



Medicare Scams: What You Need to Know

Every year, scammers find new ways to take advantage of Medicare recipients – and they're getting bolder. You might get a friendly phone call offering a "free" back brace or medical alert system. Or maybe a letter or text message warns that your benefits are changing and you need to act fast. It sounds official. It feels urgent. But it's a trap.

These scams are designed to trick you into handing over your personal information – especially your Medicare number – so criminals can commit fraud, rack up fake charges, or even enroll you in plans without your permission. The worst part? You might not even realize it's happened until months later.

Once they have your information, scammers can:

- Bill Medicare for things you never ordered or received
- Sign you up for plans you didn't authorize
- Sell your personal information to other scammers

Sometimes these crooks will even send you the brace or device just to make the scam look legitimate – but it's still fraud.

Red Flags to Watch For:

- Offers of free medical equipment you didn't request
- Pressure to "act now" or "confirm your identity"
- Being told your Medicare benefits are changing
- Robocalls asking you to "press 1" to speak with a representative

How to Stay Safe:

- Don't share your Medicare number with anyone who contacts you unexpectedly.
- Don't trust caller ID. Scammers can fake official-looking names and numbers.
- Hang up on unsolicited offers, no matter how convincing they sound.
- Report it. If you think someone's trying to scam you or may have already used your info, call 1-800-MEDICARE and report it.

And remember – Medicare will never call you to offer free products, ask for your number, or demand payment.