

Tips for Selecting a Caltech Medical Plan

When selecting a medical plan for you and your family, it is important to think about the doctors (provider network) and the costs. Make sure you consider your provider network, your monthly premium cost, and how much you'll spend when you actually receive health care services or purchase prescription drugs. Visit the insurance carriers' websites to find contracted providers, and review the formula below to estimate your costs.

Your monthly premium
cost for coverage



Your share of medical
and Rx expenses



Your total health
care costs

HMO

This type of plan allows you to receive care only from an HMO-contracted provider. If you prefer predictable costs, even if it means higher premium contributions from your paycheck, then an HMO may be the best option for you. You'll pay less out-of-pocket—a set copay—when you receive health care services or prescription drugs.

Keep in mind: HMOs have low fixed copays and no deductibles, but you must receive care from the primary care medical group and the specialists they refer you to. Out-of-network care without a referral is not covered, except in the case of a medical emergency.

High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) PPO

This type of plan allows you to receive care from any provider. In general, an HDHP PPO may have lower monthly premiums but higher out-of-pocket costs for health care services or prescription drugs due to the annual deductible that needs to be met before the insurance carrier shares the cost. If you value this flexibility in providers and potentially lower premiums, then an HDHP PPO may be the best option for you.

All Caltech medical plans pay 100% for eligible in-network preventive care services—such as annual physical exams, recommended immunizations, annual screenings, and certain eligible preventive prescription drugs.

Keep in mind: If you need non-preventive services (health care or prescription drugs), you will pay the full cost until you meet your annual deductible. Before you enroll in an HDHP PPO, make sure you understand your expected out-of-pocket costs and the advantages of a Health Savings Account (HSA).

Savings Opportunity for HDHP PPO Participants: If you enroll in an HDHP PPO, you can take advantage of having pre-tax contributions from your paycheck and put them into an HSA. Use your HSA funds to pay for out-of-pocket medical, dental, vision, and prescription drug expenses throughout the year—or in future years, including if you were to retire or leave Caltech. Unlike a Flexible Spending Account (FSA), which you can elect with any medical plan, your HSA balance does not expire at the end of the year. Note: Per IRS rules, the HSA is only available to individuals enrolled in an HDHP PPO.