

# Benefits and Me

## Comparing Embedded and Nonembedded Deductibles

One of the concepts of health insurance that is essential to grasp is how your deductible works. There are two basic types of deductibles for family coverage, and knowing which one you have and how it works can help you plan for out-of-pocket health care expenses.

Consider the following differences between these deductibles:

- **Embedded deductible**—Embedded deductibles have two components: the individual deductibles for each family member and the family deductible. When a family member meets their individual deductible, insurance will begin paying according to the plan's coverage. If only one person meets an individual deductible, the rest of the family still has to pay their deductibles.
- **Nonembedded deductible**—With a nonembedded, or aggregate, deductible, there is only a family deductible. All family members' out-of-pocket expenses count toward the family deductible until it is met, and then they are all covered with the health plan's usual copays or coinsurance.

Understanding your deductible can help you plan and save for your family's medical expenses. Speak to HR if you have any questions.

## 5 Questions to Ask Your Doctor

Patients often accept their doctors' advice without truly understanding alternative treatments and the differences—if any—in cost and effectiveness among those alternatives. Asking questions can help you decide what treatment plan is best for your health and wallet.

Asking these five questions may help maximize your health care dollars:

1. Why is this treatment necessary?
2. How much will my treatment cost?
3. Can I be treated another way that is equally effective but less costly?
4. What is this treatment's current procedural terminology (or CPT) code so I can price shop this procedure?
5. What can I do to improve my condition?

It's also appropriate to ask your doctor questions about prescribed medications with regard to dosage, generics and alternatives.



## What's a Deductible?

Your health insurance deductible is a set amount you must pay before your insurance company starts to share the cost for covered medical expenses. Essentially, it represents your initial financial responsibility before insurance helps cover the financial burden of medical care. Understanding your out-of-pocket health insurance costs can help you manage your annual medical expenses and improve your health literacy.

Finding the health care plan with the right deductible for you will vary depending on your health and financial circumstances. For example, if you are healthy, don't need much medical care and prefer lower monthly premiums, a higher deductible health plan may be right for you. Alternatively, a health care plan with a lower deductible may be a better choice if you expect high medical costs for the year and prefer more comprehensive coverage. You can often select your deductible when signing up for health insurance.

Contact HR for more information.

