 25, 2022. https://healthpayerintelligence.com/news/more-than-half-of-americans-have-low-health-insurance-literacy







What is health insurance?

Health insurance helps you pay for medical care when you have an illness, injury or seek preventive services that are important checkpoints to keeping you healthy. There are several types of plans you can choose and each one has a different amount that you and the insurance company will pay. You can purchase health insurance for yourself or you can get a family plan and cover your spouse, domestic partner and children.

Most plans help you pay for services like:



Preventive visits



Vaccinations



Specialist visits



Hospitalization



Behavioral health/ mental health services



Pregnancy, maternity and newborn care



Prescription drugs



Emergency room visits



Lab work







Why do you need health insurance?



































Health insurance is important no matter what stage of life you or your family are in. Health insurance companies work with doctors, hospitals, clinics and pharmacies to get you care at an affordable cost. Health insurance is used for basic wellness in addition to managing chronic conditions, men's/women's health, pediatric care and other highrisk health issues. It allows you to join with a larger group of people (your company or groups of individuals) and pool your money together to spread out the risk of large healthcare costs.



Even as a completely healthy individual it is important to get routine check-ups to help prevent future health issues from arising and to prevent future medical bills that could get expensive.



Planning for the unexpected and having health insurance can give you security when an emergency arises.







How and where do you get health insurance?



Employee Sponsored:

Most people buy health insurance through an employer or a "group" plan. This can be your own employer or your partner/spouse's employer.



Individual Plans:

- Individual plans are available to everyone through the government marketplace (<u>healthcare.gov</u>)
 established by the Affordable Care Act.
- You can also purchase individual plans through privately owned health insurance companies.



Government Programs:

- Medicare is a federal program designed for people who are 65 and older and young people with disabilities.
- Medicaid provides health coverage to millions of Americans, including eligible low-income adults, children, pregnant women, elderly adults and people with disabilities. Medicaid is administered by states, according to federal requirements. The program is funded by states and the federal government.



Parents or guardians can keep children (dependents) under the age of 26 on their health plan.









The time you select/register for a plan is called **Open Enrollment Period (OEP)**. For Medicare, it's called the **Annual Election Period (AEP)**.

Although Open Enrollment can occur at any time of the year, it typically occurs at the end of the calendar year. You will choose your plan to start January 1 the following year. For Medicare and the Annual Election Period, you choose your plan between October 15 through December 7.

You can enroll outside of Open Enrollment Period(OEP) during a **special enrollment period** with the following situations (also called a **qualifying life event**:



Changing marital status



Moving to a new state



Starting work with a new employer



Having a child or adding a dependent



Losing other health coverage



Qualifying for Medicaid or CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)









Your network consists of a group of doctors, hospitals and other healthcare professionals who have agreed to provide medical services to members of a healthcare plan for a certain price. Arkansas Blue Cross and Health Advantage create a comprehensive statewide network to ensure strong coverage for you, while making sure every medical provider and facility agrees to certain discounts that make care more affordable for you.



In-network

Doctors, hospitals and other healthcare providers **that have agreed** to provide medical services at set prices with your health plan. This will be the discount shown when you get an explanation of benefits for a visit.



Out-of-network

Doctors, hospitals and other providers **who have not agreed** to set prices with your health plan.

What does this mean?

To save money, you will typically choose an in-network provider because Arkansas Blue Cross and Health Advantage have negotiated what their services will cost. Out-of-network providers usually charge more. If you receive care from a doctor or hospital that is out-of-network you won't get the negotiated price (meaning you will pay more out-of-pocket).





How does health insurance work and how much does it cost?

Health insurance works by splitting the cost of healthcare between an individual and the insurer to pay the provider. If you hit your maximum out-of-pocket amount for a specific year, your insurer will pick up 100% of the cost.

Prior to receiving healthcare, you will show proof of insurance to your provider. This will tell them what kind of coverage you have and how to bill or charge you for your visit. The amount you are billed depends on many things such as:



Plan type



Deductible amount



In-network or out-of-network care

Each month you pay a **premium** to have health insurance coverage. Most of the time, plans with a higher deductible have a lower monthly premium. Plans with a lower deductible have a higher monthly premium. What do all these words mean? The following pages will define the terms and explain how they work together.







Premium







Premium is the amount you pay each month for your health insurance coverage even if you don't use it. It's your monthly bill for your health insurance, similar to a monthly payment for car insurance. If you're on an employer health plan, it automatically comes out of your paycheck and your employer pays a portion of it.

Your premium amount is determined by several factors:











Age

Location

Tobacco use

Dependents

Plan category

Example

Deductible Copayment

Coinsurance

Out-of-pocket maximum

Premium

\$150 every month

\$1,800 per year (cost may vary)*

*Prices are to be used as an example and can vary. Figures are based on individual plans with no dependents.





Copayment



This is the fixed amount you pay, usually at the time of a medical service. Some plans do not have a copayment for visits. Usually, copayments are separate from and do not count toward your deductible amount. They do count toward your out-of-pocket maximum, which can help if you have high medical expenses during a calendar year. Your copayment can vary, depending on the type of service you receive (for example, a copayment for seeing a specialist may be more than a copayment for a PCP visit. You also may have a copay with prescriptions.



A primary care provider (PCP) could be a doctor, physician assistant or a nurse practitioner.

Example

Coinsurance Deductible

maximum

Premium

\$150

\$1,800 per year

Copayment

In-network **PCP** visit



You Pay:

Copayment amounts vary. *Some plans do not have a copay.

Out-of-pocket

*Prices are to be used as an example and can vary. Figures are based on individual plans with no dependents.







Deductible

Deductible is the amount you pay for medical costs before your health insurance begins to make payments to providers for services. Your insurance provider will have certain things that are considered allowable charges to go towards your deductible. They also have different deductible amounts for in-network and out-of-network services.

Example:

If your deductible is \$1,000, your plan begins to help you pay once you have met your \$1,000 deductible.

You pay Insurance begins to pay Total cost of treatment

Deductible

Example

Out-of-pocket maximum Coinsurance

Premium \$150 every month

\$1,800 per year

In-network PCP visit

O
You Pay:
\$40

Copayment

In-network specialist visit: \$100

You pay: Insurance 100% pays: 0%

\$1,000

*Prices are to be used as an example and can vary. Figures are based on individual plans with no dependents.





Coinsurance

This is the percentage of the cost you are responsible to pay. Once you meet your deductible, your insurance begins to pay a majority of your in-network visits and you may pay 20% and they pay 80% (exact percentages depend on your provider and plan). Sometimes the health plan pays 100% of coinsurance once the deductible is met.



Example

Premium

\$150

\$1,800 per year

Copayment



Deductible

\$100



Coinsurance

In-network hospital visit: \$500



You pay: Insurance

20% 80% (\$100) (\$400)

Amount varies by plan*

pays:

maximum

Out-of-pocket

**Prices are to be used as an example and can vary. Figures are based on individual plans with no dependents.







Out-of-pocket maximum

Most plans have an **out-of-pocket maximum**, meaning once you pay the set amount, your insurance will cover 100% of any further eligible healthcare expenses.

If you or a family member have larger-than-normal health expenses, and you reach your out-of-pocket maximum for the calendar year, your insurance will cover you at 100% for the rest of that year. The out-of-pocket limit includes your deductible, coinsurance and copay amounts. **The out-of-pocket limit does not include premium payments or charges for services that are not covered**.

For example, if your out-of-pocket maximum is \$3,000, when you reach this amount, your insurance will cover everything else at 100%. Please note that there are in-network and out-of-network out-of-pocket maximums. This means you may meet your out-of-pocket maximum for in-network services, but if you receive out-of-network services and have not met that deductible, you still may receive a bill.

Example

Premium

\$150 every month

\$1,800 per year (cost may vary)*

Copayment

In-network PCP visit



Copayment amounts vary.*Some plans do not have a copay.

Deductible

In-network specialist visit: \$100



₩ _ # You pay: Insuranc 100% pays: 0%

\$1,000 Annual deductible

Coinsurance

In-network hospital visit: \$500



You pay:

20% (\$100)

Amount varies by plan*

Out-of-pocket

maximum (per person)

In-network specialist visit: \$200



You pay: Insurance

\$0 pays: \$200

\$3,000 per year*

^{*}Prices are to be used as an example and can vary. Figures are based on individual plans with no dependents.







Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC)

When looking for health plans, you will have access to a Summary of Benefits and Coverage (SBC) outlining exactly what a plan will pay for different medical services. Sometimes called a "schedule of benefits," this will provide you with a summary to use for comparison on cost and coverage. This is beneficial when choosing what plan will work best for you. You can access your plan's SBC in Blueprint Portal.



Benefit Sammary				Effective	Date: 09:30-20	
Descriptions						
Individual Deductible: A dollar amount that you pay for healigns to pay, levely poster has an individual or faintly on your policy, then you mill pay for healthcare costs cover individual deductible. Family deductibles work differently.	duductions. If yo	ou are the one	person	\$5	00/\$1,500 and Out of nation	
Family Deductible: If you or anyone in your family moves the Individual deductible, then your bearth plake will begin to pay a portion of medical expenses for that person for that contract year (also called crimercance). However, when the tendy clother title is not by any continuation of tendy persons, consecution will cay on all tendy remoters. Contrave an paye for				S1,000/\$3,000 (In-relative and Col of Autom		
read Unit on Cost Sharing: The claims amount that you must pay in oblindar year belons you're no longer expected to pay copayments, durable or coloramous for the exhalinder of the year. The amount station on cost sharing is oursiled in the Subeduce of benefits.		in-filetones		Individual 81,500	Family \$1,000	
Coloramanor: A percentage of all remaining eligible medical that is vitar responsibility to pay offer your deductible has t		Out-of-Net	work*	\$3,000	56,600	
Copagnment: The amount you're roquited to pay to a proton for covered medical expenses. Service Type**	Coçuyen ar	t.Amount	in such	tour Coat coli colonyments	Weer Could Out of notwork commercia	
Professional Services						
Primary care physician visit	\$30			0%	30%	
Speciality physician visit (Colmunance may apply to additional services)	10	350		10%	30%	
Adult previetive services				0%	82%	
Children's preventive sendral		0		0%	87%	
Professional fees for inpurient rangical and medical services				10%	30%	
Professional face for outpotters surgical and medical savdness				10%	30%	
Hospital and Other Medical Facility Services						
Important sentices		10%		10%	30%	
Outpatient services (Includes purgery, diagnostics, sat and x ray)			10%		30%	
Emergency reom stat			10%		10%	
Midemity and obstetres				10%	37%	
Theopeutic Sentions Imputient (sented to 00 days)	4			10%	375	
Outputient (Similed to 30 visits solid) - Physical, occupational and spoon tharapy				DK.	205	
- Chirocractic		(/ / la		10%	30%	
Other Services			-	10%	30%	
Durable medical equipment			-	10%		
Disbutic supplies Marriel braith				10%	30%	
Ambulance services					#7%	
Ground up to \$1,000 per trip Air up to \$1,000 per trip				10% 10%	12% 12%	
""Additional fees may appre Philoso cheek your ballance in Cooper important insults December brom. Albanea Blac Coop and Blac in "This december is becambe why, in high light your bandles and him he englest to which you and no ballat Black Philosophies and in your he will be and the administration and content State. Philosophies and he will be and the administration and content State for a her will be and the administration and contents. If the december of an her will be and the administration and contents of the december of an her will be and the administration and contents of the december of the her will be and the administration of the second of the company of the her will be a second or the second of the second of the property of the second of the second of the second of the the second of the second of the second of the second of the property of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the second of the s	hald of not be relief or uneft Centificate to	o a fait explored	doe-of yo	or burnefits, the first	special in a science	

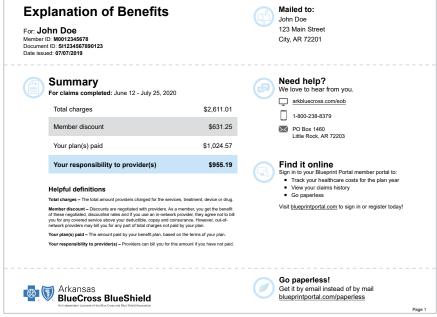


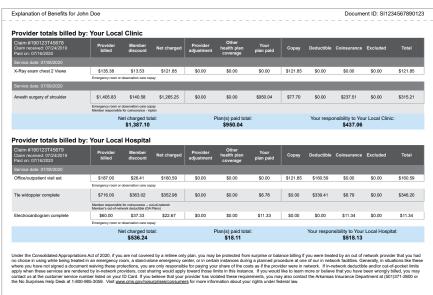




Explanation of benefits (EOB)

You will receive an explanation of benefits when you use your health insurance. This shows you the total cost of the care you received, how your insurance was applied and the discounts you received, how much was paid by your health plan and provider and what remaining costs (if any) are owed. **This is not a bill**. It is a simple way for you to see all of your claims in a given period and how your insurance is being used.











Health spending accounts

There are special accounts you can use toward medical expenses and prescription: health savings accounts (HSA), flexible spending accounts (FSA) and health reimbursement arrangements (HRA). These accounts let you save and use tax-advantaged money to cover qualified medical expenses. HSA accounts rollover year to year while FSA and HRA accounts must be used before the end of the year.

HSA vs FSA vs HRA

Account comparison	HSA	HRA	FSA
You own the account.	✓	×	×
Your employer owns the account.	×	~	~
You must have a high-deductible health plan.	~	×	×
Only your employer can put money in.	×	~	×
You and your employer can put money in.	~	×	~
You can invest the money in the account.	~	×	×
Must report account when you do your taxes.	✓	×	×







What are the types of health plans?



There are different options for the type of health plan you choose. Depending on how you get your coverage (employer sponsored, individual, etc.) you may or may not have all of these options.

- Health Maintenance Organization (HMO)
- Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)
- Point of Service (POS)
- High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)



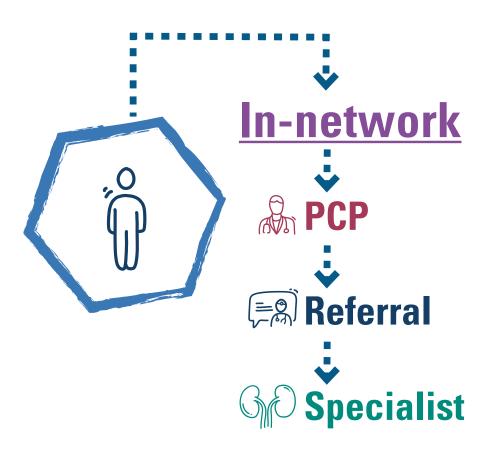




Health Maintenance Organization (HMO)

With this plan, you choose a PCP who coordinates your care using doctors and hospitals that are in your plan's network. If you need a specialist, such as a cardiologist, a referral from your PCP is required. Generally, an HMO won't cover services from an out-of-network provider.

An HMO plan will usually have a lower monthly premium and deductible, but include coinsurance and copays.





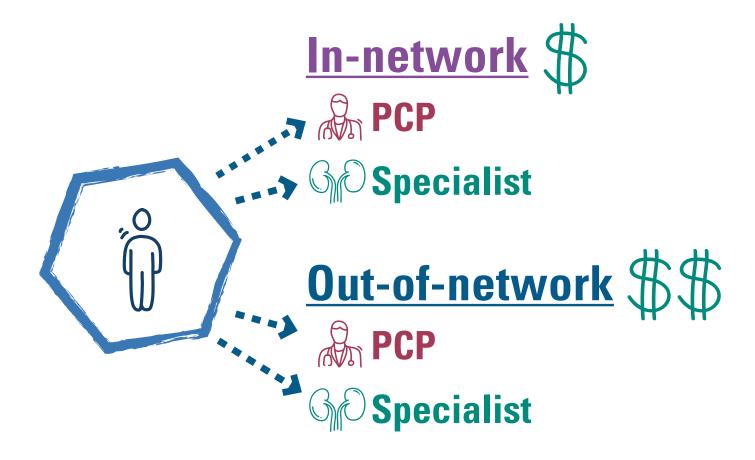




Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)

This plan allows you to manage your own care, with or without referrals from a PCP. You have a choice in which provider to see, although you'll save money if you remain in network.

A PPO will likely have higher premiums than other types of plans, but lower copays and coinsurance.





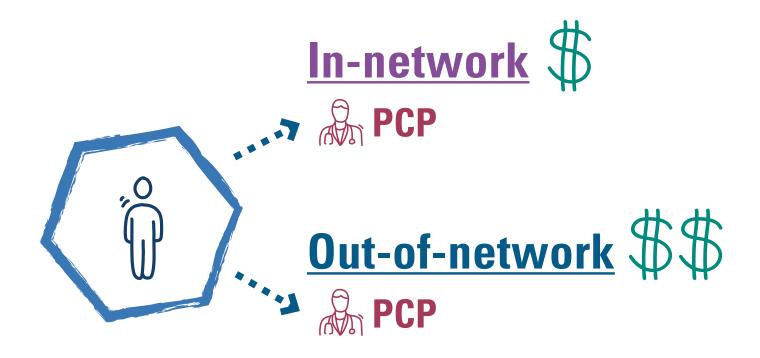




Point of Service (POS)

A POS is a combination of HMO and PPO. Like an HMO, you choose a PCP. But like a PPO, you can get medical care from both in- or out-of-network providers. You'll pay less when you use a doctor or hospital in-network and more if you choose out-of-network.

A POS plan may require you to pay a higher premium and have copays, but most have no deductible for in-network services referred by your PCP.









High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)

This plan gives you the most control on how your healthcare dollars are spent. A HDHP has a higher deductible, but a lower monthly premium and a special HSA account to help you save money for healthcare expenses.

HDHPs typically have lower premiums, but you will pay more out-of-pocket for healthcare. Most HDHPs pay for several preventive care visits, but you will pay out-of-pocket for other types of care and prescriptions at the contracted amount set by your insurance and provider.









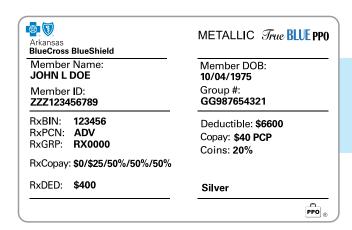
How do you use your ID card?



Arkansas Blue Cross or Health Advantage will send you a member ID card once you've enrolled in your plan and your coverage has started. This includes the essential information you need to know about your coverage, payment amounts and customer service phone numbers. Each provider you visit will need to make a copy of your ID card to make sure they bill correctly. Always carry your ID card with you in your wallet.

You also have access to a digital ID card on <u>Blueprint Portal</u>. Download the app to have your ID card anywhere you have your phone.

Your card may look slightly different than this example, depending on the health plan you have.



This is your go-to reference when you have questions or need help.

Healthcare providers use the elements on the front of your card to apply your health plan's benefits and file your claims with us.



Providers: File all claims with local Blue Cross and/or Blue Shield Plan; please refer to the website for services requiring prior approval.

Members: Refer to your benefit booklet for covered services and for services that require prior approval. Possession of this car does not quarantee eligibility for benefits.

arkansasbluecross.com

Customer Service: 800-800-4298

Pharmacy Customer Service: 800-969-3983

PPO Provider Locator: 800-810-2583
BlueCard ® Eligibility: 800-676-BLUE
Pharmacist Helpline: 800-364-6331

Prior Approval: 800-558-3865

Virtual Doctor Visits: MyVirtualHealth.com

Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield

P.O. Box 2181

Little Rock AR 72203-2181

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association







How does pharmacy work?

Different plans have their own set of prescription drugs they cover. The list of drugs your plan covers is called a prescription drug list (PDL) or "formulary."

When researching what medicine is covered by your plan, you may see there are tiers. Drug tiers represent different levels of cost and can save you money on your medications. You pay the least for medications in tier 1, which usually are generic drugs.

Plans differ on the amount of tiers they have. An example of how a four-tier formulary might be structured:

Tier 1:

Generic, non-specialty drugs

Lowest plan member copayment.

Tier 3:

All non-specialty, non-preferred, brand-name products

Higher plan member copayment.

Tier 2:

Preferred, brand-name products

Intermediate plan member copayment.

Tier 4:

Specialty medications

Highest plan member copayment.



BlueCross BlueShield

Health Advantage

- Check the drug list before going to the pharmacy.
 Ask your prescriber to consider your health plan's drug list before writing you a prescription. This allows him or her to see your lowest cost options before writing your prescription.
- 2. Use generic medications whenever possible.

 Generics have been reviewed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as safe and effective and have been approved to be used in place of their brand-name counterparts. There are usually (but not always) many generics for a single brand-name medication.
- 3. Try a combo of medications.

 Some combination brand-name medications contain ingredients that are available separately as generics. It might cost less

to take two different generic pills instead of one brand-name pill.

- 4. Consider ordering extended-day supplies through mail order. If filling your prescriptions through mail order is covered by your health plan and approved by your doctor, you may be able to save money by ordering more medication at once. For example, if your cost for 30 days of medication is \$15 and your cost for a 90-day supply is only \$30, you can save money by asking your prescriber to write a 90-day supply prescription. To find out if your plan covers prescriptions by mail, check your Blueprint Portal account.
- 5. Check costs online.

By signing in to your Blueprint Portal account, you can access the Pharmacy Center and check for potential cost savings opportunities that may be available for your medications based on your specific plan.

What about ancillary coverage?

What about the other stuff? Dental, vision, life and disability are all additional insurance products you can get with your health insurance. If you are getting your health plan through your employer, they will usually have options for you. There are individual options too through privately owned companies as well as government resources.















ArkansasBlue Welcome Centers



If you are ready to enroll in an individual plan (not through your employer), stop by or schedule an appointment at your nearest ArkansasBlue Welcome Center at arkbluecross.com/locations.



Fayetteville

3013 N. College Ave. 479-379-5180 Monday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Fayetteville@arkbluecross.com

Fort Smith

479-648-1635 Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Customerservicewc@arkbluecross.com

3501 Old Greenwood Road, Suite 3

Hot Springs

1635 Higdon Ferry Road, Suite J 501-620-2620 Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

HotSpringsCS@arkbluecross.com

Jonesboro

2110 Fair Park Blvd 870-935-4871 Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. NERegionCS@arkbluecross.com

Little Rock - Midtown

416 S. University Ave., Suite 110 501-396-8675 Monday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Midtown@arkbluecross.com

Pine Bluff

509 Mallard Loop 870-536-1223 Monday - Friday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. PBCS@arkbluecross.com

Rogers

4602 W. Walnut St. 479-973-6675 Monday - Saturday 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Rogers@arkbluecross.com





