
Other Types of Health Coverage

Other kinds of health coverage benefits might be used in addition to your primary insurance. When looking at these options, it's important to know what your primary policy does and does not cover. These plans don't usually cover your regular medical expenses, or you might have large out-of-pocket expenses.

- [Flexible savings accounts](#)
- [Health reimbursement arrangement](#)
- [Supplemental insurance plans](#)
- [Life Insurance for cancer patients](#)
- [If you're shopping for life insurance](#)

[Questions about health insurance?](#) ¹

Contact the ACS cancer helpline to get answers and information.

[Search for resources](#) ²

Find free or low-cost resources from ACS and other organizations.

Flexible savings accounts

Your employer might offer a Flexible Savings Account (FSA) if you aren't eligible for an health savings account (HSA). FSA funds are also taken from your salary tax-free. Sometimes, your employer will add to your FSA too.

You can use FSA money for medical or dependent care expenses. If you don't use FSA money by the end of the year, you lose it.

Health reimbursement arrangement

Some employers will offer to pay you back for certain medical expenses through a Health Reimbursement Arrangement (HRA). Reimbursements are tax-free and usually have a maximum amount. HRAs are different from HSAs and FSAs because the employer pays for and manages the account. The employer chooses what to cover and whether or not you can roll funds over to the next year.

Supplemental insurance plans

Supplemental plans are not primary insurance plans. They are add-ons that can help cover what your insurance doesn't pay. Review the policy carefully because many of them don't cover pre-existing conditions or have waiting periods.

Catastrophic coverage

Catastrophic health plans are coverage for worst-case scenarios. They have low monthly payments, but high deductibles and out-of-pocket costs.

Here are some important things to know about catastrophic coverage:

- Don't cover non-preventive services
- Might not pay for minor surgeries or emergency room visits
- Do cover minimum health benefits including preventive services, emergency services, and prescription medications, but you pay for all services and bills until you hit a very high deductible.

Catastrophic insurance does pay for the following, regardless of how much of your deductible you've paid:

- Three primary care visits a year
- Preventive services required under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) including some screening tests and vaccinations

To be eligible for a catastrophic plan, you must either be under 30 years of age, or qualify for a [hardship exemption](#)³.

Most people use catastrophic plans as a temporary, last resort to have some kind of coverage. If you are eligible for catastrophic coverage, you'll be able to see them in the Marketplace. You can also ask for free quotes before you decide.

Hospital indemnity insurance

Hospital indemnity insurance is a kind of supplemental insurance that you can get in addition to your regular insurance coverage. You pay a monthly premium. If you're in the hospital, your insurance pays a certain amount of money to you. You can use this money on hospital bills or other things like:

- Insurance deductibles
- Medicines
- Food
- Rent or mortgage
- Utility bills
- Transportation
- Rehabilitation

Hospital indemnity plans are usually available through your employer. Some have waiting periods before they take effect.

Life Insurance for cancer patients

Some people who have or had cancer might wonder if they qualify for life insurance. Life insurance can give you peace of mind that your loved ones or dependents will have some financial support in case of your death.

Most life insurance companies have certain requirements for people with a history of cancer. These requirements can be different depending on the company, but some common things they might ask you include:

- What kind of cancer you have or had
- What cancer treatments you've had, when you last had treatment, and how it's affected your overall health
- If you're in remission, how long you've been cancer-free
- Other health problems you have or had
- Lifestyle habits such as using tobacco or drinking alcohol
- Family history of cancer

Some life insurance policies have a waiting period for coverage or payout from when you last received cancer treatment. Some companies will consider you for traditional life insurance policies if you've been cancer-free for a certain amount of time.

Just like health insurance, there are different kinds of life insurance plans depending on how much coverage you need. The two main kinds of life insurance are:

Term life insurance

- Is bought for a certain amount of time (a term).
- Terms are usually in 1, 5, 10-, 15-, 20-, and 25-year increments.
- Monthly premiums are often less expensive than for permanent life insurance policies.
- Some are renewable, meaning the insured can renew at the end of the term, even if their health condition has changed. However, the premium might increase. And some companies can deny renewal based on your health status.
- Some longer-term policies (like 20 years) offer guarantees that premiums won't be increased during the term. Some don't, so make sure you know your policy.
- Some term policies can be changed to permanent policies.

Permanent life insurance

- Also called **whole life insurance** or **cash value life insurance**.
- Provides coverage for the insured's entire life.
- Some build cash value that the insured or their beneficiaries can borrow under certain conditions.
- Premiums are often higher than for term life insurance policies. But you might be able to "lock in" that premium, meaning it won't increase as you age or if your health status changes.

There are different kinds of permanent life insurance:

- **Whole life insurance:** You pay premiums on a set schedule.
- **Universal life insurance:** You can choose a flexible payment schedule if you meet certain requirements.

Guaranteed life insurance

Some permanent life insurance policies have **guaranteed issue** options. These policies might be an option if you've been denied eligibility from other policies. They are a popular choice for people with serious medical conditions because you don't have to give health information or have a physical examination. You are "guaranteed" to be

accepted for coverage.

However, these policies usually have higher premiums and might not pay out as much as other policies. And there's usually a waiting period of at least a year before they go into effect.

Group life insurance

Some employers offer group life insurance plans. There are often coverage limits based on your salary. And if you lose or leave your job, you usually can't keep this coverage.

Life insurance riders

Some life insurance companies offer **riders** (optional add-ons) to your primary policy. Some riders that a person with cancer might look into include:

- **Accelerated death benefit (ADB)** and **terminal illness riders** let the insured claim some or all their death benefits while they're alive under certain conditions.
- **Critical or chronic illness riders** give the insured access to death benefits if they're diagnosed with certain illnesses.
- **Child and spouse riders** pay out a small lump sum if the insured dies during the rider's term.
- **Family income riders** offer monthly payments after the insured's death, through the end of the policy term.
- **Term life insurance riders** can be added to permanent life insurance. They increase the amount of death benefits for a certain time period.

If you're shopping for life insurance

One of the best things you can do when looking for life insurance is to get quotes from more than one company. Then you can compare your options and find one that meets your needs and budget.

Here are some things to think about when looking for life insurance:

- The highest premium you'd have to pay to keep your coverage. Life insurance premiums can go up.
- Be honest. If the insurance company finds that you weren't truthful about all your

health information, they could cancel your coverage.

- Don't choose a minor child as your beneficiary. Most life insurance companies will not pay a minor. Instead, think about leaving the money to your estate or trust.
- If you already have life insurance, it's a good idea to review your policy every few years. Make sure the policy still meets your and your beneficiaries' needs.
- If you already have a life insurance policy, it might be easier to keep the policy (even if your premiums go up) than to look for a new policy.

Need more information?

Along with the American Cancer Society, you can find more information and support from these resources:

US Department of Health and Human Services, State Health Marketplaces & more

- Toll-free number: 1-800-318-2596 (English and Spanish)
- TTY: 1-855-889-432

[Medicaid](#)⁴ for information on how to apply, including how to find your state's Medicaid program.

- Toll-free number: 1-877-696-6775

[Medicare](#)⁵ for information on how to apply, compare plans, find a provider, and more.

- Toll-free number: 1-800-633-4227
- TTY: 1-877-486-2048

The National Association of Insurance Commissioners' [Life Insurance Buyer's Guide](#)⁶

**Inclusion on these lists does not imply endorsement by the American Cancer Society.*

Hyperlinks

1. www.cancer.org/about-us/what-we-do/providing-support.html
2. www.cancer.org/support-programs-and-services/resource-search.html
3. www.healthcare.gov/health-coverage-exemptions/forms-how-to-apply/
4. www.medicaid.gov/about-us/beneficiary-resources/index.html
5. www.medicare.gov/
6. www.insureuonline.org/consumer_guide_life.pdf

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