

Auto Med Pay: If You Don't Have It, Please Get It. If You Have It, Please Use It.

Definitions:

- “Med Pay”: The optional insurance you can obtain under your auto policy that covers your medical treatment.....**The Best Choice**
- “Excess Med Pay”: A policy that covers a portion of medical services *after* you use your health insurance.....**A Poor Choice**
- “No Auto Medical Coverage”: Zero protection.
..... **Unsafe at any speed. Saves money until the inevitable happens.**

Reason vs. Emotion:

Many people strongly dislike the idea of using their med pay for an accident caused by someone else. While this argument works on an emotional level, on a rational it makes little sense. Ask yourself this question: “Would you still choose not to use your med pay if the responsible party had no insurance and was unable to pay out of his/her pocket?” Of course, not. It is your auto insurance company’s duty to obtain reimbursement of the medical expenses from the responsible party. Your job after an auto accident is to get well as fast and as completely as possible. You paid insurance premiums on a regular basis for your med pay policy, so why not use it when the need arises?

Fear vs. the Law:

Many people fear that using their med pay will cause their auto insurance rates to increase. State law typically protects injured patients who use their med pay from incurring any rate increase as a direct result of this usage, provide they did not cause the accident.

Advantages of Med Pay #1:

As a patient with med pay, you can go wherever and to whomever you want for professional treatment. The ability to choose how to use the medical care allowance provided in your med pay policy gives you enormous freedom to get precisely the care you need. As long as your care is reasonable and necessary, you are not at the mercy of the arbitrary restrictions seen in non-med pay coverages. Therefore, if your doctor determines a MRI (or other special test) is needed, you can typically get the test without delay. Try doing that with a managed care company.

Advantages of Med Pay #2:

By using your med pay, you don't have to use up your limited health care benefits. As you probably know, most health insurance companies have a limited, yearly-maximum coverage. Thus, if you use up your benefits to pay for your auto injury expenses, you will have no health care coverage for the remainder of the contract year. By contrast, med pay coverage is per incident, not per year. So if you have another auto accident that same year, your coverage is not diminished.

Advantages of Med Pay #3:

Some medical establishments only accept med pay or immediate payment for their services. Without med pay coverage, the amount one might have to pay out-of-pocket for diagnosis or treatment could be considerable. Are you prepared to pay hundreds or even thousands of dollars out of your pocket for something you may never get reimbursed for?

Advantages of Med Pay #4:

When using your med pay, your treating doctor does not have to wait until the resolution of your case to get paid. While many doctors endure this wait as a courtesy to their patients, this delay of many months is not necessary if you use your med pay.

Advantages of Med Pay #5:

When using your med pay, you typically have the protection of *bad faith* laws. This protection helps assure that you will be treated more fairly by your auto insurance company. A bad faith violation could cost your auto insurer a small fortune, so you have considerable leverage on your side. Third party payors are exempt from most bad faith laws, so the same protection does not exist, making you vulnerable to abuse. If you don't use your med pay, you are more vulnerable.

The Low Cost of Med Pay:

Having a good med pay policy (one with at least \$5000.00 limits) adds only a small percentage to the total cost of the auto policy. Typically, this cost is only a few dollars more per month. This is a small price to pay for all the advantages it affords the individual, his/her family, and friends.