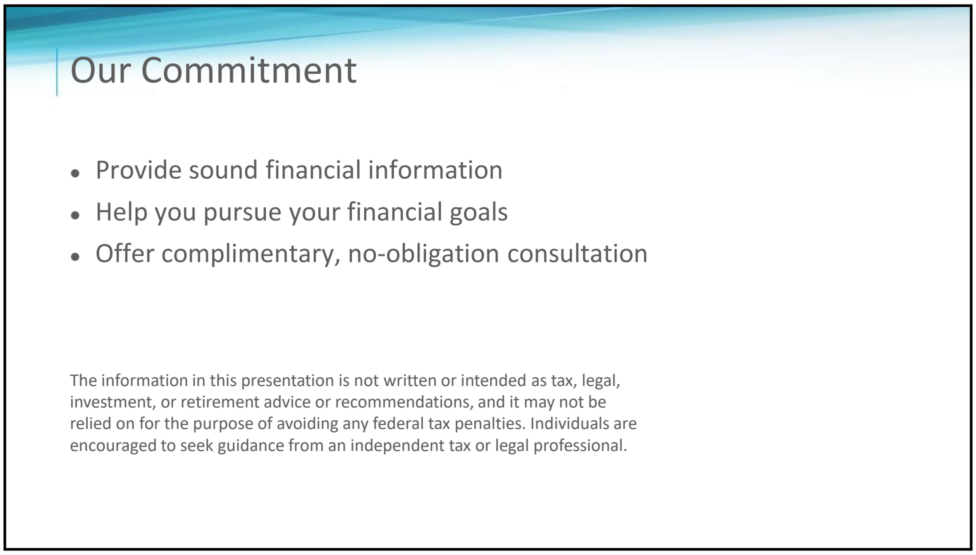
Welcome to our Taking Control seminar: financial strategies for women. We're glad that you could join us here today.

Before we get started, I'd like to introduce myself and my company.

[Note to presenter: Give a brief personal background, then talk about your organization and give its location. If appropriate, introduce other members of your organization who are in the room and discuss any housekeeping issues.]



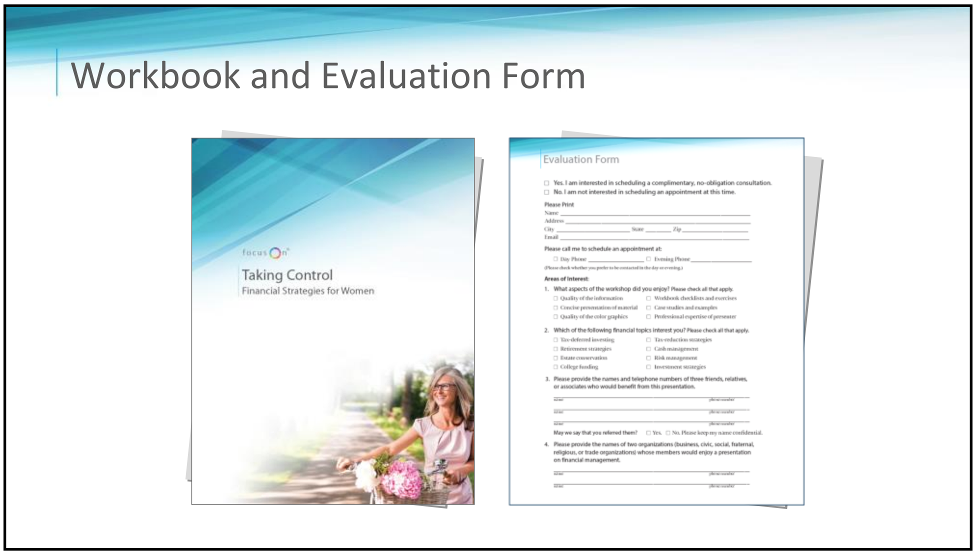
We use seminars like this one to introduce ourselves and to develop strong working relationships with members of the community like you.

Our commitment extends beyond simply offering financial services. We are committed to helping you evaluate your financial situation and giving you tools to help make informed decisions and pursue your financial goals.

We hope that after attending the seminar, you'll want to meet with us in our office. This is a complimentary, no-obligation consultation that we offer to everyone who attends our seminars. During that meeting, we can discuss any questions you have as a result of what we discuss here. If you prefer, we can use that time to examine your specific situation and begin the process of helping you formulate a financial strategy that will suit your needs.

We know that we'll establish a working relationship with you only when *you* are confident that we can be of service. We want you to understand your options and to know how you may benefit from working with us.

The information in this presentation is not written or intended as tax, legal, investment, or retirement advice or recommendations, and it may not be relied on for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. You are encouraged to seek guidance from an independent tax or legal professional based on your individual circumstances.



Let’s talk about the workbook you received as you entered.

We’ve found that people are more likely to remember something they act on rather than something they only hear about. That’s why we designed this workbook so you can apply what you learn to your situation. In it you’ll find helpful materials that reinforce the seminar’s major points and will be a valuable resource for you.

Feel free to highlight, underline, or make notes in whatever way serves you best.

Inside your workbook, you’ll find an evaluation form just like this one.

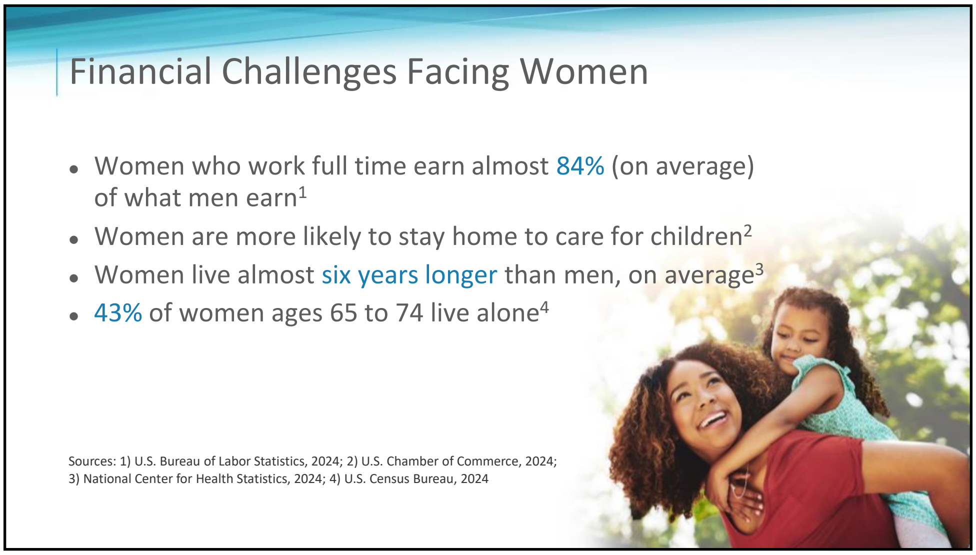
[Note to presenter: Pull out an evaluation form for your seminar participants to see.]

At the end of the presentation, please use this form to tell us whether you’re interested in taking advantage of the complimentary, no-obligation consultation.

We’d like to make you two promises concerning this form. First, if you check “Yes, I am interested in scheduling a complimentary, no-obligation consultation,” we’ll call you in the next couple of days and set up an appointment. Second, if you check “No, I am not interested in scheduling an appointment at this time,” we won’t call you directly after the seminar.

In exchange for these two promises to you, please promise that you will fill out this form. Many seminar attendees do come in for a consultation, so we’ve set aside time just to meet with you.

When you do come to our office, feel free to leave your checkbook at home. We are very interested in developing working relationships with you, but that decision is yours.



Today we're going to talk about taking control. Whether single or married, widowed or divorced, women need to plan ahead for personal and financial security. And more than anything else, this requires that you take control of your finances to help ensure a more comfortable financial future.

Being adequately prepared to meet whatever financial challenges come your way may be more important than you think, especially when you consider the challenges described here.

[Note to presenter: Read bullet points.]

What financial issues are *you* most concerned about? Do you need to save more or take more risks with your investments? Is one of your goals to help a family member pay for college? Does it seem as though you might need to work until you are age 70 or older in order to retire?

To address many of the financial concerns you may have, we're going to cover five action items that are designed to help strengthen your financial future:

1. Getting your financial house in order
2. Putting your money to work by investing
3. Building a healthy nest egg for retirement
4. Facing life's challenges with confidence
5. Addressing insurance and estate issues

Let's start with the first item: getting your financial house in order.

This may seem obvious, but the first step in any financial review is knowing your income and expenses. How much do you have coming in and how much do you have going out?

Regarding your income, you should know all the accounts that hold your money, including bank accounts, brokerage accounts, and retirement accounts. This includes passwords and log-in information to access all of these accounts online.

You should also know what assets you own, including property, insurance policies, and annuities.

Finally, you should know what loan obligations you have — for example, your mortgage, car loans, student loans, and other personal loans. This step includes knowing the lender that holds your loan, the loan terms, and your outstanding balance.

Once you've taken a financial inventory, it's time to look at your financial goals.

Your financial goals are guideposts to planning for your financial security.

[Note to presenter: Consider asking the following questions to encourage a dialogue with your audience:

What are some of your financial goals?

Have you developed a systematic strategy to pursue your goals?

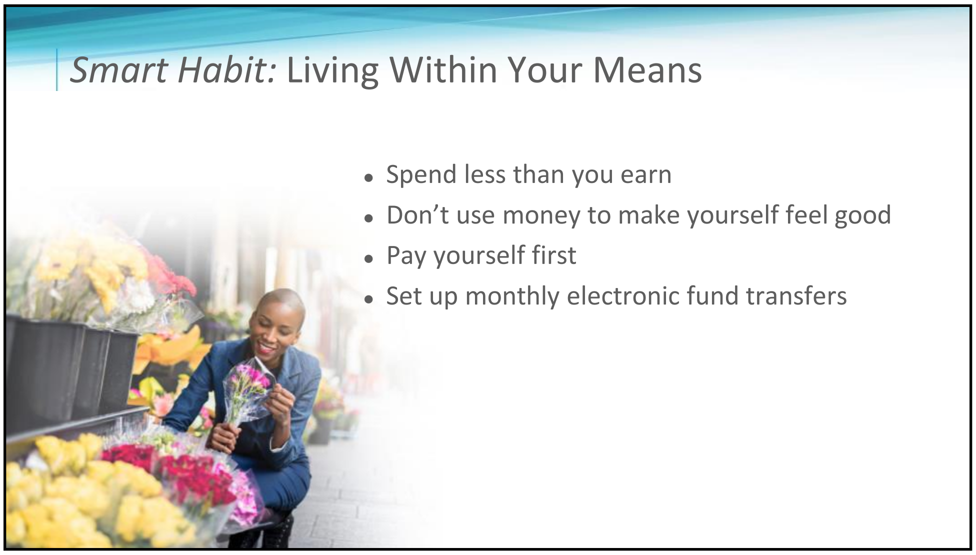
How confident are you that you will achieve them?]

Some goals are **money oriented**. For example, it takes dollars to generate retirement income, purchase a home, pay for vacations, or help cover a child's college tuition.

Other goals are **task oriented**, such as getting your financial papers in order or learning more about the investment options in your employer-sponsored retirement plan.

In addition, your goals can be **short term, medium term**, or **long term**. Making a list of your financial goals and classifying them by timeline can clarify your priorities and help you see the big picture.

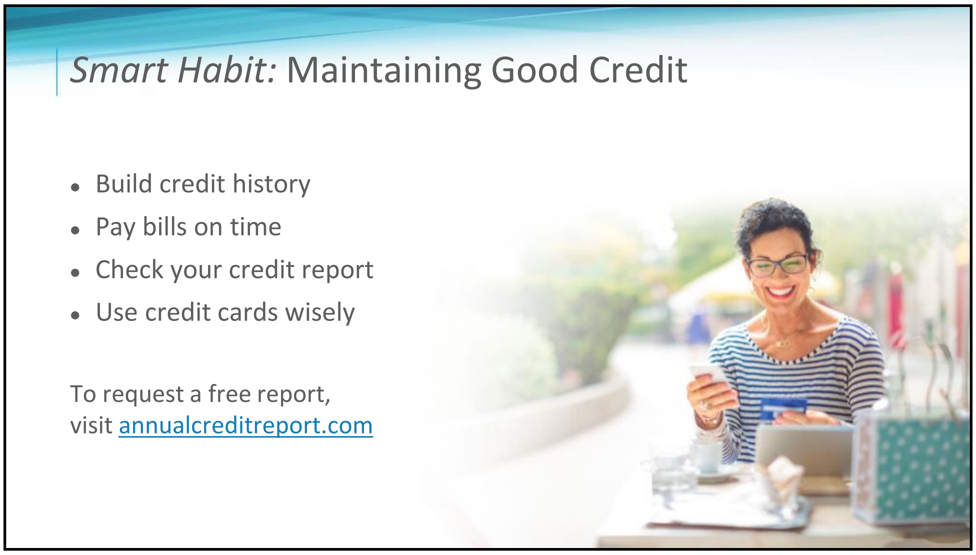
Developing and maintaining smart money habits is a key strategy to being able to meet your financial goals. Let's look at some of them.



At the top of the list is living within your means. Living within your means — or better yet, below your means — involves spending less than you earn, not using money to make yourself feel good, and paying yourself first.

If you’re having trouble living within your means, you’ll need to find a way to spend less or increase your current income. To spend less, look first at cutting back on discretionary expenses. If that’s not enough, look at your fixed costs. Housing is typically the largest fixed cost for most people. If you have outstanding loans, can you refinance to save money? If you can’t lower your fixed costs, you might try to increase your income by looking for new opportunities with your current employer, finding a new job, or retraining in a new industry.

Paying yourself first means you routinely put money into savings before spending on anything else. To put your savings on autopilot, set up monthly electronic fund transfers with your bank or other financial institution to have a portion of your paycheck automatically deposited into one or more savings or investment accounts. We’ll talk more about investing a bit later in this presentation.



Another key habit is maintaining good credit, which can help you get the best interest rates on personal loans. Maintaining good credit includes building a credit history, paying bills on time, and checking your credit report to make sure there are no inaccuracies.

By law, you are entitled to receive one free credit report every 12 months from each of the major consumer credit reporting agencies (Experian, Equifax, and TransUnion). You can do this by visiting annualcreditreport.com.

If you find any inaccuracies or errors in the report, contact the agency in writing and provide copies of any corroborating documents. In addition, many major credit card companies let you see your credit score for free. Your credit score represents the information on your credit report and generally ranges from 300 to 850. The better your credit, the higher your score. If your score is below 670, you might not be getting the best rates for loans and insurance.[1]

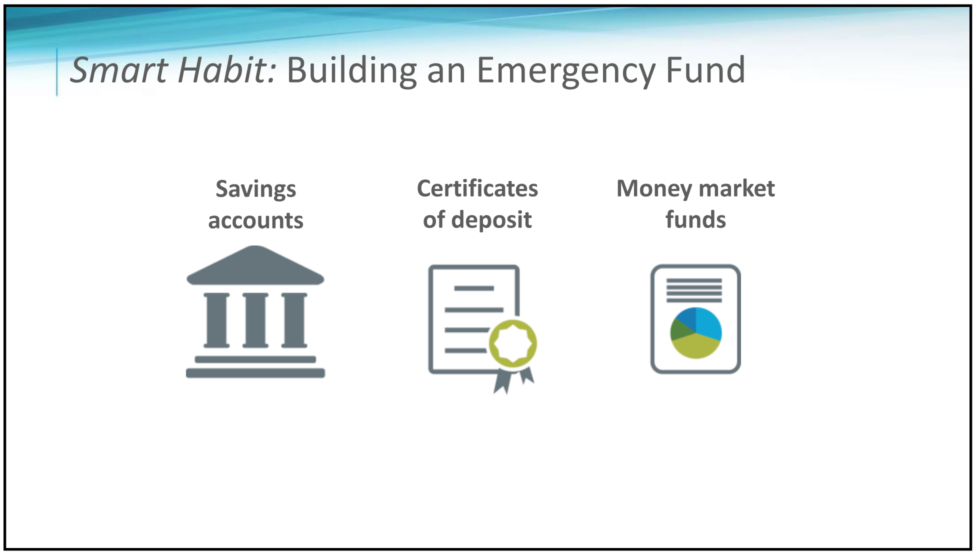
If you're married, you don't have a joint credit score but rather individual scores. However, your spouse's credit history and profile could have an impact on yours. If you have a credit card in both of your names and it doesn't get paid on time, that could affect *both* of your credit scores.

And speaking of credit cards, there's a right way and a wrong way to use them. Credit cards can help you build a credit history that might help you qualify for loans. But too much credit-card debt can become a burden when high interest payments cut into your disposable income. And having a high balance relative to your credit limit could also damage your credit score.

To use credit cards wisely:

- Before using a credit card for a major purchase, first do the math so you understand the true cost of the debt you are incurring.
- If you carry balances from month to month, pay more than the minimum amount whenever possible and reduce the account balances on the highest-rate cards first.
- Shop around for the best credit-card rates or call your credit-card company and try to negotiate a lower interest rate.

Source: 1) Fair Isaac Corporation, 2024



The next smart habit is to build an emergency fund, or a cash reserve. This is your "rainy day" money that you set aside for life's little and not-so-little emergencies, or for vacations or large periodic expenses such as property taxes and auto insurance. By having a cash reserve readily available to draw on, you reduce the need to charge expenses on your credit card that you may not be able to pay back immediately.

As a general rule, your cash reserve fund should be large enough to cover three to six months of living expenses. But if you can't save that amount, that's OK. It's better to have a smaller cushion than none at all.

Because your cash reserve fund should be liquid and safe, you might consider these savings vehicles.

Savings accounts usually offer high safety but a relatively low fixed rate of return. They don't require a large initial investment, and the funds in them are readily accessible. For many people, their main attraction is convenience and liquidity.

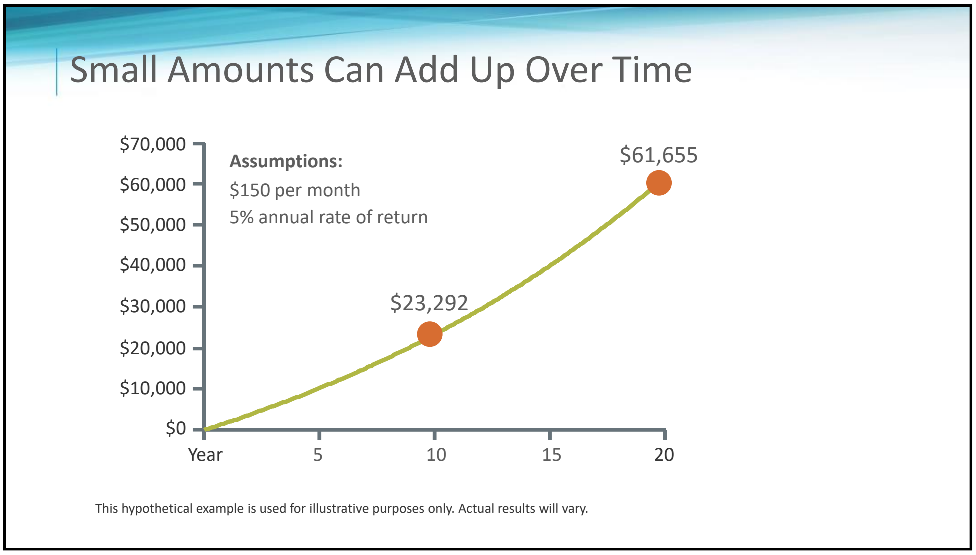
Certificates of deposit are really just short-term loans to a bank, credit union, or savings association. They offer a fixed, moderate rate of return and high safety. CDs usually require a larger initial investment than savings accounts, but you must leave your principal in the CD for a set term in order to avoid early-withdrawal penalties.

Money market funds invest in a diverse portfolio of short-term debt securities. Their goal is to preserve principal while yielding a modest return. However, the value of the funds can fluctuate.

Traditional bank savings accounts and CDs are insured for up to $250,000 per depositor, per federally insured institution, by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation.

Money market funds are neither insured nor guaranteed by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or any other government agency. Although money market funds seek to preserve the value of your investments at $1 per share, it is possible to lose money by investing in such a fund.

Mutual funds are sold by prospectus. Please consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. The prospectus or summary prospectus, if available, which contains this and other information about the investment company, can be obtained from your financial professional. Be sure to read the prospectus carefully before deciding whether to invest.



It can be hard to think about building up a cash reserve fund with thousands of dollars. Here's an example of how small discretionary expenses can add up over time.

Let's say that everyday you buy a $5 cup of coffee or smoothie or whatever special treat you like. Or maybe you buy a $15 lunch 10 times a month, instead of bringing a lunch to work. Either way, this adds up to about $150 per month. If instead you were to put that money in a savings account earning 0% interest, after one year you would have $1,800, and after two years you would have $3,600.

And if instead of earning no interest you *invested* that $150 and earned a 5% average annual return, you might accumulate a sizable sum over time. For example, after 10 years you might have nearly $24,000, and after 20 years you might have more than $60,000. Remember that's just by investing the equivalent of $5 a day.

[Note to presenter: You might ask participants for examples of other discretionary expenses that they could cut back on to save more for specific financial goals.]

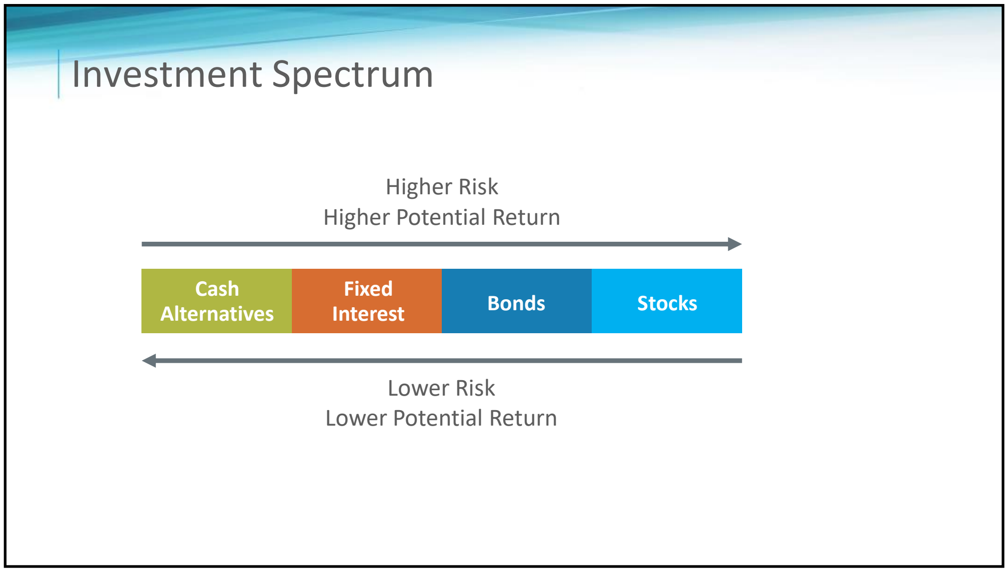
Now I'm not saying that you have to give up specialty coffees or going out to lunch altogether. Life's little pleasures can be important. I simply want to illustrate that it may not take as much effort as you think to accumulate a potentially large sum over time — *if* you have the discipline to save and invest on a consistent basis.

And now that we've looked at getting your financial house in order, let's move on to how to put your money to work.

This hypothetical example is used for illustrative purposes only and does not represent the performance of any specific investment. Rates of return will vary over time, especially for long-term investments. The effects of investment fees, expenses, and taxes are not considered. Actual results will vary.

Where does the money come from to buy a home? Travel? Pay for your children's college tuition? Prepare for a comfortable retirement?

All these financial goals take money — and this money can come from your investments. Putting your money to work by investing could result in a better future down the road.



Usually, investments offer a compromise between risk and reward — the higher the potential return, the more investment risk you must bear.

This diagram positions the major asset classes according to their relative degree of risk and return. Generally, investments on the right side of the spectrum are riskier, yet they offer the potential for higher returns. Investments on the left side of the spectrum are generally safer, but they typically provide lower returns.

[Note to presenter: You might consider asking the following questions:

> *Do you know the allocation of your portfolio that is invested in stocks, bonds, and cash alternatives?*
>
> *Have you looked at the short- and long-term performance of your investments in these asset classes?*
>
> *Are you comfortable with the level of risk in your portfolio and your potential for returns?]*

Let's start by exploring some fundamental investment principles to help build a better portfolio.

Asset allocation is a strategy by which you divide your investments among the different asset classes — typically stocks, bonds, and cash alternatives — to help reduce risk. This process can help you balance investments that have higher levels of safety with those that have a higher potential for growth.

Diversification basically refers to the old adage: "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." It involves investing among and within different asset classes in an attempt to limit exposure to losses in any one sector of the market.

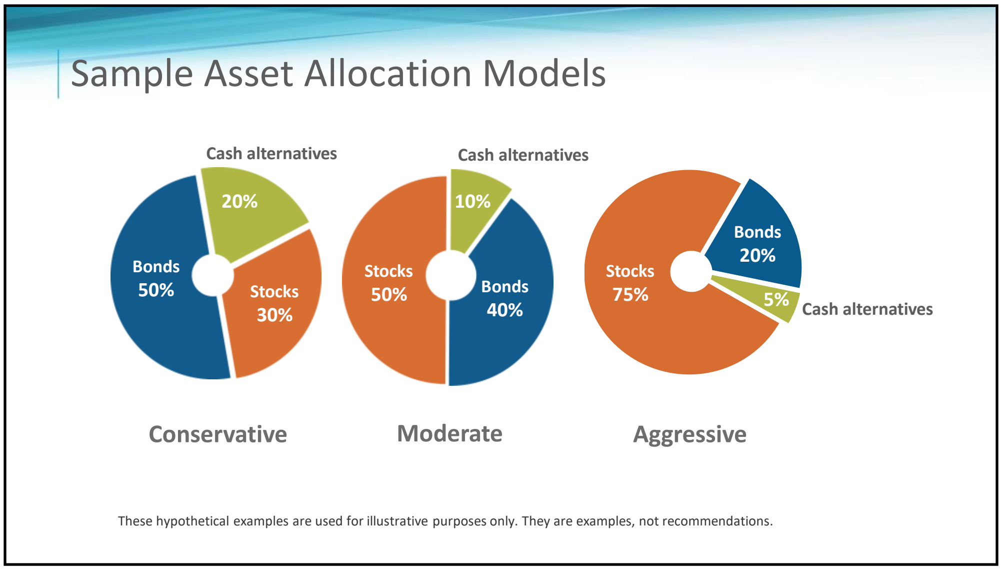
If a single investment becomes volatile, the value of a portfolio may fluctuate widely. A diversified portfolio, on the other hand, may be able to take advantage of potential rallies with some of the investments. And in the event that any one investment suffers a downturn, only a portion of this portfolio would be vulnerable. Although any level of diversification can help protect a portfolio, inexperienced investors may not know which types of investments are most likely to react differently when market volatility occurs. We may be able to suggest a mix of investments that could help enhance the benefits of diversification for your situation.

Asset allocation and diversification do not guarantee a profit or protect against loss; rather, they are methods used to help manage risk.

Dollar-cost averaging is a method of investing that may help you overcome the challenge of volatility in the markets. It calls for investing the same amount of money in an investment, such as stocks, at regular intervals over a period of time. By investing consistently, you end up buying more units when the price is low and fewer units when the price is high. This reduces the average cost of each unit.

If you are contributing a percentage of your salary to an employer-sponsored retirement plan, you are practicing dollar-cost averaging.

Dollar-cost averaging won't prevent a loss, and it doesn't guarantee investment gains. This strategy involves continuous investments in securities regardless of fluctuating price levels of the securities. You should consider your financial ability to continue making purchases through periods of high and low price levels. However, this strategy encourages a systematic approach to investing, which may be the best way to achieve your financial goals.



Here are three sample allocations that might be appropriate for investors with different tolerances for risk.

The model for a conservative investor might look like this: 50% in bonds, 30% in stocks, and 20% in cash alternatives (e.g., money market securities and CDs).

A moderate model might be 50% in stocks, 40% in bonds, and 20% in cash alternatives.

A growth model for an aggressive investor might be 75% in stocks, 20% in bonds, and 5% in cash alternatives.

These investment categories would range from somewhat volatile to very volatile over the years, but the mix of investments could give these investors an adequate potential return for the risk they are willing to take.

If you participate in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, your assets have already been allocated, whether you know it or not. Your quarterly statement may provide a snapshot showing the percentage of your assets that are held in different categories. But is the allocation appropriate for your needs and objectives?

These hypothetical portfolios are shown for illustrative purposes only. They are examples, not recommendations. Investments offering the potential for higher rates of return also involve a higher degree of risk of principal.

Mutual funds and exchange-traded funds (ETFs) are also common investment options. They are both pooled investments assembled by an investment company that may combine stocks, bonds, and other assets into one portfolio shared by many investors. Their underlying investments are typically selected to track a particular market index, asset class, or sector — or they may follow a specific strategy. Because these funds can hold dozens or hundreds of investments, they could provide greater diversification at a lower cost than you might obtain by investing in individual stocks and bonds. Diversification does not guarantee a profit or protect against loss; it is a method used to help manage investment risk.

Despite their obvious similarities, there are key differences between these two types of investments.

You can invest in mutual funds through investment companies and employer-sponsored retirement plans. Mutual fund shares are typically purchased from and sold back to the investment company, and the price is determined by the net asset value at the end of the trading day.

By contrast, ETFs can be bought and sold throughout the trading day like individual stocks. You must pay a brokerage commission when buying or selling ETF shares. The price at which an ETF trades on an exchange is generally a close approximation to the market value of the underlying investments, but supply and demand may cause ETF shares to trade at a premium or a discount.

The ability to buy or sell ETF shares quickly during market hours could encourage some investors to trade ETFs more often than might be necessary, or to make emotional trading decisions during bouts of market volatility. In addition, ETFs are not widely available to investors who participate in employer-sponsored retirement plans.

The return and principal value of mutual fund and ETF shares fluctuate with changes in market conditions. Shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost. You should be aware that bond funds are subject to the same interest-rate, inflation, and credit risks associated with the underlying bonds in the fund. As interest rates rise, bond prices typically fall, which can adversely affect a bond fund's performance.

Mutual funds and ETFs are sold by prospectus. Please consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. The prospectus, which contains this and other information about the investment company, can be obtained from your financial professional. Be sure to read the prospectus carefully before deciding whether to invest.

Just as there are different types of stocks and bonds, there are different types of mutual funds.

Many funds emphasize current income. **Income-oriented** mutual funds concentrate their portfolios on municipal bonds, corporate bonds, Treasury securities, and other income-oriented securities. They may also include stocks that pay high dividends. Income-oriented funds are generally considered to be more conservative than growth funds.

Growth-oriented mutual funds usually invest in stocks. Depending on the objectives of the fund, these may be stocks of larger, well-established companies or smaller, more aggressive companies. Some funds even specialize in international or global securities. Other funds specialize in the stocks of one industry such as health care or technology; these are called sector funds. Because they invest in stocks, growth-oriented funds offer greater potential for appreciation. These funds may be appropriate for investors seeking long-term growth instead of income. Of course, remember that investments seeking to achieve higher returns involve a higher degree of risk.

Predictably, **balanced** funds seek the middle ground between growth funds and income funds. They seek to combine moderate growth potential with modest income.

Target-date (lifecycle) funds are common options in IRAs and 401(k) plans.

As with all investments, you should understand the risks, costs, and benefits of these popular vehicles before investing in them. Keep in mind that the investment return and principal value of mutual funds will fluctuate with changes in market conditions. When an investor’s shares are redeemed, they may be worth more or less than their original cost.

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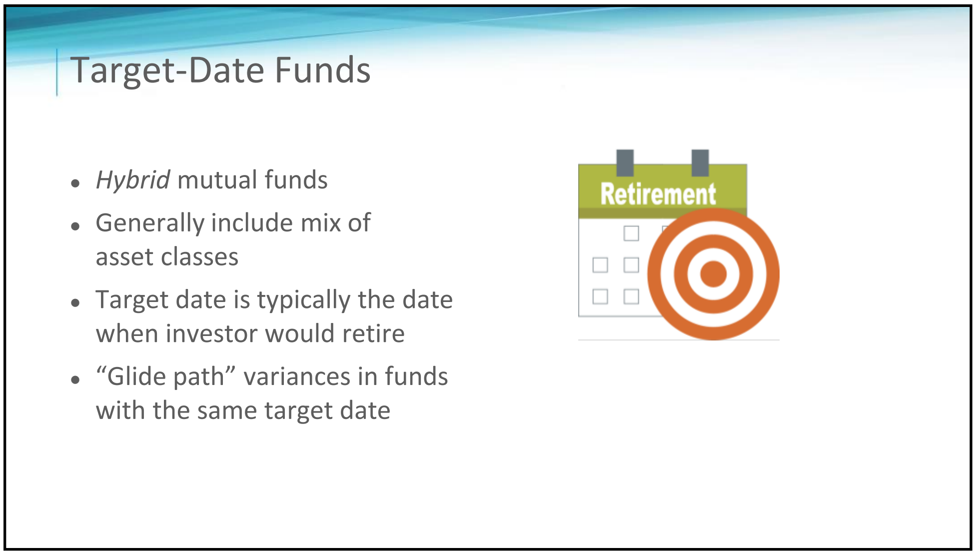


Target-date funds are *hybrid* mutual funds that usually contain a mix of stocks, bonds, and cash alternatives. They can help simplify the selection process because they offer the potential for age-appropriate asset allocation in a single fund.

The target date is the approximate date when an investor might retire and withdraw money. Thus, an investor who expects to retire in 2030 might choose a 2030 fund.

The further away the target date, the greater the risks the fund usually takes. As the target date approaches, the fund typically shifts toward a more conservative asset allocation to help conserve the value it may have accumulated.

However, it's important to understand that no two target-date funds with the same date are alike. Typically, they won't have the same asset allocation, investment holdings, or glide path. The glide path is a formula that determines how the asset mix will change over time — before and often after reaching the target date.

For some investors, a high stock allocation might be too risky, especially when they are approaching retirement or already retired.

It's important to understand that the principal value of target-date funds is not guaranteed before or after the target date. The return and principal value of all mutual funds fluctuate with changes in market conditions. Shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

Mutual funds are sold by prospectus. Please consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. The prospectus, which contains this and other information about the investment company, can be obtained from your financial professional. Be sure to read the prospectus carefully before deciding whether to invest.

Some people want to invest their money in a way that promotes social or environmental issues that are important to them or doesn't support activities they feel are harmful. Sustainable, responsible, and impact (SRI) investing is not a new idea, but these strategies have been attracting much more attention — and investment capital — in recent years.

A common approach to SRI involves evaluating and screening potential investments based on environmental, social, and corporate governance practices (ESG) in addition to more traditional financial analysis. Some examples of ESG concerns include environmental protection, labor relations, gender equality, human rights, and product safety.

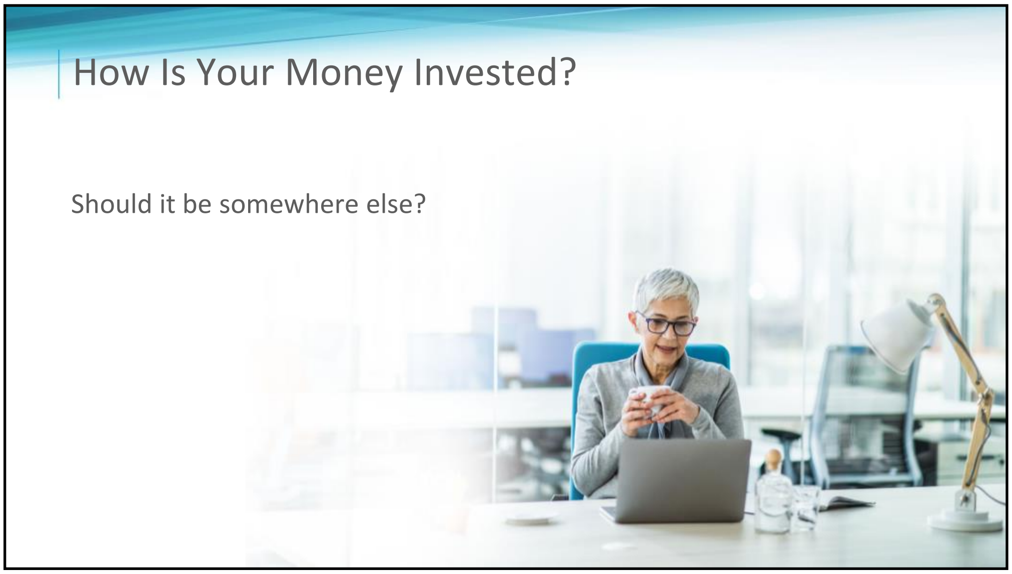
Today, individual investors can choose from thousands of SRI funds.

SRIs entail risk, could lose money, and may underperform similar investments not constrained by social policies. There is no guarantee that a SRI will achieve its investment objectives. SRIs may limit the total universe of available investments, and investors who want to diversify their portfolios among a variety of sub-asset classes may not find a SRI to fill each sub-asset class. Different companies offering SRIs may define and evaluate environmental, social, and governance factors differently.

If you are interested in learning more about the rapidly changing world of socially responsible investments, I can help you explore your options and consider strategies that may allow you to further both your own economic interests and a greater good, whatever that means to you.

As with all stock investments, the return and principal value of SRI stocks and investment funds fluctuate with changes in market conditions. Shares, when sold, may be worth more or less than their original cost.

Mutual funds and ETFs are sold by prospectus. Please consider the investment objectives, risks, charges, and expenses carefully before investing. The prospectus, which contains this and other information about the investment company, can be obtained from your financial professional. Be sure to read the prospectus carefully before deciding whether to invest.



How is your money invested? Do you sometimes wonder whether your money should be somewhere else?

We can work with you to examine your investment style, risk tolerance, time frame, and current mix of investments, and then help you determine whether you could potentially benefit by making some adjustments. Our goal is to help you determine a mix of investments that will balance the appropriate levels of growth potential, income, tax benefits, and preservation of principal for your particular situation.

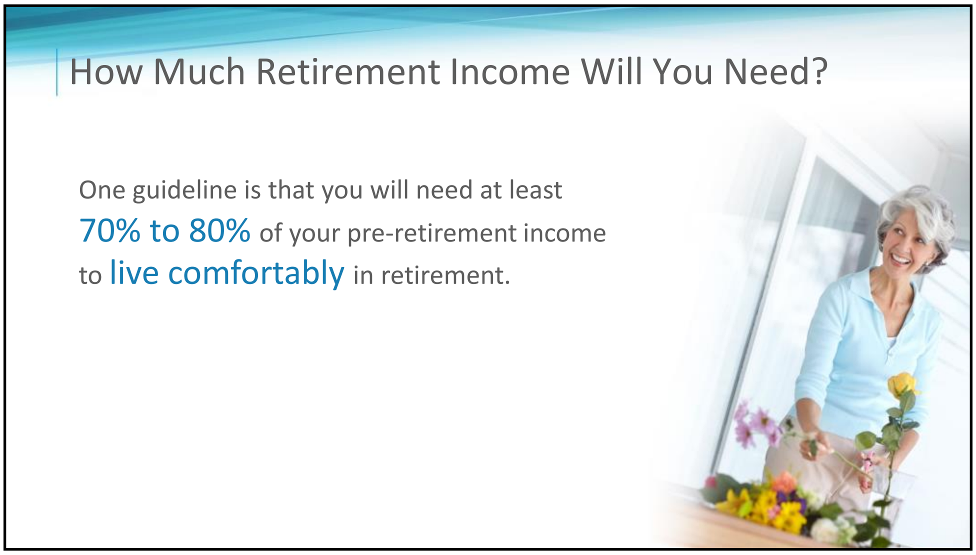
Now I'd like to move on and talk about planning for retirement. This is a critical planning step for women.

Building a healthy nest egg that will last throughout retirement is probably one of the biggest challenges you may face, especially when you have competing priorities.

[Note to presenter: You might ask the following questions to encourage a dialogue with your audience:

Are any of you retired?

How many of you will be retiring in the next 5 to 10 years?]

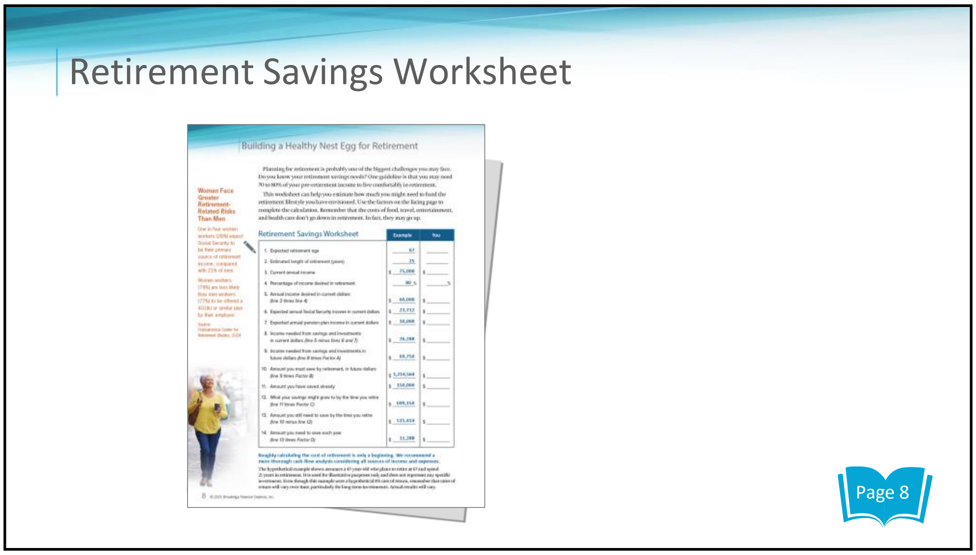


How much retirement income will you need? One guideline is that you will need at least 70% to 80% of your pre-retirement income to live comfortably in retirement.

And you'll likely need this income for a while since a woman's life expectancy is 80.2 years.[1]

In addition, even moderate inflation, which is the rise of consumer prices over time, will reduce your purchasing power and affect the amount you need to save.

Source: 1) National Center for Health Statistics, 2024



What are your retirement savings needs? The worksheet on page 8 in the workbook can be used to estimate how much you might need to fund the retirement lifestyle you have envisioned.

[Note to presenter: Pause to give participants sufficient time to locate the worksheet.]

The first column shows an example to help you see how the worksheet works. The second column is for you to fill out after you return home and have access to your records. Use the factors on page 9, which use various assumptions for inflation and rates of return, to complete the worksheet.

Let's go through the hypothetical example together. Assume you are 47 now, want to retire in 20 years at age **67** (the expected retirement age goes on line 1), and the estimated length of your retirement is **25 years** (line 2). Your current annual income is **$75,000** (line 3), and the percentage of pre-retirement income desired in retirement is **80%** (line 4). To determine the amount of retirement income you would need in today's dollars (line 5), you multiply line 3 by line 4. In this example, you would need **$60,000** a year in today's dollars.

Next, estimate the income you expect from Social Security in today's dollars. The average annual Social Security retirement benefit is about **$23,712**, so we've entered that value on line 6. There's also a line for the amount of income you might expect from a pension in today's dollars. We've entered **$10,000** on line 7 for this example. Of course, this line may be blank for some people.

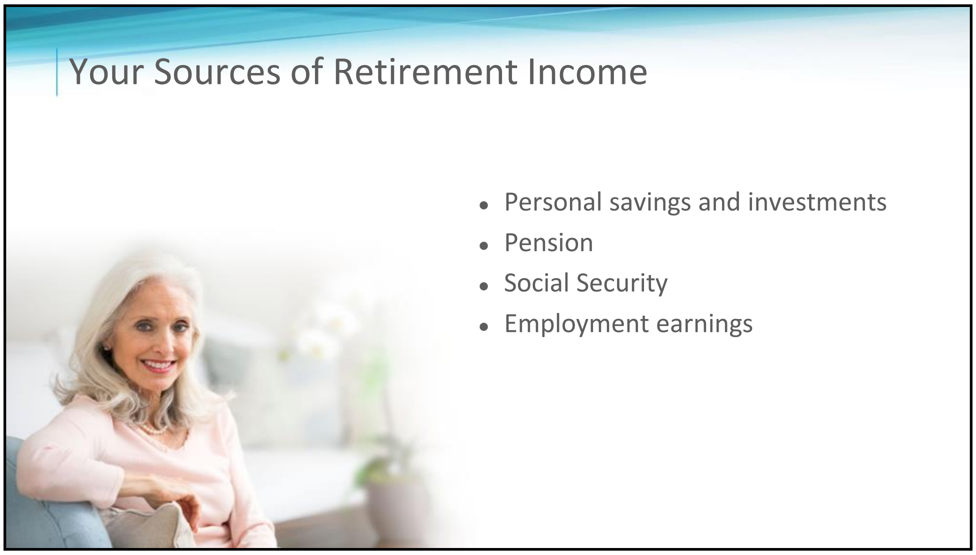
To determine the amount of retirement income (in current dollars) needed from savings and investments (line 8), you subtract the amounts in lines 6 and 7 from line 5. For this example, you would need to withdraw **$26,288** in current dollars from savings and investments each year.

To find the amount of income you would need from savings and investments in future dollars, you multiply line 8 times Factor A (found on page 9), based on the number of years until retirement. In this situation, we're assuming 20 years until retirement, so we multiply **$26,288** by 2.6533, which results in **$69,750** annual income needed from savings in future dollars (line 9). To determine the amount that must be saved by retirement in future dollars, you multiply line 9 by Factor B. For this example, the total amount to be saved is **$1,214,564** (line 10).

On line 11, enter the amount saved already. For the example, we'll use **$150,000**. Then on line 12, to determine what your savings will grow to by the time you retire, you multiply line 11 by Factor C (based on the number of years until retirement), which results in **$699,150** for this example.

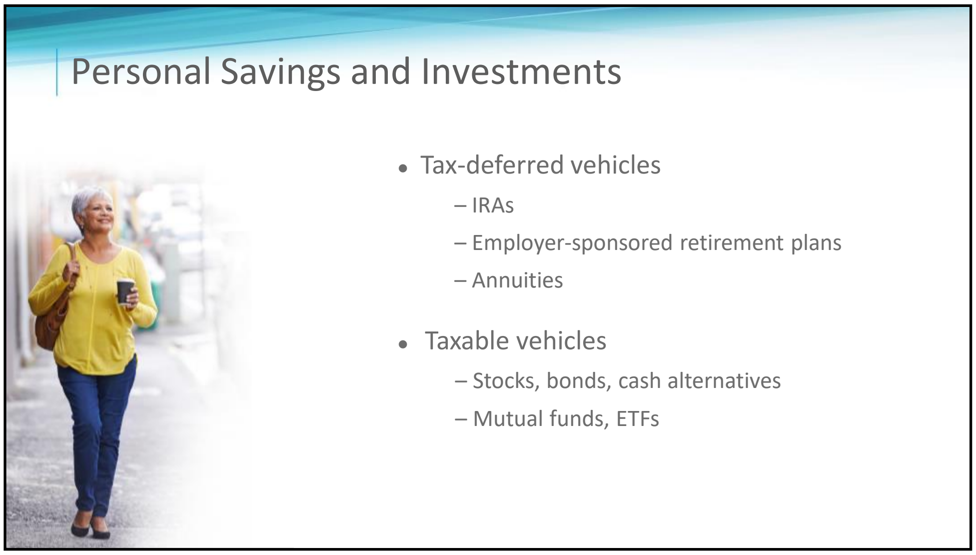
Line 13 shows the total amount you would still need to save before retirement. To find this value, subtract line 12 from line 10, which results in **$515,414**. Line 14 shows how much you would need to save each year (line 13 times factor D), which is **$11,288** for this hypothetical situation.

Bear in mind that roughly calculating the cost of retirement is only a beginning. We recommend a more comprehensive cash-flow analysis considering all sources of income and expenses.



So where will this income come from?

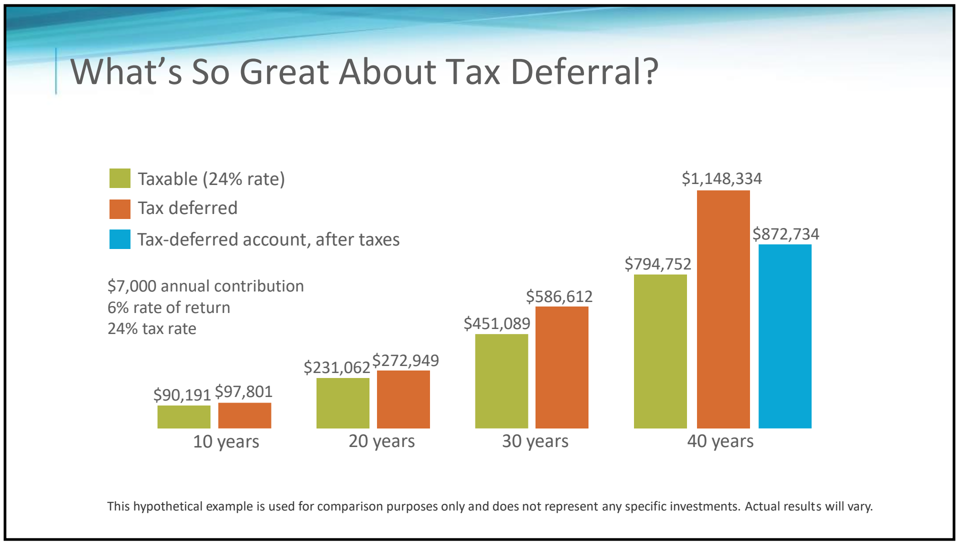
Personal savings and investments may become the most important source of your retirement income. But they are just one piece of the retirement puzzle. In addition to your savings, some of your retirement income might come from a traditional pension (if you’re lucky!), Social Security, other assets you may own such as rental property, and possibly earnings from continued employment during retirement.



Personal savings are the cornerstone of a successful retirement strategy.

People often choose to save for retirement using tax-deferred retirement savings vehicles, such as IRAs and employer-sponsored retirement plans. Annuities are an additional option to consider, and we'll talk about those, too.

In addition, some people supplement their tax-deferred savings and investments by investing in stocks, bonds, cash alternatives, mutual funds, and exchange-traded funds and holding them in taxable accounts.



What's so great about tax deferral? Before we move on, let's take a closer look.

When an investment is tax deferred, it means that current taxes aren't due until the investor takes distributions, generally in retirement. This gives contributions and earnings the opportunity to accumulate year after year, potentially enhancing the long-term growth of savings.

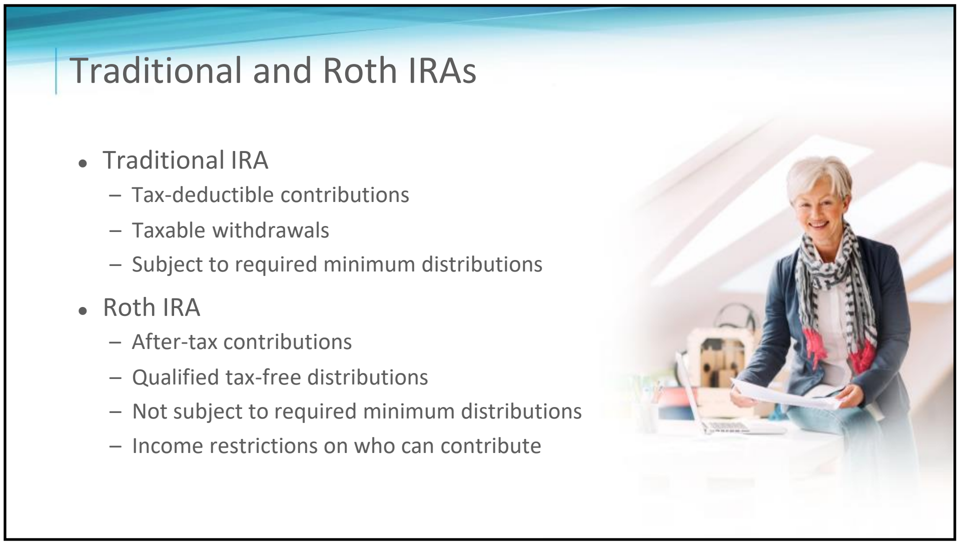
This chart shows the potential growth in account value of a $7,000 annual investment in a taxable versus a tax-deferred vehicle earning a hypothetical 6% rate of return.

After 40 years, the money placed in a taxable account would be worth $794,752. During the same period, the tax-deferred account would grow to $1,148,334 — significantly more than the taxable investment. Even after taxes have been deducted (assuming a lump-sum payout and a 24% tax rate on earnings), the account would still be worth $872,734.

Generally speaking, it's a good idea to take advantage of tax-deferred savings whenever possible.

This hypothetical example is used for comparison purposes only and does not represent any specific investments. Rates of return will vary over time, especially for long-term investments. Actual results will vary. Investments offering the potential for higher rates of return also involve a higher degree of risk. Typically, a 10% early-distribution penalty may apply to distributions from a tax-deferred account prior to age 59½. Investment fees and expenses are not considered and would reduce the results shown if they were included. Lower maximum tax rates for capital gains and dividends, as well as the tax treatment of investment losses, could make the taxable investment return more favorable, reducing the difference in performance between the accounts shown. Investors should consider their investment horizon and income tax brackets, both current and anticipated, when making investment decisions.

(Note: For convenience, all numbers have been rounded to the nearest whole dollar.)



Let’s look at IRAs. There are two types: traditional and Roth. One is not necessarily better than the other. It may come down to whether you want to pay the taxes now versus later.

In general terms, if you anticipate that your tax bracket will be lower after you retire, contributing to a traditional IRA may be a better choice, especially if your IRA contributions are tax deductible. On the other hand, if you don’t expect to be in a lower tax bracket after you retire or you have a long time frame before retiring, a Roth IRA may be a better choice because qualified distributions are free of federal income tax. Another advantage of a Roth IRA is that any contributions you make can be withdrawn without taxes or penalty at any time. However, for a qualified tax-free and penalty-free withdrawal of any earnings, you must meet the Roth IRA distribution requirements.

IRAs are subject to federal contribution limits, which are indexed annually for inflation. In 2025, workers may contribute up to $7,000 ($8,000 for those age 50 and older) in *total* contributions to Roth and traditional IRAs. Eligibility to contribute to a Roth IRA phases out at higher income levels: $150,000 for single filers or $236,000 for married couples filing jointly in 2025. There are no income eligibility limits to contribute to a traditional IRA, but if you are an active participant in an employer-sponsored retirement plan, the ability to deduct IRA contributions starts phasing out once modified adjusted gross income exceeds $79,000 for single filers or $126,000 for married joint filers (in 2025).

IRA withdrawals prior to age 59½ may be subject to a 10% early-distribution penalty. To qualify for the tax-free and penalty-free withdrawal of earnings, Roth IRA distributions must meet the five-year holding requirement and take place after age 59½. Traditional IRAs are subject to required minimum distributions (RMDs) that must start no later than April 1 of the year after the year you reach age 73 (75 if age 73 is reached after December 31, 2032). Original owners of Roth IRAs are not subject to RMDs. (Most nonspouse beneficiaries must liquidate inherited retirement accounts in 10 years.)

There are specific circumstances under which the IRS may allow penalty-free early distributions from either type of IRA. They include those resulting from a disability or those used for the payment of qualified, unreimbursed medical expenses exceeding 7.5% of adjusted gross income; qualified higher-education expenses; or a first-time home purchase ($10,000 lifetime maximum). Penalty-free early distributions can also be made for substantially equal periodic payments that are made over a period of at least five years or until age 59½, *whichever occurs later.*

Now let's look at another tax-deferred retirement savings vehicle where you can contribute more money each year. Employer-sponsored retirement plans such as 401(k) and 403(b) plans offer a number of benefits.

In addition to the benefit of tax-deferred accumulation that we saw earlier, contributing to an employer-sponsored retirement plan can reduce your current income tax liability. That's because you can elect to contribute funds on a pre-tax basis, which means your contribution comes out of your paycheck first, and your tax liability is based on your remaining salary (and other income). Some plans may offer a Roth account; in this case, your current income tax liability is not reduced because you are contributing after-tax dollars to the Roth account.

Another benefit is that many employers match a percentage of your employer-plan contributions with their own funds. This is essentially free money provided by your employer to help you save for retirement. Whatever your savings strategy, it is a good idea to contribute at least enough to qualify for the full employer match, if one is offered.

It's also convenient to save in an employer retirement plan. Money is taken out of your paycheck automatically before you have a chance to spend it. And you can generally increase or decrease your contribution amount whenever you need to.

As it does with IRAs, the IRS limits how much you can contribute to an employer-sponsored retirement plan each year, but the limits are higher than for IRAs. In 2025, you can contribute up to $23,500 to a 401(k) or 403(b) plan, and those who are 50 and older may contribute an additional $7,500 thanks to a special "catch-up" provision or $11,250 for those who reach age 60 to 63 during the year.

Distributions from employer-sponsored retirement plans are generally taxed as ordinary income. The exception is Roth work-based accounts in which distributions are tax-free. Withdrawals taken prior to reaching age 59½ may be subject to a 10% early-distribution penalty. Generally, required minimum distributions (RMDs) from tax-deferred plans must begin no later than April 1 of the year after the year in which you reach age 73 (75 if age 73 is reached after December 31, 2032). If you're still working, in some cases you can delay required distributions from your current employer's retirement plan.

How Much Could You Save?

Age you start saving for retirement	Save $2,000 per year	Save $5,000 per year	Save $10,000 per year
	Savings accumulation at age 65		
20	$425,487	$1,063,718	$2,127,435
30	$222,870	$557,174	$1,114,348
40	$109,729	$274,323	$548,645
50	$46,552	$116,380	$232,760
60	$11,274	$28,185	$56,371

Assumes a 6% annual rate of return. This hypothetical example is used for illustrative purposes only and does not reflect the performance of any specific investment. The results do not account for taxes. Earnings are compounded annually.

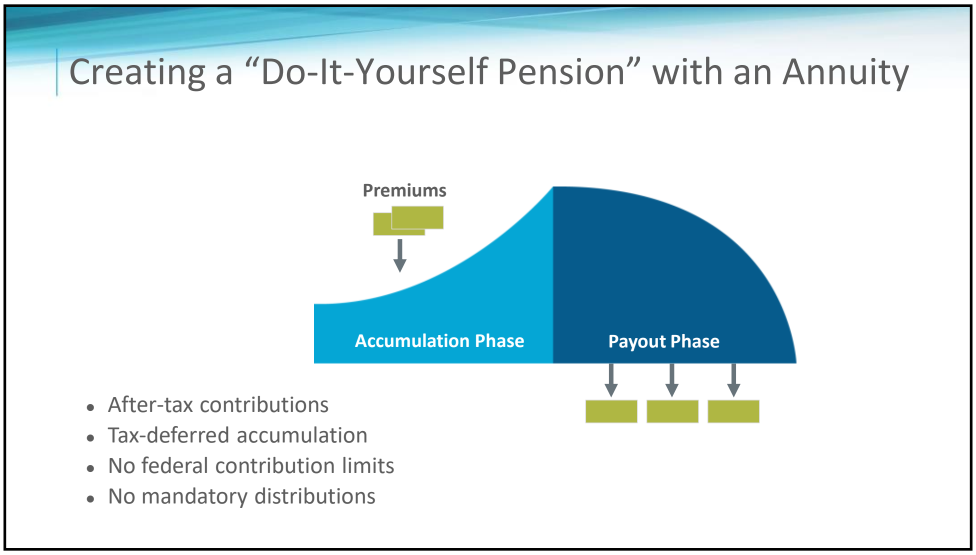
So how much could you save?

This table shows how much you could accumulate by age 65 if you invested $2,000, $5,000, or $10,000 each year and earned a hypothetical 6% annual rate of return, based on starting to save at age 20, 30, 40, 50, and 60.

As you can see, the sweet spot to start saving is when you're in your 20s, but starting in your 30s and 40s is pretty good, too. Even if you’re older, saving money regularly is important and can still add up. Indeed, the most important factor for retirement readiness is to establish a robust savings strategy now.

As you get closer to retirement, knowing your expected retirement age — the age when you plan to retire — can help you create more realistic savings projections. But keep in mind that you can’t always control your retirement age. For example, you might be unable to continue working because of poor health, changes at your company such as downsizing, or the need to care for a family member.

This hypothetical example is used for illustrative purposes only and does not reflect the performance of any specific investment. The results do not account for taxes. Earnings are compounded on an annual basis.



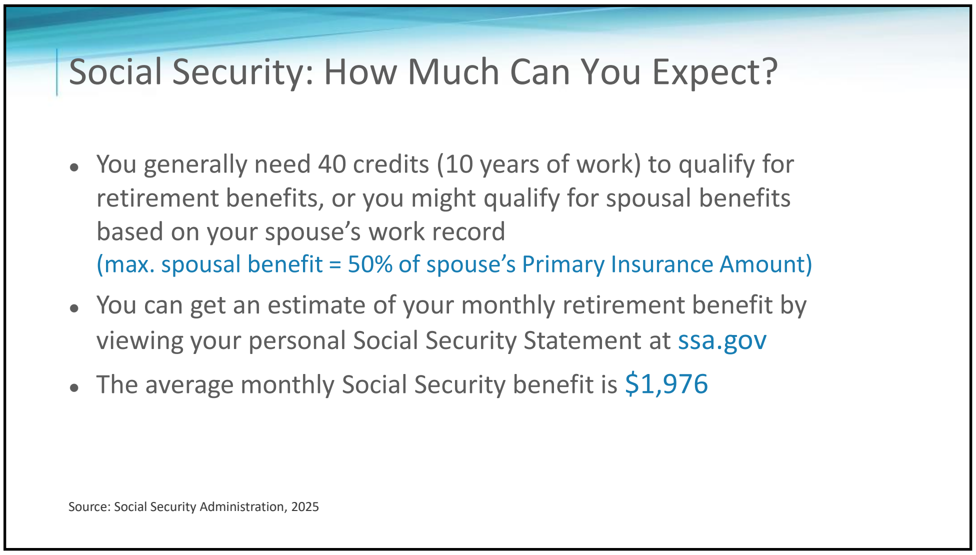
Now let's shift gears and talk about pensions, which can be another source of income in retirement. Traditional pension plans once provided a steady income for many retirees, but the number of companies offering such plans has declined dramatically. If you have one, consider yourself lucky!

Many people who don't have a traditional pension like the idea of setting up one of their own. An annuity offers a way to accumulate money for retirement and create a "do-it-yourself pension," and it doesn't have some of the restrictions associated with IRAs and employer-sponsored retirement plans.

An annuity is a contract between you and an insurance company. In return for your payments, the company agrees to pay you regular income for a set number of years or for the length of your retirement, which is the payout phase. Contributions to annuities are made with after-tax dollars, but any earnings accumulate tax deferred.

Unlike IRAs and employer-sponsored retirement plans, annuities are not subject to federal contribution limits, so they can be funded with a lump sum from an inheritance or the sale of a home or business. In addition, annuity owners are not required to take mandatory distributions due to age.

Generally, annuities have mortality and expense charges, account fees, investment management fees, and administrative fees. The earnings portion of annuity withdrawals is taxed as ordinary income. Withdrawals taken prior to age 59½ may be subject to a 10% early-distribution penalty. Surrender charges may also apply during the contract's early years if the annuity is surrendered. The guarantees of fixed annuity contracts are contingent on the financial strength and claims-paying ability of the issuing insurance company.



Now let's talk about Social Security. Social Security is the major source of guaranteed lifetime retirement income for most Americans. "Guaranteed" means that once you start taking monthly Social Security retirement benefits, you will get that money every month for as long as you live.

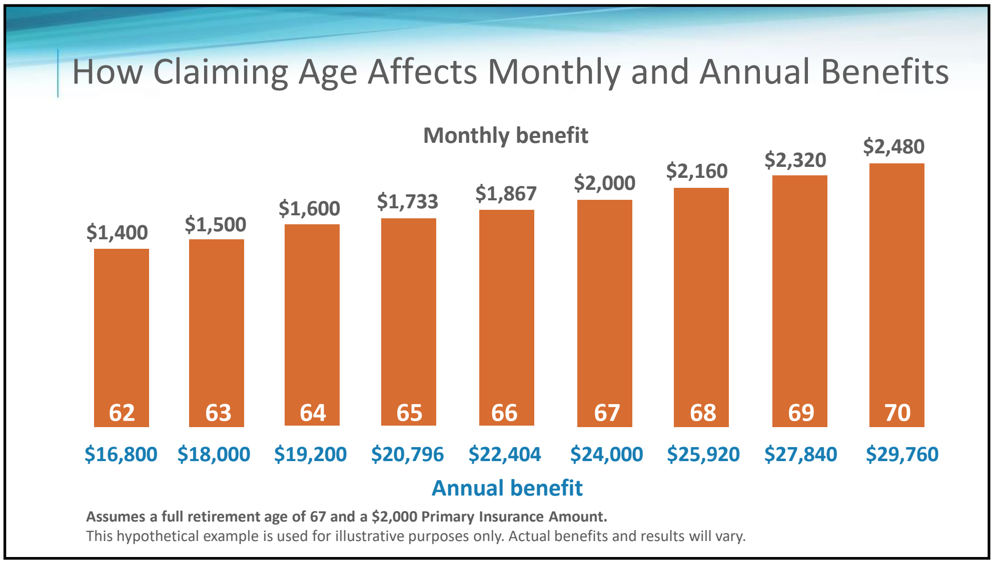
You are entitled to receive Social Security benefits if you have worked and accumulated a minimum of 40 work credits (which equals about 10 years of work). Worker benefits are based on your highest 35 years of earnings.

If you haven't worked long enough to qualify on your own, you might qualify for spousal benefits based on your spouse's work record. A spousal benefit claimed at full retirement age is generally equal to 50% of the other spouse's Primary Insurance Amount.

To determine the benefit you might receive, you can view your Social Security Statement online by creating your own personal account on the Social Security website. Your Statement contains a detailed record of your earnings, shows how much you and your employer(s) paid in Social Security and Medicare taxes, and estimates your retirement benefits based on retiring at different ages. If you haven't signed up online to view your statement, you'll receive one in the mail every year, starting at age 60.

Social Security was never designed to be an individual's sole source of income in retirement. The average Social Security benefit for retired workers is about $1,976 per month.

Source: Social Security Administration, 2025



To better understand how your benefit could increase by waiting to claim Social Security, let's put some dollar amounts behind different claiming ages.

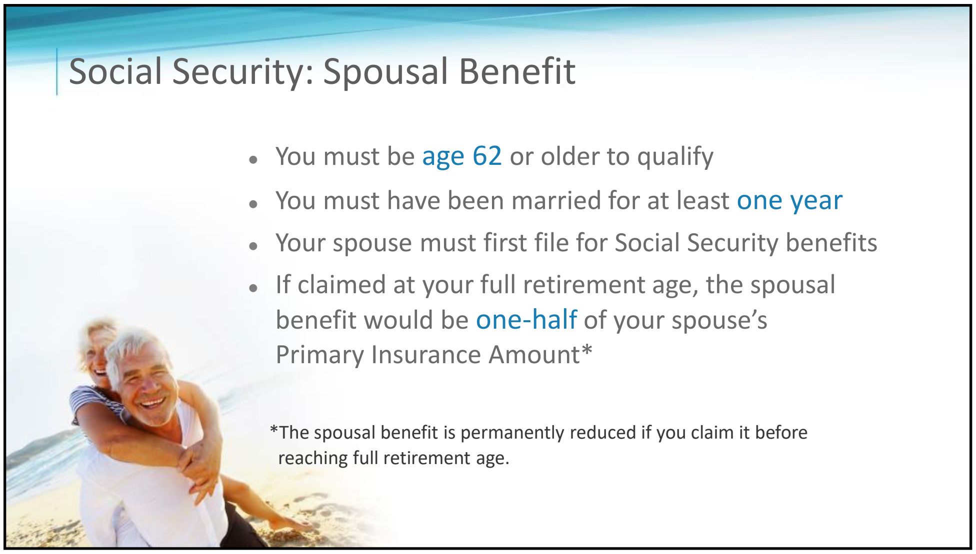
This slide shows the potential impact on monthly and annual benefits based on claiming age. It assumes a hypothetical $2,000 full retirement benefit — referred to as the Primary Insurance Amount or PIA — at age 67, which is full retirement age for those born in 1960 and later.

[Note to presenter: You might ask participants the ages when they plan to claim Social Security and use this slide to examine the benefit impact.]

On an annual basis, the difference between claiming benefits at age 62 versus age 70 is nearly $13,000 a year in this hypothetical example, which would continue throughout the beneficiary's lifetime.

Not only could waiting to claim Social Security significantly affect your own lifetime benefits, but it could also impact a surviving spouse. That's because survivor benefits include any delayed retirement credits you earn by waiting past full retirement age to claim Social Security.

This hypothetical example is used for illustrative purposes only. Actual benefits and results will vary.



Let's look at an important part of Social Security for a moment: the spousal benefit. Married individuals may be eligible to receive a Social Security benefit based on their own earnings history or a spousal benefit based on the spouse's Primary Insurance Amount. *(This is also true for unmarried, divorced individuals who were married for at least 10 years.)*

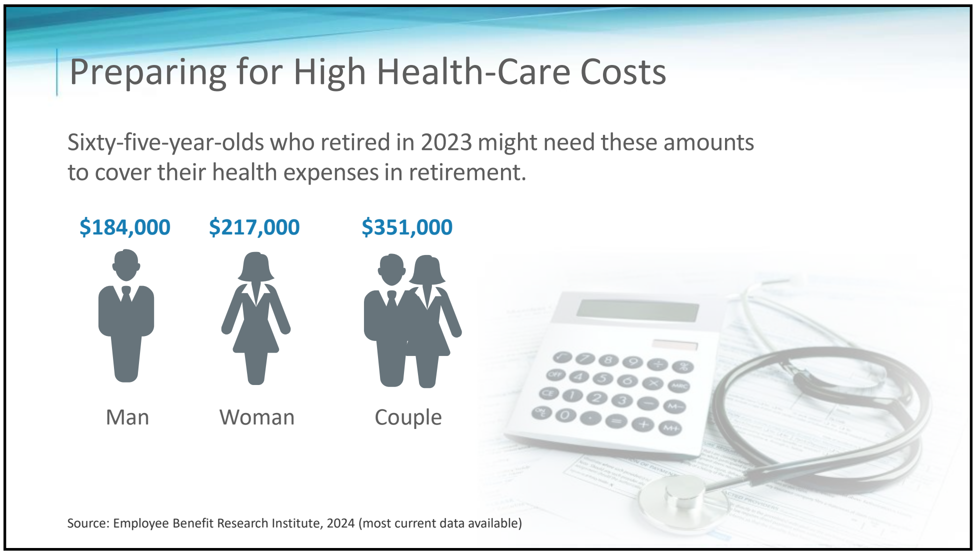
If you're married, you can claim a spousal benefit whether you have worked or not. But in order to qualify for the spousal benefit, you must be at least age 62, you must have been married for at least one year, and your spouse must have filed for or be receiving Social Security benefits. *(An eligible, unmarried divorced spouse does not have to wait until his or her ex files for benefits, but the ex must be at least age 62.)*

If you elect to receive a spousal benefit *before* you reach full retirement age, you would receive a permanently reduced amount, unless you are caring for a qualifying child. The benefit reduction is based on *your* age when you claim the spousal benefit.

If you claim the spousal benefit upon reaching *your* full retirement age, the benefit would be one-half of your spouse's Primary Insurance Amount. The spousal benefit is never higher than 50% of the primary worker's full benefit. So, for example, if your spouse's PIA is $2,400, you could receive a $1,200 monthly spousal benefit by claiming it at your full retirement age.

If you are eligible for a spousal benefit *and* a retired worker benefit when you claim Social Security, you are "deemed" to be filing for both and will receive a combination of the two that equals the higher amount. *(Note: This rule also affects divorced spouses, but not survivor benefits.)*

We'll discuss Social Security survivor benefits later in the presentation.



Let's talk about some risks to your retirement.

Many people underestimate the potential cost of health care in retirement, forgetting the premiums, copays, deductibles, and prescription drugs they might have to cover — even with Medicare, which typically covers only a little more than half of the average subscriber's health-care costs.

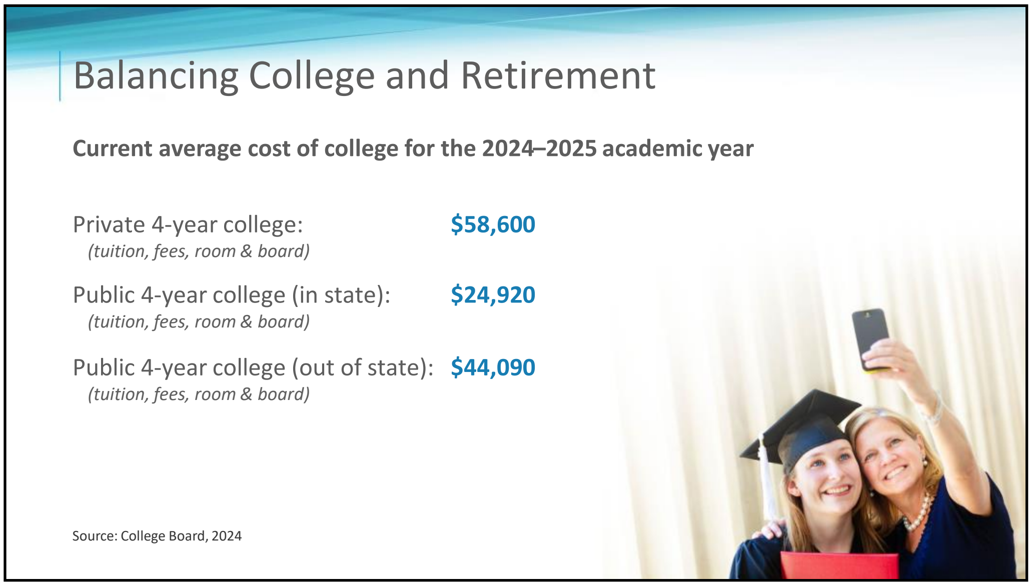
How much could you spend on health care in retirement?

If Medicare benefits remain at current levels, it's estimated that a 65-year-old man who retired in 2023 and lives an average life expectancy would need about $184,000 to cover his health expenses in retirement. A 65-year-old woman might need $217,000, and a 65-year-old couple might need $351,000. Of course, these costs could be even higher for those with high medical and prescription drug costs.[1]

Also consider that these estimates don't include dental expenses, glasses — even hearing aids for those who need them.

If current trends continue, health-care costs may force you to rethink your retirement strategy.

Source: 1) Employee Benefit Research Institute, 2024 (estimates are based on average savings needed to cover premiums and deductibles for Medicare Part B and Part D, premiums for Medigap Plan G, and median out-of-pocket prescription drug expenses) (most current data available)



Another big risk to your retirement is paying for college. Of course, all parents want the best for their children, and this includes funding a college education. But college is expensive.

[Note to presenter: You might ask for a show of hands among participants who currently have a child in college, have a child about to go to college, or have a child who has recently graduated. Are any of them currently repaying student loans, either their own or their child's?]

For the 2024–2025 academic year, the current average cost for one year of tuition, fees, room, and board was **$58,600** at a four-year private college and **$24,920** at a four-year public college (for an in-state student). The average cost for an out-of-state student at a four-year public college was **$44,090**.

If you're facing college bills, how will you pay for them? Student debt is a big problem. But it's not just young adults who have college loans. Older Americans have student debt, too.

Don't let college derail your retirement. There are various cost-cutting measures you might consider at college time, such as having your child attend a community college for two years and then transfer to a four-year institution, or having your child take a gap year before college to work and save money. If college is a priority of yours, we can discuss options when you come to the office for the complimentary consultation.

The main takeaway here is that even though college is important, funding it shouldn't come at the expense of your own financial security.

Source: College Board, 2024

I want to change subjects now and focus on unexpected obstacles. Unfortunately, life isn't always fair. Or easy. Things happen.

Employees are let go.

Children may come along before we're ready.

Couples divorce.

Illnesses spring up.

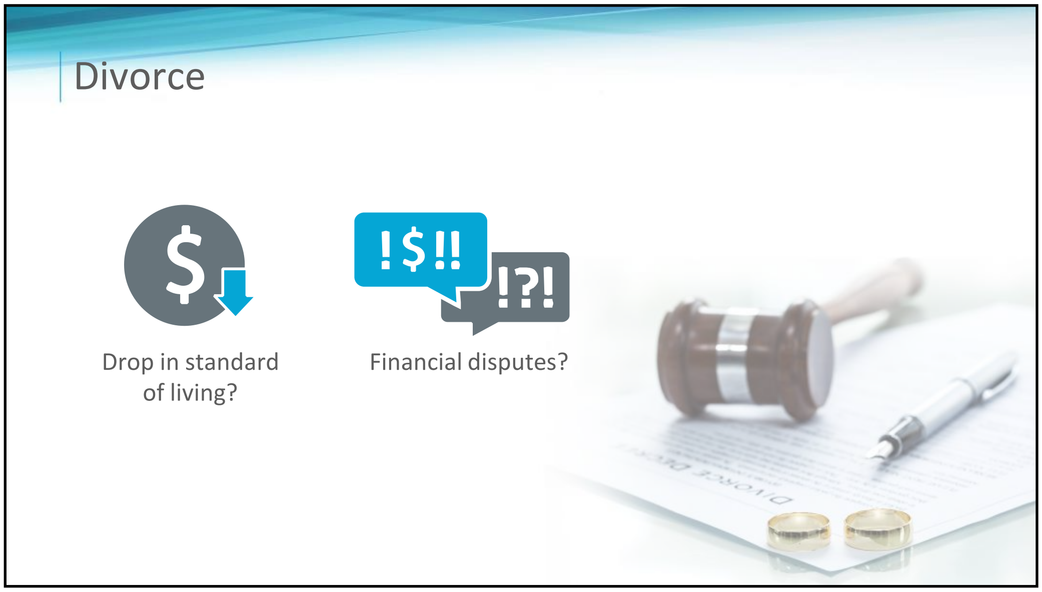
Adult children need financial help.

Our parents need help.

Spouses pass away.

When you take steps to strengthen your financial future, not only will you be in a better position to enjoy life in the good times, but you'll also be in a better position to cope during the not-so-good times, which many of us are likely to face at some point in our lives.

In fact, it's often during these stressful times that many women turn to a financial professional for help. Let's take a closer look at a couple of these challenges and the financial implications associated with them.



Nobody likes to think about it, but what would your life be like in the event of a divorce? Aside from being a source of emotional upheaval, divorce can be financially devastating, especially for women.

It's hard to generalize how anyone will fare after a divorce. Retired women and those close to retirement may find it more difficult to recover financially knowing they have fewer years to regain their footing, especially if they have relied on their spouse's income for a long time. Younger women may have more years to regroup financially, but if they have children, they face the challenge of working and raising children on their own, a situation that will likely be more difficult if they have been out of the workforce for a period of time. Everyone's situation is unique and presents its own challenges.

If you are currently single but planning to marry, you might consider a prenuptial agreement. A **prenuptial agreement** is a written contract that states how assets will be owned during the marriage and divided in the event of divorce. A pre-negotiated agreement may be especially important if you own a business, have substantial assets, or want to protect the financial interests of your children from a previous marriage.

Make sure to consult a qualified attorney for help drafting a prenup or to provide advice and representation in matters related to a divorce.

It's important for you to know about all your sources of income, financial assets, and joint debts — both now and in the future. Although state laws vary, any income, property, assets, and debt accumulated during marriage is generally divided equally between spouses upon divorce. Beyond state law, the negotiation process will determine the details of your **divorce agreement**, including property settlement, spousal support (alimony), and child support. As part of a divorce decree, you might want your ex to carry **life insurance** to replace child support or spousal support in the event of your ex's death. In this case, you should be the owner and beneficiary of the life insurance policy.

Retirement plan benefits are often among the most valuable marital assets, and they must often be divided at the time of a divorce, just like houses, cars, and bank accounts. If you are entitled to a share of the assets in your former spouse's workplace retirement plan, this is typically accomplished using a qualified domestic relations order (QDRO) issued by the court. Of course, this can work in the same way for your ex. In some cases, one spouse may agree to waive any rights to all or some of the other spouse's retirement benefits in exchange for other marital assets (for example, the home).

If you were married for at least 10 years to a fully insured worker and are not married, you are entitled to **Social Security benefits** based on your former spouse's work record — whether your ex is living or deceased — as long as your own worker benefit would be less than what you would receive based on your ex's work record.

If your ex is living, you can receive Social Security spousal benefits starting at age 62. The maximum benefit if claimed at your full retirement age would be 50% of your ex's full benefit. If you claim the spousal benefit before reaching your full retirement age, your benefit will be permanently reduced. *Keep in mind that if you are eligible to use the "restricted application" for spousal benefits and claim a spousal benefit before reaching full retirement age, you will not be able to switch to your own worker retirement benefit later.*

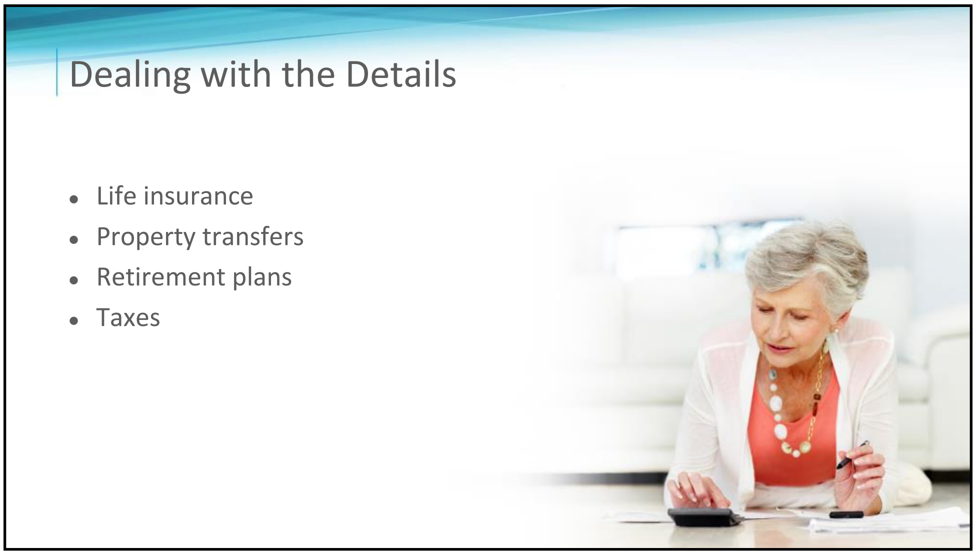
If your ex is deceased, you can receive divorced survivor benefits starting at age 60. Your benefit will be reduced if you claim it prior to reaching your full retirement age. If you are caring for the child (under age 16) of your deceased former spouse, you may also be entitled to benefits, regardless of your age or the length of your marriage. Remarriage after you reach age 60 will not affect your eligibility for Social Security survivor benefits.

Finally, make sure you consider any **tax implications** of your agreement, such as your new tax bracket as a single filer, whether you can continue to claim children as dependents, potential capital gains taxes on the sale of marital property, among others.

Another major challenge women often face is widowhood. There are more than three times as many widows (9 million) as widowers (2.9 million) in the United States.[1]

If you are married, you should prepare yourself for the possibility that you might someday become widowed. Being caught off-guard is one reason why many widows face financial hardship.

Source: 1) 2023 Profile of Older Americans, Administration on Aging,
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (most current data available)



Widows face a number of financial considerations, often before they are emotionally ready to do so. It’s important to seek support from friends or family members, and possibly the guidance of a trusted professional.

Start by investigating **life insurance** and **survivor benefits**, which can be a critical source of financial support if you are widowed. In addition to any personal life insurance your spouse may have owned, check with your spouse’s current and past employers, along with any trade unions and associations your spouse may have been a member of, for any group life insurance. Also check with your creditors, including mortgage lenders and credit-card issuers, for any mortgage or credit life insurance. If your spouse was in the military, you’ll also want to check for military survivor’s benefits. Benefits from any of these sources may include a funeral expense allowance.

You may also need to **transfer the ownership of property**, such as bank accounts, real estate, stocks, bonds, mutual funds, annuities, and retirement plans held in your spouse’s name.

If your spouse had a will, the terms of the will determine how property interests will pass. If any property is owned by a trust, the terms of the trust will determine how the property will be distributed. Property passing by your spouse’s will is subject to probate, a court process that can be costly and time-consuming, whereas property within a living trust is not subject to probate. If your spouse died without a will (“intestate”), the spouse’s property will pass according to state law. If you and your spouse owned real estate as community property or joint tenants with rights of survivorship, your spouse’s share of the property passes to you immediately. If you later decide to sell your marital home, keep in mind that a surviving spouse may exclude up to $500,000 of profit from the sale of a principal residence (one you have lived in for at least two of the last five years) if it occurs within two years of a spouse’s death. After two years the exclusion amount would fall to $250,000 (as a single filer).

As for income **taxes**, you may file a joint tax return and claim an exemption for your spouse for the year in which your spouse died. In addition, there is a filing status called “qualifying widow” or “surviving spouse” that allows you to use joint tax return rates if your spouse died in the previous two years. You must not have remarried and you must have a dependent child. There are many tax considerations. You should consider obtaining professional tax advice and can look at IRS Publication 559, which deals with tax issues for survivors.

If you are the sole beneficiary of your spouse's employer-sponsored retirement plan — and by law, spouses are generally required to be the beneficiary unless they signed a waiver form — contact the employer for information about your options.

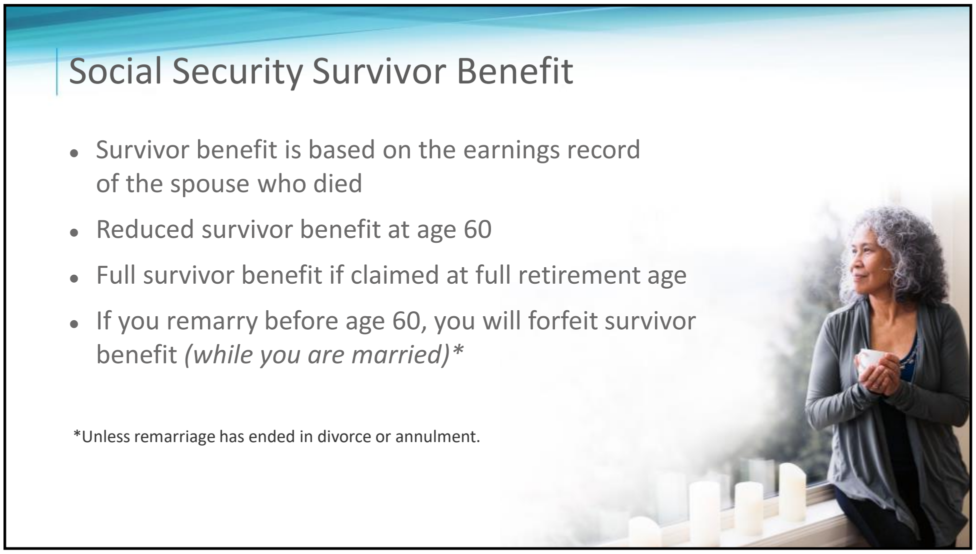
Before you make any decisions, carefully consider your current and future income needs, as well as your tax situation. Generally, you may take the assets in a lump sum, which could incur a sizable tax obligation; take distributions based on your own life expectancy; roll the assets into your own 401(k), if allowed; or roll them into an inherited IRA or your own IRA. Beginning in 2024, you may choose to leave the assets in the plan and begin taking required minimum distributions (RMDs) based on the age at which your spouse would have taken them, which may be more beneficial from a tax standpoint.*

If you are the sole beneficiary of your spouse's IRA, you have several options for handling the IRA assets. One of them is to transfer the money to an IRA in your own name with a direct rollover (trustee-to-trustee transfer), which enables you to choose your own investments, name your own beneficiaries, and stretch future distributions over your own life expectancy. However, a 10% early-withdrawal penalty would apply to distributions taken prior to age 59½ (in addition to ordinary income tax), so a rollover might not make sense if you are a younger widow who may need to take taxable distributions before you reach that age.

Another option is to treat the assets as an inherited IRA. In this case, you may choose to begin taking RMDs based on your age or the age at which your spouse would have been required to begin RMDs, whichever is more beneficial.*

Lastly, disclaiming all or part of the IRA or retirement plan account would allow those assets to pass directly to contingent beneficiaries such as children or grandchildren.

*These rules assume your spouse dies before reaching the age at which minimum distributions were required to begin, otherwise known as the required beginning date.



Let’s take a closer look at the survivor benefit offered by Social Security.

Because women tend to outlive their spouses, it’s important to understand all the Social Security benefits you might be entitled to. Widows and widowers may be eligible to receive a survivor benefit based on their spouse’s earnings record if it would be higher than their own benefit.

To claim a survivor benefit, you must have been married for at least nine months *(or for at least 10 years if you are a surviving divorced spouse).* The survivor benefit amount is based on the earnings record of the spouse who died.

The benefit will be permanently reduced if it is claimed prior to *your* full retirement age. Unlike spousal benefits, survivor benefits take into account any delayed retirement credits, so if your spouse worked past full retirement age, your survivor benefit would be based on your spouse’s Primary Insurance Amount and any delayed credits.

One caveat is that if your spouse dies and you remarry before reaching age 60, you will forfeit your late spouse’s Social Security benefits (as long as you are married).

Learn more about any survivor benefits you might be entitled to by visiting the Social Security Administration’s website.

In this final section, we are going to talk about protecting your assets with insurance, and how to leave a legacy with a thoughtful estate plan.

This involves more than just having a will and an executor for your estate, although these are important tasks.

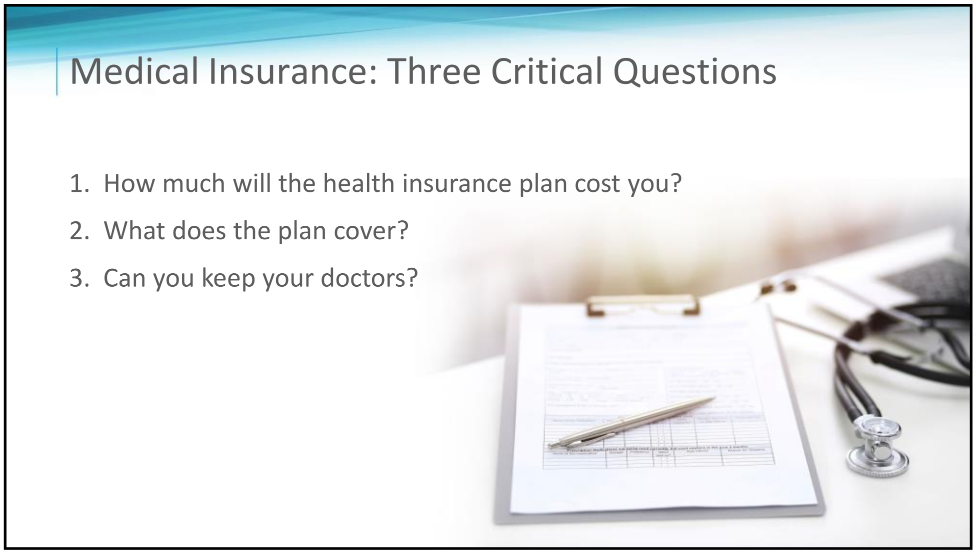
Are you adequately insured?

A well-designed risk management program can help protect you and your estate from the unexpected.

You should consider six major areas of protection: medical, disability income, property and casualty, liability, and life insurance. In addition, you might want to be prepared financially for the potential need for long-term care — for yourself or for a close family member.

[Note to presenter: Consider asking the following questions to encourage a dialogue with your audience:

> *How would your family be affected financially if you were to become sick or disabled and could no longer earn an income, or if you were to die unexpectedly?*
>
> *Do you have adequate insurance protection in these areas?*
>
> *Should you consider increasing your coverage?]*



Let's take a closer look at medical insurance. Having adequate health insurance coverage is critical to protecting your financial security.

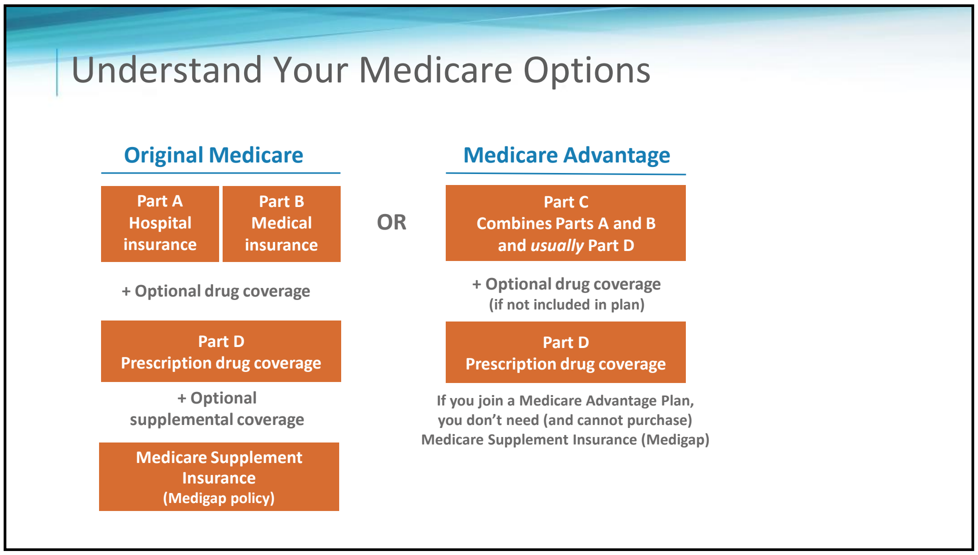
You might have health coverage through a workplace medical plan or a private insurance company. Three broad types of medical insurance are indemnity plans, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), and preferred provider organizations (PPOs).

When selecting your health-care plan, consider three questions:

How much will the health insurance plan cost you? The premium, deductible, and out-of-pocket maximum are the costs that will vary across health plans. It's important to know these amounts because they refer to the part of your medical bills that you are responsible for paying when you receive health care.

What does the plan cover? Before you sign up for a specific plan, read the policy information and look closely for any coverage gaps or policy exclusions, consider the extent to which your prescription drugs are covered and estimate your potential out-of-pocket costs based on last year's usage.

Can you keep your doctors? Find out whether the doctors you currently see are within your plan's network. If you see a health-care provider that's out-of-network, your insurance company may not cover the bill, or you may have to pay a higher share of the cost.



Now let's turn to Medicare. Medicare is the federal health insurance program that covers most people who are 65 and older. It is composed of different parts that each help cover specific services.

Original Medicare is divided into hospital insurance (Part A) and medical insurance (Part B), which are run by the federal government. Medicare Part C (Medicare Advantage) and Part D (prescription drug coverage) are provided by private insurance companies approved by Medicare.

This graphic helps illustrate your main options for getting Medicare coverage.

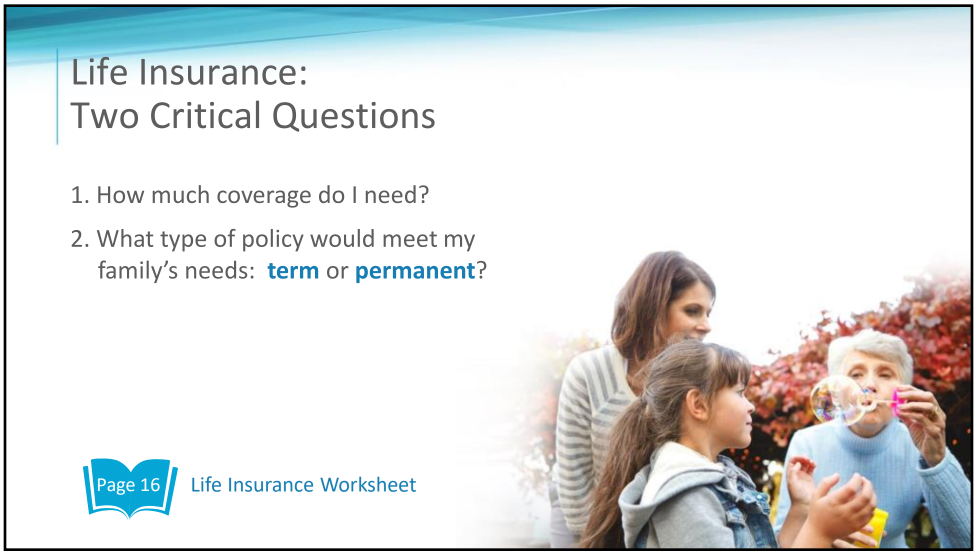
You can choose to enroll in Original Medicare or Medicare Advantage (Part C). Each has advantages and disadvantages, so you'll need to compare costs and benefits. If you choose Original Medicare, you might also add prescription drug coverage (Part D) and Medicare Supplement Insurance (a Medigap policy).

If you're within a year or two of your 65^{th} birthday, you'll want to familiarize yourself with Medicare enrollment rules and deadlines. Although these rules are beyond the scope of this presentation, you can find more information on the Medicare website: ***Medicare.gov***.

You might also visit the Medicare website to learn more about your options and to get information about specific plans available in your area when you are ready to enroll.

If you don't have employer-provided coverage and aren't eligible for Medicare, you can purchase insurance that meets minimum standards directly from a private insurance company (or broker) or from an exchange run by your state or the federal government. The official site is ***HealthCare.gov.*** Some families may be eligible for income-based subsidies that lower the cost of premiums.

There isn't time today to go into greater detail on medical insurance options, but we would be happy to review them during the complimentary consultation.



Another form of protection that most of us need is life insurance. The primary purpose of this coverage is to help protect your dependents financially in the event of your death. Even if your children are grown and self-supporting, there may still be reasons to have life insurance. The benefit could be used to help pay final expenses, estate taxes, and other obligations or to leave an inheritance for loved ones.

When you consider your life insurance coverage, you need to ask yourself three critical questions. The first is**: "How much coverage do I need?"** Obviously, what might be appropriate for a family with two children and a stay-at-home spouse could be significantly different from the needs of a divorced woman whose children are grown.

When estimating life insurance protection, it's not quite as simple as calculating two to five years of your annual salary — or even 10 years. It's important to do an in-depth analysis of your situation, taking into account your family's lifestyle, future needs (such as paying off a mortgage or sending children to college), and other sources of income.

How much life insurance do you need? To address that question, let's turn to page 16 in your workbook. You can use this worksheet to help determine how much life insurance your family would need in order to maintain its lifestyle in your absence.

[Note to presenter: Pause to give participants time to turn to the correct page.]

The second question is: **"What type of policy would meet my family's needs?"** Would I be best served by term insurance, or should I buy a permanent life insurance policy?

Term insurance is purchased for a certain period of time. When the term expires, you are no longer insured. Permanent life insurance is in force for the rest of your life, as long as the premiums continue to be paid. In addition, permanent insurance builds cash value, which can be accessed during your lifetime, if needed. Access to cash value through policy loans or partial surrenders could reduce the policy's cash value and death benefit, increase the chance that the policy will lapse, and possibly result in a tax liability if the policy terminates before the death of the insured. Additional out-of-pocket payments may be needed if actual dividends or investment returns decrease, if you withdraw policy values, if you take out a loan, or if current charges increase. There may be surrender charges at the time of surrender or withdrawal, and withdrawals are taxable if you take out more than your basis in the policy. Any guarantees are contingent on the financial strength and claims-paying ability of the issuing company.

We can help you address these concerns during the complimentary consultation.

The cost and availability of life insurance depend on factors such as age, health, and the type and amount of insurance purchased. Before implementing a strategy involving life insurance, it would be prudent to make sure that you are insurable. As with most financial decisions, there are expenses associated with the purchase of life insurance. Policies commonly have mortality and expense charges. And if a policy is surrendered prematurely, there may be surrender charges and income tax implications.

As I mentioned earlier, long-term care is another potential challenge. Here are some statistics that might surprise you:

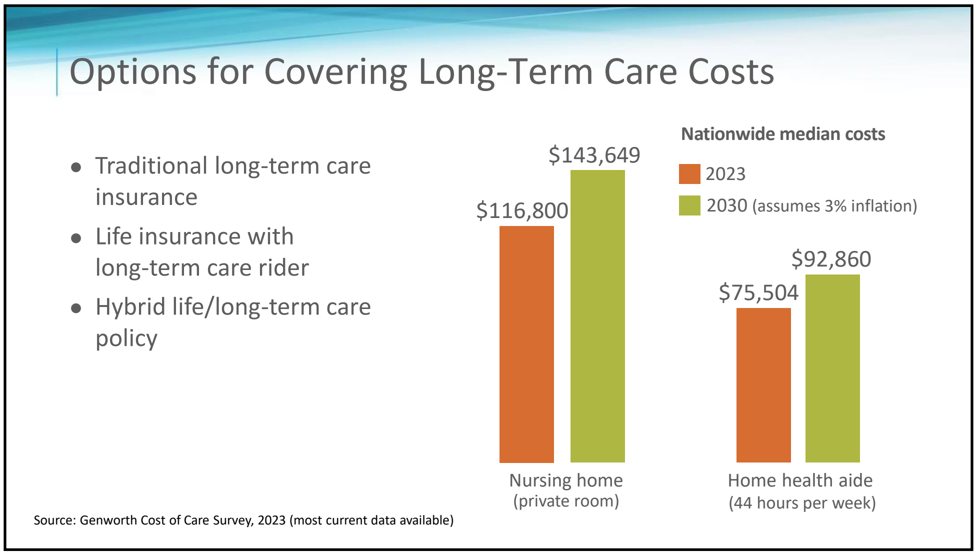
- Almost two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's disease are women.[1]
- About two-thirds of informal (unpaid) caregivers are women.[2]

Long-term care costs can be daunting. The national median cost for a private room in a nursing home is $116,800.[3] That's about $9,733 a month or $320 a day. Receiving care at home can also be expensive; the national hourly cost for a home health aide was $33.00 in 2023.[4] Think about how difficult it might be to pay these costs out of pocket for any length of time.

People who need long-term care generally have a physical or cognitive impairment that requires different types and levels of care. Because women have longer life expectancies and often outlive their spouses, they face a greater risk of needing long-term care by a paid caregiver. Even so, some people continue to have misconceptions about long-term care, thinking:

- It will never happen to me. *(Statistics suggest it's more likely than you may think.)*
- My family will care for me*. (They could, but it might be a burden.)*
- Medicare will pay for it. *(By the way, it won't. And you may not want to spend down your assets in order to qualify for Medicaid, which could limit your options.)*

Sources: 1–2) Alzheimer's Association, 2022 (most current data available);
3–4) Genworth Cost of Care Survey, 2023 (most current data available)



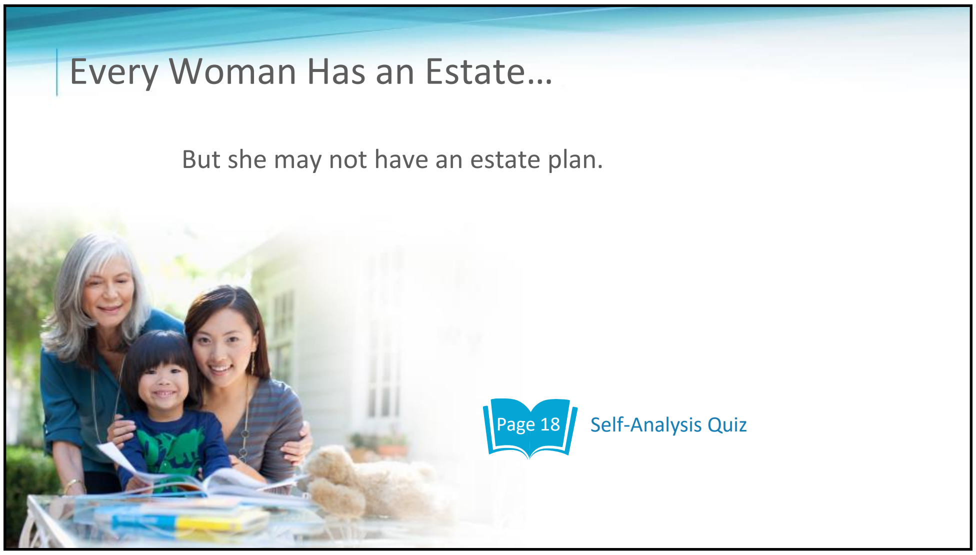
It’s a good idea to consider how you would pay for long-term care expenses while you are still working and healthy, because if you wait until the need for care arises, your options could become more limited — and costly.

Long-term care insurance provides a contractual daily or monthly benefit for covered services. Payments typically kick in when you need help with two or more activities of daily living (such as eating, bathing, and dressing). Premiums are partly based on your age when you sign up. However, annual premiums have been known to increase over time, and there’s a chance you will never need custodial care. A complete statement of coverage, including exclusions, exceptions, and limitations, is found only in the long-term care insurance policy. It should be noted that carriers have the discretion to raise their rates and remove their products from the marketplace.

If you are uncomfortable with the idea of a traditional long-term care policy, you might consider a life insurance strategy that provides potential long-term care benefits.

A **long-term care rider** attached to a permanent life insurance policy allows you to tap into the account value for long-term care benefits while you are still living. However, any payouts for covered expenses reduce (and are usually limited to) the life insurance death benefit that would go to heirs, and they are typically much less generous than those of a traditional long-term care policy. Optional benefit riders are available for an additional cost and are subject to the contractual terms, conditions, and limitations outlined in the policy; they may not, however, benefit all individuals.

Hybrid life/long-term care policies combine permanent life insurance and long-term care coverage. Many of these policies require a substantial upfront premium, but buyers don’t have to worry about future rate increases or the issuer canceling the policy. For the same premium, a hybrid policy typically has a smaller death benefit than a life policy with a rider, but payouts for covered long-term care expenses could be greater than the death benefit. Any payments used for covered long-term care expenses would reduce (and are limited to) the death benefit or annuity value and can be much less than those of a typical long-term care policy. If you consider a life policy with long-term care benefits, you should have a need for life insurance and evaluate the policy on its merits as life insurance.



If you have overlooked developing an effective estate plan, a court could decide who will benefit from your life's work after you're gone. And your estate might have to go through an expensive probate process.

> *Have you thought about who would raise your children or care for other loved ones if you were not able to do so?*
>
> *Who would make critical health-care and financial decisions for you if you were unable to make them yourself? A stranger or someone you trust?*

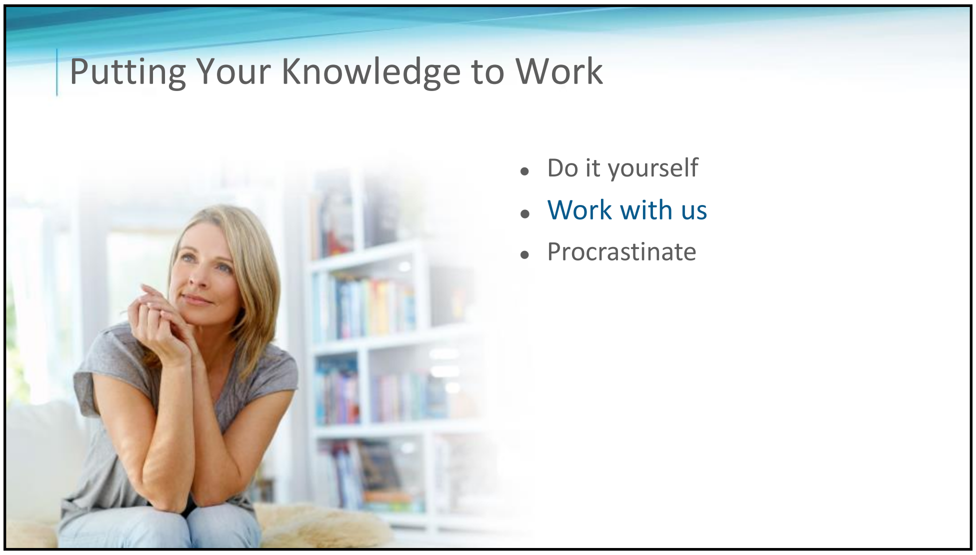
Without an estate plan and the appropriate documents in place, your loved ones could wait for years to inherit valuable property. And your family might have to sell your home or business to pay taxes.

All these concerns could be addressed in an estate plan. A will, a living will, a health-care proxy, a power of attorney, a living trust (and a testamentary trust) are among the important documents you should consider having in your estate plan, drafted by an attorney who specializes in estate planning.

We've put together a short self-analysis quiz that will help you consider some common estate conservation issues. You'll find it on page 18 in the workbook. It may help you think about steps you may still need to take to help conserve the value of your estate.

[Note to presenter: Take out the workbook and conduct the quiz, allowing participants to fill out their answers. If you prefer, you can focus only on those questions that are most pertinent to your audience.

If there isn't time to go over the quiz during your presentation, ask participants to fill it out when they return home.]



I hope we have given you the motivation to focus on your finances now, not later. Having well-planned financial strategies in place can prepare you for whatever comes next and can help you feel confident about the decisions you make.

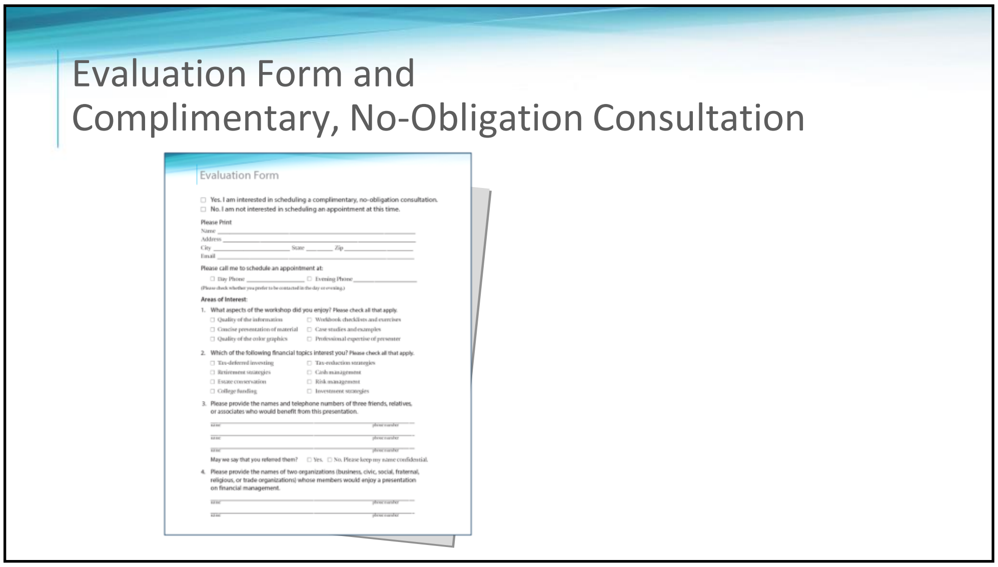
How can you put all this knowledge to work? There are several ways to proceed.

You can do it yourself, which could be a tremendous amount of work, or work with others.

You could work with us. I hope you feel comfortable with what you've learned about our professional knowledge and the approach we take with our clients.

Finally, you can procrastinate. But you don't need me to tell you that procrastination is not a prudent move.

Of course, I hope you'll decide to work with us, and I hope you'll come to the complimentary, no-obligation consultation. I don't expect you to make any decisions now, nor do I expect you to decide when you come to the office. I want you to decide only when you're ready. As you get to know us better, I feel confident that you'll want to work with us. But, again, the choice is totally up to you.



Would everyone please pull out the evaluation form I talked about at the beginning of the presentation?

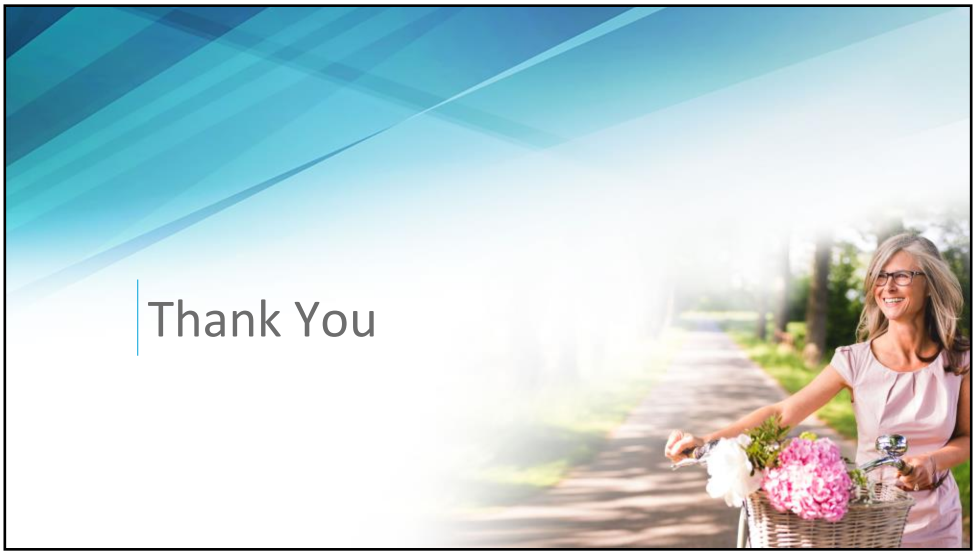
I would like each of you to fill out the form and turn it in. The evaluation form offers a way for you to comment on the seminar. It also lets me know whether you'd like to schedule a personal meeting to discuss any of the ideas you've learned here. Because many of the people who attend our seminars come in for a complimentary, no-obligation consultation, I've blocked out several days over the next couple of weeks to meet with you and address your specific concerns.

[Note to presenter: Have extra evaluation forms available if some participants no longer have them, and allow time for all participants to fill out the forms before they leave.]

Remember my two promises: If you check "Yes, I am interested in scheduling a complimentary, no-obligation consultation," we'll call you in the next couple of days to set up an appointment. If you check "No, I am not interested in scheduling an appointment at this time," we won't call you directly after today.

I'd like to collect the evaluation forms before you leave.

[Note to presenter: Mention any important financial forms or documents you would like participants to bring to the consultation. There are spaces where they can write them down on the back cover of the workbook.]



Thank you for coming to our financial strategies for women seminar. I commend you for the initiative you’ve shown in wanting to improve your financial future and build a successful retirement.

I look forward to seeing you again in the near future.

[Note to presenter: As people leave, shake hands with them and collect their evaluation forms.]