

Medicare and Veterans Administration benefits can work together

You can have both VA Benefits and Medicare. However, you will need to choose which benefits you use when you receive health care services or get health care items.

To use VA benefits, you'll have to see a VA doctor or get care at a VA medical center or other VA location. The VA will also cover care if it's been pre-authorized for services in a non-VA hospital or other care location.

If you go to a non-VA or also VA authorized care facility, Medicare may pay for the services you may need, or if the VA has only pre-authorized some services at the non-VA location, then Medicare may provide coverage for other services the VA doesn't cover. What Medicare does and doesn't cover will depend on the plan you have, what kind of health care facility you receive services at, and which benefits you designate to use if you can use both.

Some other important things to note about Medicare when you have VA benefits:

If you have Part B, and then you drop it, you won't be able to get it back until January of the following year. Also, if you drop it and decide you want it back later on, you may have to pay a penalty to reinstate the coverage. (VA source)

VA benefits often include prescription drug coverage; however, if you sign up for Medicare Part D, you can also get your medicines from non-VA doctors and fill prescriptions at local pharmacies instead of only through the VA mail-order service.