

## Medicare Part B Excess Charges – What Are They?

### Description



fall under the doctor

charges/outpatient part of Medicare (Part B). These charges are not charged by all medical providers, but in most states, providers do have the option of charging these – excess – charges. So what are Part B Excess charges? And when are you responsible for them?

Medicare has a predetermined payment schedule for each service or procedure. In other words, they pay a set amount to providers. These fee schedules are location-specific – they vary depending on where you are in the country – and they change over time. A doctor has the option, in most states, of charging up to 15% ABOVE the Medicare-approved payment schedule.



*Medicare Part B Excess Charges are when a doctor charges more than the approved fee schedule. They can be up to 15% above the Medicare*

These so-called Medicare Part B Excess charges of up to 15% above the Medicare-approved amount are passed on to the patient and billed directly to you after the fact. That is, unless you have a [Medigap plan](#) that pays the Part B Excess charges for you. The plans that do this are the two most common plans – Plan F and Plan G.

### GET A LIST OF THE PLAN F AND PLAN G OPTIONS FOR YOUR ZIP CODE

Where should we email the list of plans?

[si-contact-form form=–?9–]I hate spam too, so I will never send such to you!

[No, thanks](#)

[Get a list of Medigap Plans that DO Cover Part B Excess Charges in your zip code](#)

### How Common are Medicare Part B Excess Charges?

Doctors that charge Part B Excess charges, in most parts of the country, are relatively uncommon. Some recent studies have put the national percentage around 5% of instances where doctors charge – excess charges –. Keep in mind, even if a doctor does charge them, they are limited to 15% of the

Medicare-approved payment schedule.

Situations that are usually seen as having a higher incidence of Part B Excess charges are visits to a specialist. Additionally, these charges appear to be more commonplace in urban areas or areas with higher costs of living overall.

That said, if you do go to the doctor regularly and have a doctor that does charge "excess charges", it may be beneficial to ensure you are in a plan that covers them. There is no annual limit on the number of times a doctor can charge these charges. Likewise, there is no dollar amount limit to Part B Excess charges - only the 15% cap above the Medicare-approved amount. So, it is important to know how common Medicare Part B Excess charges are in your particular area of the country.

Lastly, another consideration is that, although you may not have regular doctor visits now, you should choose a Medigap (Medicare Supplement) plan based, at least somewhat, on a long-term plan. You have an initial 6-month open enrollment window, and after that, would have to "qualify medically" to move to a different, more comprehensive plan.



**REMEMBER:** There is NO annual enrollment period for Medigap plans "qualify medically" if you wish to change plans after your initial 6-m

## What States Prohibit Medicare Part B Excess Charges?

As previously mentioned, there are some states that prohibit Part B Excess charges altogether. In these states, doctors are not allowed to implement Medicare Part B Excess charges at all and must stick to the Medicare-approved payment schedule.

The current list of those states that prohibit them is: Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York\*, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

\*New York: [physician\\_charges.pdf \(nyassembly.gov\)](#)

## How to Avoid Medicare Part B Excess Charges?

There are several ways to avoid **Part B Excess Charges**. The most obvious, of course, is to live in a state that prohibits them (see list above).

Beyond that, you can always check with your regular doctors to see if he/she does use "balance billing" (i.e. if they charge Part B Excess charges). If so, you can choose a doctor that does not.



**Two Medigap plans cover Medicare Part B Excess charges in full. The Medigap Plan G and Plan F.**

Excess charges are one of the [key differences between Plan G and Plan N](#). So, as previously discussed, you can [choose a Medigap plan](#) that covers these Part B Excess charges in full. The plans that do so currently are [Medigap Plan G](#) and [Medigap Plan F](#).

If you have questions about how Medicare Part B Excess charges work, or anything else regarding Medicare or Medicare Supplement plans, feel free to [contact us here](#) or call us at 877.506.3378.

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**Author**

65medicare

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