



COLLEGE DIABETES NETWORK

# HEALTH INSURANCE 101

Making the best decisions for your financial and physical well-being



Healthcare costs for **Americans with diabetes** are **2.3 times greater** than those without diabetes.\*

\*2018 American Diabetes Association research.

Part of independently managing your health is choosing a health insurance plan. The process can feel daunting, especially if it is your first time. Consider the cost of your office visit co-pays, prescriptions, monitors and other medical devices – it’s too expensive to manage this chronic disease without the right health insurance plan.

There are several types of health insurance plans, which determine the care you receive and cost of treatment. Follow this guide to make smart choices and stay healthy without draining your bank account.

## BELOW ARE SOME TIPS TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS:

- 1 Plan ahead.** Research and choose the plan that best suits your medical needs.
- 2 Don't choose a high deductible plan.** This means paying all medical bills out of pocket – including purchasing insulin at list price – until you reach that deductible.
- 3 Do the math!** Calculate and compare premium costs, copays, deductibles, etc. [JDRF's Guide](#) and this [worksheet from the Affordable Insulin Project](#) can help!
- 4 Weigh your options.** For example, compare mail order versus pharmacy prices to see if you can fill prescriptions (including insulin) every 90 days or every 30 days to save money.
- 5 Get advice from an expert!** Watch our video from Stewart Perry, insurance guru from the [National Diabetes Volunteer Leadership Council](#).
- 6 Advocate** for yourself and others.



## FOLLOW THE LINKS BELOW FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For a basic primer on health insurance plans for people with diabetes, check out:



To explore more affordable options, visit:



To learn more about getting involved in advocacy, visit:



For more tips, visit:



## WHAT ARE MY OPTIONS?

If you have a job and are offered health insurance through your employer, taking advantage of those plans is usually your best option if you are not covered under a parent's plan. If you are aging out of a family plan, and don't have health insurance through a job, consider some of the following options:

SITUATION	Medicare	CHIP	COBRA	Marketplace	Medicaid	University Health Plan
Aging Out of CHIP or Family Plan	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Unemployed or Between Jobs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Student Who is Not on a Family Plan	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

If you still can't find adequate insurance coverage, try these steps:

1. Check to see if you qualify for your insulin manufacturer's patient assistance program or coupon cards.
2. Contact your doctor's office to see if they have insulin samples that they can provide you with.
3. If no other options are available, the emergency room or urgent care center is always an option. It is never a good idea to ration insulin!

## HEALTH INSURANCE KEY

### Medicare

Available for certain people with disabilities who are under age 65 and have received Social Security Disability benefits for 24 months. **Note:** In most circumstances, diabetes alone does not qualify as a disability for Medicare purposes. Contact your local SHIP for assistance.

### CHIP

Provides medical coverage for individuals under the age of 19 with household incomes too high for Medicaid, but too low to afford private health insurance coverage.

### COBRA

Provides continuing group health insurance coverage for some employees and their families after a job loss or other qualifying event. This program extends coverage whether you are on your parents' or your own health insurance plan.

### Marketplace

This service helps people shop for and enroll in affordable health insurance.

### Medicaid

Government health insurance provided for people who fall under a specific income threshold.

### University Health Plan

Check with your student health center about what options they may have to offer.

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