Your Guide to Medicare Part D  
(Prescription Drug Coverage)

For many people, prescription drugs make up a significant portion of their yearly healthcare costs. That’s why decisions around Medicare Part D—the prescription drug coverage portion of Medicare—is so important. To join a Part D plan, you only need Part A or Part B. To join a Medicare Advantage Plan, you must have both Part A and Part B. Many Medicare Advantage plans include drug coverage, although some don’t include it, in which case you would need to join a separate Medicare drug plan. Let’s explore Part D further.

**Benefits of Part D**  
  
**• Broad coverage:**Medicare Part D plans cover a wide array of prescription drugs, from generic to certain brand-name medications.  
  
**• Cost management:**By offering tiered formularies (a plan’s list of covered drugs), beneficiaries often find that commonly prescribed drugs are available at a reduced cost, making routine medications more affordable.  
  
**• Protection against high drug costs:**With a cap on out-of-pocket expenses, Part D ensures that beneficiaries aren't overwhelmed by the costs of essential medications, especially in cases of chronic or severe conditions.

**Costs associated with Part D**  
With Medicare Part D, beneficiaries will still have some out-of-pocket costs:  
  
**• Monthly premium:**Premium costs for Part D vary based on the plan you choose. Some Medicare Advantage Plans (Part C) include Part D coverage, potentially affecting the premium.  
  
**• Deductibles:**Some Part D plans have a yearly deductible, after which the plan pays its share of the drug costs.  
  
**• Copayments and coinsurance:**Once the deductible is met, beneficiaries typically pay a part of the drug cost (either a copayment or coinsurance), with the plan covering the rest.

**When to enroll in Part D**  
Timing is everything when it comes to Medicare, and Part D is no exception:  
  
**• Initial Enrollment Period (IEP):**This 7-month window starts 3 months before the month you turn 65 and extends 3 months after your birth month. Enrolling in Part D during this time prevents late enrollment penalties.  
  
**• Annual Election Period (AEP):**From October 15 to December 7 each year, you can review, switch, or enroll in a Part D plan. Changes made during this period take effect on January 1 of the following year.  
  
**• Special Enrollment Periods (SEPs):**In specific situations, like losing current creditable drug coverage, beneficiaries can enroll in a Part D plan outside of the usual periods.

**Choosing the right Part D plan**  
  
Prescription drug prices can be a source of concern for individuals. Choosing the right Part D plan to get the drugs you need at a cost that works for your budget is an essential part of your Medicare decision process. EOS is here to help you compare plans and find the one that works for your specific prescriptions and budget.