

# What You Need to Know About Your Ontario Health Card

*Your Ontario health card is your key to the Ontario health care system.*

*Take good care of it.*

## What are my responsibilities as an Ontario health card holder?

- Your eligibility for the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) requires that:
  - you are a Canadian citizen or have an immigration status as set out in Ontario's Health Insurance Act; **and**
  - you make your permanent and principal home in Ontario; **and**
  - you are physically present in Ontario for at least 5 of the first 6 months immediately following the date you establish residency in Ontario; **and**
  - you are in Ontario for at least 5 months in any 12-month period.
- If, for any reason, your status changes or you no longer meet these eligibility requirements, you must notify the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.
- You should inform the ministry if you change your address. **It is important to notify the ministry when you change your address to prevent any interruption to your health coverage.**

- You should carry your health card with you at all times and show it every time you visit a health care provider. No one else should use your health card.
- Check the expiry date on the bottom of your health card. If you are older than 15½ years of age, you must visit your local ministry office to renew your health card and have a new photo taken.

Before your health card expires, you will receive a notice asking you to renew it. Please make sure that the ministry has your current address so we can direct these notices and other communications to you.

- You should replace your health card if:
  - any information on your health card is **not** correct; **or**
  - your health card is lost, stolen or damaged; **or**
  - you change your name or address.

## Who can ask to see my Ontario health card?

Your Ontario health card is for health care only. Only health care providers or Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care staff can ask to see your health card. You do not need to show it to anyone else.

Protect the privacy and confidentiality of your personal information by protecting the use of your health number and health card.

## Services In Ontario

### What services does my Ontario health coverage cover?

The ministry covers a wide range of health services; however, it does not pay for services that are not medically necessary, such as cosmetic surgery.

## Physicians

The ministry covers all insured medically necessary services provided by physicians. Physicians may bill you for uninsured services or if you miss an appointment or your health card is not valid. You may contact the ministry if you have questions about charges for uninsured services.

## Podiatrists and Osteopaths

Services provided by podiatrists and osteopaths are partially covered under OHIP. The ministry pays part while you must pay for the extra costs.

## Other Health Care Providers

You may need to pay the full or partial cost of services provided by other health care providers, such as chiropractors and physiotherapists. You may contact the ministry if you have questions about services provided by other health care providers.

## Dental Services in Hospital

The ministry pays for some dental surgery when it is done in a hospital. You must pay the cost of regular dental services in a dentist's office.

## Eye Care

A comprehensive eye examination is covered by OHIP once a year for persons under 20 and those 65 and over. OHIP also covers a major eye exam once every 12 months for persons aged 20 – 64 who have medical conditions requiring regular eye exams.

## Other Health Services

Full or partial coverage is provided in some cases for health services, such as ambulance services, prescribed medications and long-term care services.

## Northern Health Travel Grant

You may be eligible for a Northern Health Travel Grant to help pay transportation costs if you live in northern Ontario and must travel long distances for specialty medical care.

## Services In Other Canadian Provinces or Territories

Most of your Ontario health coverage benefits can be used across Canada. The province or territory you are visiting will usually bill Ontario directly. If you have to pay for health services you receive in another part of Canada, you can submit your receipts to your local ministry office to be considered for reimbursement.

Prescription drugs from pharmacies, home care services, ambulance services and long-term care services provided in other provinces and territories are **not** covered.

## Services Outside Canada

For people traveling outside Canada, the ministry pays a set rate for emergency health services. Emergency health services are those given in connection with an acute, unexpected condition, illness, disease or injury that arises outside Canada and requires immediate treatment. Ambulance services are **not** covered.

Ontario residents are encouraged to purchase supplementary insurance when traveling outside Canada as many emergency health services provided outside the country cost much more than OHIP may pay.

## For More Information:

- Call the ministry **INFOline** at 1 800 268-1154 (toll-free in Ontario only)  
In Toronto, call (416) 314-5518  
For TTY service, call 1 800 387-5559
- Visit our website at: [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)