

Choosing Your Health Coverage

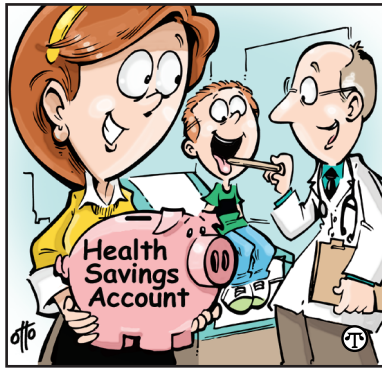
Health Savings Accounts Offer A Low-Cost Option

(NAPSA)—Enrolling in a medical plan at work, or shopping for health insurance yourself? Then you may want to take a look at high-deductible plans that allow you to open a health savings account (HSA). An HSA can help you pay for qualified medical expenses—such as doctor visits and prescriptions—and save on taxes.

HSAs are available to people who have eligible high-deductible health insurance coverage. This type of insurance typically has lower premiums because of its higher deductibles. And preventive care—such as annual physicals and mammograms—is usually covered at no extra cost.

Introduced just seven years ago, HSAs have grown quickly in popularity as people try to manage rising health care costs while keeping health coverage. Americans covered by HSA-eligible health insurance increased from just over 1 million to 10 million in the past five years, according to America's Health Insurance Plans.

“High-deductible health insurance policies, paired with HSAs, make sense for many people,” says Chad Wilkins, chief executive offi-



A health savings account can be good for your health and your wealth.

cer of OptumHealth Financial Services. “The costs compare favorably to other types of insurance, and you can save money for today, tomorrow and even retirement.”

How HSAs Work

You deposit pretax money in a bank account. The contributions you or your employer makes to the HSA are tax-deductible up to limits set by the IRS.

You can invest your funds and earn interest—and any growth is tax free. You can also withdraw the funds at any time to pay for qualified medical expenses without paying income taxes.

With an HSA, you own the funds in your account from day one, and you keep the money if you change jobs or retire. There's no “use it or lose it” rule, so unused funds roll over each year and can be saved for future expenses. Many employers contribute to their employees' HSAs, too.

Is An HSA Right For Me?

If your employer offers an HSA or if you are shopping around to buy health insurance on your own, consider these tips:

- Compare the costs and benefits of HSAs with other kinds of health insurance by using cost estimators and other tools provided by health insurers or your employer.
- Ask a tax expert to explain the tax advantages of HSAs.
- Check to see if your employer contributes to your HSA.
- Compare the interest rates, fees and banking services provided by the HSA administrator. See if it offers conveniences such as HSA debit cards and online bill payment.

To learn more about HSAs and high-deductible health insurance policies, visit www.optumhealthbank.com.

Note to Editors: Health savings accounts (HSAs) are individual accounts offered by OptumHealth BankSM, Member FDIC, and are subject to eligibility and restrictions imposed under applicable tax law, including but not limited to restrictions on who can open an HSA and tax penalties that may arise if distributions are not for qualified medical expenses set forth in section 213(d) of the Internal Revenue Code. This communication is not intended as legal or tax advice. Please contact a competent legal or tax professional for personal advice on eligibility, tax treatment and restrictions. Federal and state laws and regulations are subject to change.