

# MONEY SMART FOR A HEAD START

## Health Insurance for My Budget



**Health insurance helps you pay for medical care and protects you from high health care costs.** It can cover many things like doctor visits, prescriptions, and emergency care. Most plans include free check-ups, vaccines, and screenings that are called preventive care. In fact, people with health insurance are more likely to get care earlier, stay healthier longer, and avoid larger medical bills than those without health insurance.

If you are not sure where to start, [Covering Wisconsin](#) offers free, expert help to find a plan that fits the needs and budget of your household. Visit [CoveringWI.org/enroll](http://CoveringWI.org/enroll) or call 2-1-1 to get connected with free, expert support.

### Where Can You Get Health Insurance? What Are My Options?

There are several ways to get health insurance, and the right option depends on your household's needs, income, and age. Each person in your household may even qualify for a different health insurance option. Young adults can stay on their parent's or guardian's insurance until the age of 26 regardless of if they are married or don't live with you.

#### Workplace

Many people get health insurance from their employer. To know if it's affordable, compare the monthly payment, called a premium, for the lowest-cost employee-only plan to your household income. If the monthly premium is more than 10% of your income before taxes, you may qualify for financial help through Healthcare.gov Marketplace. Use the Affordability Worksheet at [CoveringWI.org/learn](http://CoveringWI.org/learn) to get help checking your plan.

#### Healthcare.gov Marketplace Plans

The Marketplace can be a great option for individuals and families who do not have affordable coverage through a job or other program. Most people qualify for financial help based on their income and can find plans between \$0-\$100 per month. You can apply during the Open Enrollment time, from November 1 to January 15, each year. If you've had a major life change, such as marriage, birth, or death, you may qualify for a special enrollment period. Visit [Healthcare.gov](http://Healthcare.gov) for more information.

## Other Health Insurance Options

### Medicare

- A federal health insurance program
- Available to people who are:
  - Age 65 or older,
  - Receiving Social Security Disability,
  - Diagnosed with certain conditions like end-stage kidney disease.
- For support:
  - Call the Medigap Helpline: 1-800-242-1060.
  - Visit [CoveringWI.org/learn](http://CoveringWI.org/learn) for Medicare fact sheets.
  - Contact your local Aging and Disability Resource Center.

### TRICARE (Military Health Insurance)

- Health care program for active-duty service members, veterans, and surviving family members.
- Offers several plans including:
  - TRICARE Prime,
  - TRICARE Select,
  - TRICARE For Life.
- Plan eligibility depends on service status and location.
- Learn more at [TRICARE.mil](http://TRICARE.mil) or visit your local Veterans Affairs office.

### CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program)

- In Wisconsin, CHIP is part of BadgerCare Plus.
- Provides health coverage for children in families with incomes too high for Medicaid but still needing support.
- Children may qualify even if other family members do not.
- Apply or learn more at [Access.wi.gov](http://Access.wi.gov).

### BadgerCare Plus

- Wisconsin's Medicaid program
- Offers free or low-cost health coverage for individuals and families
- Eligibility is based on income; each household member may qualify at different income levels.
- Example: A family of four with a monthly income of about \$2,000 may qualify.
- Learn more or apply at [Access.wi.gov](http://Access.wi.gov) or call 2-1-1 for local expert help.

### To \$um it up

-  Health Insurance protects your health and your wallet.
-  You have options based on your household's needs and income.
-  Free expert help is available.

## Want to Learn More?

- Visit our website for more financial education resources. <https://finances.extension.wisc.edu>
- Contact your local Extension Educator: <https://counties.extension.wisc.edu>
- For help with balancing your monthly spending plan, contact the nonprofit National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) at <https://www.nfcc.org> or 800.388.2227.