

10 simple tips: The essentials of disability insurance

No one knows what the future holds, so it's important for you to do your best to prepare for what life may bring. Based on our experience in helping disability customers through an emotionally and financially difficult time, we created these "10 Simple Tips" to share our point of view and provide guidance and answers to common questions about disability insurance. Certainly, everyone's circumstances are different, but these will help you get started and make the best decision based on your specific needs.

1 If you or others depend on your income, you may need it.

If people depend on your income—including yourself—you may need disability insurance. Many are surprised to learn that Social Security pays benefits to people who can't work because they have a medical condition that's expected to last at least one year or result in death.¹ One year without income could deplete your savings and have a significant impact on your finances.

6 A good rule of thumb is to protect 60-80% of your after-tax income.

You will need to meet your essential living expenses if you should become disabled. More than seventy percent of consumer expenditures are to cover essential expenses like housing, food, transportation, and health care.⁶

2 Disability insurance replaces a portion of your income when you can't work.

If you become unable to work due to illness or injury, disability insurance could help to pay your essential expenses, including food, utilities, school tuition, home, and car payments.²

7 Supplementing your group disability benefits may cost less than you think.

When budgets are especially tight, it still makes sense to buy enough disability insurance to cover the rent or mortgage and keep your family in their home should you become disabled. Disability insurance is more affordable than you may think. Please review your enrollment materials for details on how much you qualify for and the cost.

3 Most long-term absences are due to illnesses, not accidents.

While many people think that disabilities are typically caused by accidents and injuries, the majority of long-term absences are actually due to illnesses, such as cancer, heart attacks, and diabetes.³

8 Make sure you know how much of your income will be replaced by the disability benefits you get at work.

Find out if disability coverage is made available to you at work. You might want to look carefully at coverage, though, since your employer-provided coverage alone may not be enough. Find out if you can buy additional coverage during your open enrollment period.

4 You may need disability insurance even if you're young and healthy.

Some studies show that a 20-year-old worker has a 1-in-4 chance of becoming disabled before reaching full retirement age.⁴ What's more, it's easier and less expensive to get disability insurance when you're young and healthy.

9 There is no substitute for good advice.

Good advice on how much insurance is right for your needs can be found in a variety of places. Some prefer talking to a trained financial professional, while others prefer to do research online. Whichever approach works best for you, taking action to help protect you and your family with disability insurance is an important part of a strong financial plan.

5 The risk of a disability during your working years may be greater than you think.

The risk of suffering a disabling illness or injury may be more likely than you realize. In fact, almost half of Americans with disabilities are between the ages of 16 and 64.⁵ Disability insurance helps you to maintain a steady stream of income when you can't work due to illness or injury.

10 The financial strength and reputation of the company you buy from matters.

When you buy disability insurance, the company you buy from is making a long-term commitment to you. If you become disabled, there is a chance you will receive benefits for an extended period of time. It makes sense to buy from a company with experience, financial strength, and a solid reputation.

For more information,
visit www.metlife.com/digi or call (888) 671-8152.

1. Social Security Administration, <https://www.ssa.gov/pubs/EN-05-10029.pdf>. February 2025.
2. Disability benefits begin to accrue after completion of the elimination period.
3. Council for Disability Income Awareness, <https://thecdia.org/common-causes-of-disability/>, accessed March 2025.
4. Social Security Fact Sheet, <https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/factsheets/basicfact-alt.pdf>, accessed March 2025.
5. Persons with a Disability: Labor Force Characteristics News Release. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/disabl.htm>, February 2025.
6. Consumer Expenditures, U.S. Department of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cesan.pdf>, September 2024.

Like most disability insurance policies, MetLife's policies contain certain exclusions, exceptions, waiting periods, reductions, limitations and terms for keeping them in force. MetLife can provide you with costs and complete details. These policies provide disability income insurance only. Policies issued in New York do NOT provide basic hospital, basic medical or major medical insurance as defined by the New York State Insurance Department. The expected benefit ratio for these policies is at least 50%. This ratio is the portion of future premiums that MetLife expects to return as benefits when averaged over all people with the applicable policy.

