# Figuring Out How Much Health Coverage You Need

Health insurance plans come in all shapes and sizes, and the right one for you depends very much on your particular needs.  Your level of general health, plans to have children, children you already have, and of course your financial situation all contribute to determining how much health coverage you need.  Here are a few of the deciding factors in selecting a level of coverage.

## How Are Your Finances?

In theory it would seem that, if you are short on cash, choosing a plan with a low premium is the way to go.  This isn't necessarily the smart choice, however.  Lower premiums often come with higher deductibles, larger co-pays, and higher co-insurance percentages.  That means that while you might be saving money every month, when you need to use your coverage it is going to cost you a lot out of pocket.  If you don't have a lot of disposable income, you are better off paying for more coverage on a monthly basis, especially if you are likely to need health care frequently.

For those who are comfortable enough financially, a plan that has less coverage and more out of pocket expenses can keep your monthly premiums down.  This is a good way to go if you don't anticipate much need for medical care, and you have enough money saved to cover unexpected medical bills.

## How Is Your Health?

If you are in good health, you probably don't need a lot of coverage; just enough to cover well visits along with some just-in-case catastrophic coverage will probably do just fine.  Be sure you do have that emergency coverage, though-no matter how good your health, anyone can be involved in an accident that could cost thousands.

## What About Your Family?

Do you have children or are you planning to have children soon?  Then you should consider a high level of coverage.  Both maternity and delivery care can be very expensive, and young children require a lot of doctor visits throughout the year.  They are also more likely to require emergency care.  A comprehensive plan with a high level of coverage for maternity and well-child care is essential for families.

If you have a family, remember it's not just the kids who need good coverage-you as a parent need to be covered, too.  What would happen if you were injured and hospitalized?  Could your family cover the bills if you lost your income?  Good health insurance doesn't just protect you; it protects your family, too.

The amount of coverage is a very individual choice.  The bottom line is to ensure you have enough coverage that medical bills won't put you in a difficult financial situation.  Paying the premiums up front is much better than trying to pay off hefty medical bills when it's too late.