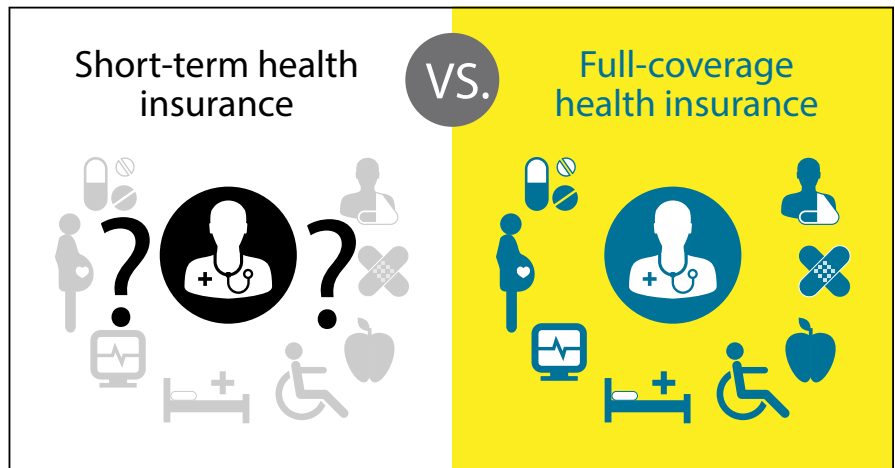


Buyer beware, know the risk before buying short-term health insurance



Short-term health insurance plans often seem cheaper than traditional health insurance, but buyers must take warning. They may offer a lower monthly premium, but these plans provide coverage only for limited medical expenses.

Before purchasing a short-term health plan, be sure to understand the risk of buying one by carefully reading the policy and asking some important questions.

How can I find financial help and enroll in full-coverage health insurance?

You might be surprised at how much financial assistance you are eligible for when buying a full-coverage plan through [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

Last year, more than 70 percent of Oregonians who enrolled in plans through [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) qualified to receive help paying for coverage. For 2019, individuals making \$48,560 or less, and families of four making \$100,400 or less, may qualify. Financial help can be significant. For 2018 coverage, Oregonians who qualified for financial help got plans with an average premium of \$138.

Open enrollment is the health insurance sign-up period for people who buy health insurance for themselves and their families. It runs from Nov. 1 to Dec. 15. For people who do not get coverage through their job or another program, it is likely the only time to sign up for 2019 health insurance and get help paying for coverage at [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

What are the deductibles and maximum dollar amounts of coverage for short-term health insurance?

It is essential to understand how much you will have to pay in addition to the monthly premium. If the monthly premium seems too good to pass up on a short-term health plan, make sure you can afford the out-of-pocket costs, especially the amount you must pay before insurance coverage starts.

What is the prescription drug coverage for short-term health insurance?

Prescription drug costs are rising. Find out how much coverage, if any, the short-term plan provides for prescription drugs. If you already have regular prescriptions, find out the dollar amount the short-term health plan will cover on the medications you currently take.

Under Oregon law, short-term health plans can only be issued for three months at a time, and cannot be renewed for at least 60 days.

Before buying a short-term plan, review the exclusions, ask questions, and make sure you understand how limited it can be.

Visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov) or call 1-800-318-2596 (toll-free) between now and Dec. 15, to enroll in full-coverage individual or family health insurance. To learn more about the risks of purchasing a short-term health insurance plan visit [DFR.Oregon.gov/short-termquestions](https://www.dfr.oregon.gov/short-termquestions).



If you have questions about short-term health insurance, call a consumer advocate at 888-877-4894 (toll-free) or visit [dfr.oregon.gov](https://www.dfr.oregon.gov)

