

# Tips to Avoid Durable Medical Equipment Fraud

Medicare covers certain kinds of durable medical equipment (DME), prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies when they are **medically necessary**. This means that a doctor needs to prescribe the equipment before it will be covered by Medicare. If you need medical equipment or supplies, contact your doctor **first**. Once your doctor has approved the DME, prosthetics, orthotics, or supplies, you can find a Medicare approved DME supplier by calling 1-800-MEDICARE or visiting Medicare's website, [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov). The DME supplier should set up a fitting appointment with you before providing you any equipment, to ensure that the equipment will fit and work properly for you and in your home.

**Here are some tips to avoid durable medical equipment fraud:**

## DO NOT...

- ✦ DO NOT give your Medicare number to someone you do not know, especially someone who calls on the phone, comes to the door, or offers “free” services in exchange for your Medicare number. “Free” services do not require your Medicare number!
- ✦ DO NOT accept equipment or supplies from someone who calls on the phone or visits you unexpectedly, even if they say your doctor sent them!
- ✦ DO NOT accept “free” equipment at a presentation or event, or equipment that was not prescribed by your doctor.
- ✦ DO NOT sign contracts or other forms without reading them, and never sign blank forms.

## DO...

- ✦ DO contact your doctor if you think you may need durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, or supplies. Your doctor should order any supplies that you need.
- ✦ DO read your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from your insurance company. Watch for claims of services or supplies that you did not get, services or supplies that were not ordered by your doctor, or other billing errors.

The Illinois SMP (Senior Medicare Patrol) Program educates consumers about health care fraud, waste, and abuse. If you have questions about a claim on your Medicare Summary Notice or Explanation of Benefits, call the Illinois SMP program at **(800)699-9043**. Information about the Illinois SMP program is also available on our website: [www.illinoissmp.org](http://www.illinoissmp.org)