

# Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

## Make sure that Medicare will cover it!



### What is DME?

Walkers, wheelchairs, hospital beds, and back/knee braces are some examples of DME. DME is mainly used in the home.

If you need DME, you and your doctor can make that decision. They know your health needs.

### Talk to your doctor first!

### A prescription is mandatory!

Your Medicare-enrolled doctor will write an order for DME when it is medically necessary for you.



DME usually has a copayment. Be careful of taking "free" DME.

### DME is not free.



### Does it fit you properly?

Some DME must be sized so it will work best for you and fit in your home.



Only a Medicare-approved supplier can bill Medicare.

### To find a supplier call 1-800-MEDICARE



### Be cautious of scammers!

Do not give your Medicare number to someone you do not know, especially over the phone.



Read your Medicare Summary Notice and look for services and supplies you did not receive.

### Look for fraud.



### Call Illinois SMP (800)699-9043

Call the Illinois SMP to report potential Medicare fraud.

# Protect Your DME Benefits

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## This is a common example of fraud...

Mrs. Smith received a call from a man named Jim who said he worked for Medicare. Jim asked Mrs. Smith if she had any pain, and she told him that sometimes her back was sore. Jim said Mrs. Smith could receive a "free" back brace because Medicare will pay for it. Jim sent Mrs. Smith a back brace and used her Medicare number to bill Medicare for a very expensive back brace. The back brace did not fit Mrs. Smith, so she never used it.

One year later Mrs. Smith injured her back after a fall, and her doctor wrote a prescription for a back brace for her.

However, Medicare would not cover the cost of the back brace, because Medicare already paid for a back brace for Mrs. Smith (the "free" one Jim sent her). Mrs. Smith lost her benefit.

It is important to always work with your doctor for your health care needs, especially when it comes to DME. Don't take the chance of losing your benefits by accepting "free" equipment that is not right for you or something you may not need.

**Be careful with your Medicare number, so this does not happen to you!**

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## A sales person who calls you on the phone CANNOT:



### ▶ Diagnose or assess your health care needs

That is the job of your doctor. Your doctor knows you and your health history. Don't let a sales person talk you into something you do not need.

### ▶ Prescribe durable medical equipment (DME) for you

Would you take medicine from a person other than your health care provider? Of course not! The same holds true for DME. Only your doctor can order DME for you.

### ▶ Fit you for DME over the phone

It is impossible for someone calling on the phone to make sure equipment will fit you, and that is the job of a DME supplier. A good DME supplier will work with you until the equipment fits you just right and works properly for you.

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**Prevent** Medicare fraud by not giving out your personal information to someone you do not know.

**Detect** Medicare fraud by reading your Medicare Summary Notice to make sure the claims for services and supplies are what you actually received.

**Report** Medicare fraud by calling the Illinois SMP at (800)699-9043 with questions about claims on your Medicare Summary Notice.