

Monthly Wellness SpotLight by PSA



WHAT ARE PRESCRIPTION COPAY ASSIST CARDS? HOW DO THEY WORK?

As prescription drug prices continue to rise, it's no surprise that people are looking for ways to save on their medications. When you have a large out-of-pocket cost, many people turn to manufacturer copay cards to help offset some of the costs.

These savings programs, which come directly from drug manufacturers, can help those struggling to afford expensive brand drugs.

Here's everything you need to know about manufacturer copay cards.

What are copay cards?

Also referred to as copay savings programs, copay coupons, or copay assistance cards, manufacturer copay cards are savings programs offered by the pharmaceutical company. They help patients afford expensive prescription drugs by reducing their out-of-pocket costs.

Copay coupons are typically for expensive, brand name drugs without a generic equivalent.

How do copay cards work?

The idea behind copay cards is to reduce the total out-of-pocket expense for the patient. When you use one, your health insurance pays some of the cost, and then the drug manufacturer pays part or all of the cost you're responsible for through your copay or coinsurance. If your insurer doesn't cover the drug you're taking, the manufacturer will simply cover all or some of your costs.

How do I get a copay card?

Copay cards are usually accessed through the medication or manufacturer websites. You can also ask your health care provider or pharmacist about copay cards for your medications. To sign up, register online or call the program to enroll. Once you're enrolled, they will usually

provide a card to print out and bring with you to the pharmacy.

Are there any requirements or restrictions?

For most copay cards, there are two main requirements:

1. You must have commercial or private insurance.
2. You cannot have government health insurance, such as Medicare or Medicaid.

This is due to anti-kickback statutes that prohibit manufacturers from inducing the purchase of an item for which someone may be reimbursed by the federal government.

For many cards, there is also an expiration date and a savings maximum. It varies by drug, but it's typically a monthly or annual maximum. There are also sometimes restrictions on the maximum number of times you can use the card.

Depending on where you live, there may also be laws that restrict the use of certain copay cards. In 2017, California banned the use of coupons to purchase brand-name drugs that have generic equivalents.

When signing up for a copay card, be sure to carefully read the terms and conditions. You can always call the program if you have any specific questions.

How do I know if a copay card is available for my medication?

GoodRx has the largest database of copay cards of over 700 medications. To find one, search the name of the drug on www.goodrx.com and scroll down to see if there is a copay card for your drug under "Ways to Save." You can also search for the manufacturer's site for the drug in question. Once on the site, search for copay assistance.