

Fight Fraud: Guard Your Medicare Card

If you have Medicare, you can protect your identity and help prevent health care fraud by guarding your Medicare card like you would a credit card.

Identity theft from stolen Medicare Numbers is becoming more common. Medicare's here to help by removing Social Security Numbers from Medicare cards and replacing them with a new, unique number for each person with Medicare. Medicare will mail new Medicare cards with the new numbers between April 2018 and April 2019.

Here are some important steps you can take to protect yourself from the identity theft that can lead to health care fraud:

- Don't share your Medicare Number with anyone who contacts you by telephone, email or in person, unless you've given them permission in advance. Medicare will NEVER contact you (unless you ask us to) for your Medicare Number or other personal information.
- Don't ever let anyone borrow or pay to use your Medicare Number.
- Review your Medicare Summary Notice to be sure you and Medicare are only being charged for actual items and services received.

If you're looking to enroll in a Medicare plan:

- Remember there are no "early bird discounts" or "limited time offers."
- Don't let anyone rush you to enroll by claiming you need to "act now for the best deal."
- Be skeptical of free gifts, free medical services, discount packages or any offer that sounds "too good to be true."

If someone calls you and asks for your Medicare Number or other personal information, hang up and call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227). To learn more about protecting yourself from identity theft and health care fraud, visit www.Medicare.gov/fraud or contact your local Senior Medicare Patrol (www.smpresource.org).

This message is brought to you by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.