

Accelerated Death Benefit Fact Sheet

Life and Disability

What is the Accelerated Death Benefit?

The Accelerated Death Benefit (ADB) is a provision in most life insurance policies that allows a person to receive a portion of their life insurance money early — to use while they are still living. ADB is a standard in the industry and offered by most life insurance carriers. Generally, a person can get part of the value of their life insurance policy if they have a terminal illness and, depending on the policy, have a life expectancy of six months to two years. People with certain disabling conditions can also qualify for ADB regardless of life expectancy. Policy guidelines vary, but usually the benefit is 50 to 80 percent of the policy value.

Who can apply for an ADB?

Anyone who has a terminal condition should explore the Accelerated Death Benefit option. People with other conditions, such as Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS), those requiring artificial life support or people with organ failure who are not transplant candidates may also qualify depending on their individual policy and state laws.

Can a spouse or child benefit from the ADB?

Life insurance policies vary. At Aetna, our group life policies typically allow a person and their dependent spouse or domestic partner to apply for an ADB.

How can patients use the ADB?

Usually, there are no restrictions on how the ADB can be used. Patients can pay for hospital bills, medications or experimental treatment. Some patients use ADB funds to pay off their home or make financial arrangements for their family. Others use the funds for daily living expenses or to take a vacation. Applicants should speak with their life insurance carrier to find out about any policy restrictions.

Where can patients get more information on the ADB?

We encourage patients to contact their human resources department or life insurance carrier for more information about ADB.* For those with an Aetna Life Insurance policy, contact the Care Advocacy Program at **1-800-276-5120**.

*Tax laws relating to accelerated benefits are complex. Patients are also advised to consult with a qualified tax advisor about circumstances under which they could receive accelerated benefits excludable from income under federal tax law. Receipt of accelerated benefits may affect a patient's eligibility, or that of their spouse or family, for public assistance programs such as medical assistance (Medicaid), Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), Supplementary Social Security Income (SSI), and drug assistance programs. Patients should consult with social services agencies concerning the effect receipt of accelerated benefits will have on public assistance eligibility for themselves, their spouses, or family.

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