

Hospital Inpatient or Outpatient

Did you know that even if you stay in the hospital overnight, you might still be considered an outpatient?

Your hospital status (inpatient or outpatient) affects how you pay for hospital services (like X-rays, drugs, and lab tests) and may also affect whether Medicare will cover care in a skilled nursing facility (SNF).

You're an **inpatient** the day you're admitted to the hospital with a doctor's order. The day before you're discharged is your last inpatient day.

You're an **outpatient** if you are getting emergency care, observation, surgery, tests and the doctor hasn't admitted you to the hospital. You can be an outpatient even if you spend the night in the hospital.

How does inpatient or outpatient affect Medicare Skilled Nursing Facility benefits?

To be eligible for the Medicare Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) you must have been an inpatient for three days and enter a Medicare-approved facility within 30 days after leaving the hospital.

You can ask your doctor or the hospital staff if Medicare will cover your SNF stay. They are usually experienced in the details of Medicare coverage. But it always helps to be informed.

More information is available from
CMS (Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services)
www.medicare.gov/Publications or call 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227)

Relevant booklets are:

- "Medicare and You"
- "Are you a Hospital Inpatient or Outpatient?"
- "Medicare Coverage of Skilled Nursing Facility Care."

Source: Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. www.cms.gov.

Note: Your Medicare Supplement plan may help pay for both inpatient and outpatient services. Your Medicare Supplement plan includes benefits in both Part A (Hospitalization) for inpatient costs and Part B (Medical Expenses) for inpatient or outpatient costs.