



## Choosing the right protection isn't just smart... it's critical

Tom and Natalie are both 37 years old and have two children. They feel they have a good insurance plan in place: life insurance on both of them and, since Natalie is a freelance writer, disability insurance for her. But a conversation in a supermarket checkout line prompted Natalie to rethink their strategy for the unexpected.

The customer behind her had a packed cart and her hands full trying to keep her kids away from the chocolate bars. Natalie offered to help put her groceries on the belt. The frazzled mother was very grateful and told Natalie she's really busy these days now that she's at home full time looking after her husband. She explained that he was recovering from a heart attack. He was going to be fine, but...well, you know, it was hard.

Natalie, sensing a story, asked her new acquaintance if it was tough on them financially. Yes, the woman

offered, but since they had critical illness insurance it wasn't as bad as it could have been.

Natalie went home with her head full of questions. Critical illness insurance? Sure, she'd heard of it. But just how important was it? What were the chances of one of them getting sick? She called up her advisor, Jason, and while she was waiting for him to return her call she did a quick internet search. It confirmed her suspicions. The chance of getting a critical illness? High. The impact on their family's finances if one of them got sick? Very high.

A few more clicks on the Internet and Natalie quickly realized that, while critical illness insurance is a relatively new product, there are a lot of options to choose from. Just then the phone rang. It was Jason. He promised to e-mail her a checklist that would highlight the features to look for when buying critical illness insurance. He also set up an appointment with Natalie and Tom the next week so they could discuss their family's specific requirements.

## LOOK FOR A COMPANY THAT HAS A STRONG CLAIMS PAYMENT HISTORY.

### What to look for

#### General

- A broad selection of coverage options (e.g., renewable in 10 or 20 years or payable to age 100) *A broad selection of coverage options ensures that you can choose the coverage that meets your specific needs. For example, if you need protection during your mortgage years, a product with a 20-year term is a great solution.*
- A product that offers the flexibility to change your coverage option should your needs change. *This way, you can select an affordable coverage option today and switch to more a comprehensive coverage option in the years ahead.*

#### Covered Conditions

- A product that offers protection against the most common covered conditions which people are most likely to suffer, such as cancer, heart attack and stroke.
- A product that features industry benchmark definitions so you won't need to compare products based on the meaning of each definition. You can rest assured that your policy will be adjudicated in a similar manner.

#### Long Term Care Insurance

- A product that also helps cover the costs associated with long term care if you become functionally dependent and satisfy the waiting period. Most products offer a Loss of Independent Existence covered condition, however, the condition must be permanent with no reasonable chance of recovery. *Instead, look for a product where the condition does not have to be permanent, so you can make additional claims if you have any insurance left over.*

#### Partial Benefits

- Strong partial benefits coverage for the early stages of breast and prostate cancer, and for coronary angioplasty. Many policies pay partial benefits. The partial benefit percentages and amounts payable for early breast cancer, early prostate cancer and coronary angioplasty vary from policy to policy. *Ensure you choose the best possible partial benefit coverage. Look for a product that does not reduce future benefit payments if you receive payment for a partial benefit.*

#### Advance Payment

- An advance payment that applies to all covered conditions and doesn't require you to satisfy the waiting period. Many products do not offer advance payment. Receiving a portion of your claim benefit quickly may allow you to receive treatment sooner. *Look for a company that offers an advance payment as soon as you make the claim.*



At their meeting, Jason explained that critical illness insurance would provide a cash benefit they could use to help minimize the financial impact on their lives if they were diagnosed with a covered condition and survived the waiting period. Natalie was definitely interested now. Critical illness insurance would complement her disability policy, which she had bought to protect a portion of her income if an illness or accident left her unable to work. Now, she and Tom

would be protected if they received common medical diagnoses, including cancer, a heart attack or stroke.

After talking it over, Natalie and Tom purchased the policy Jason recommended.

Not only could Natalie sleep at night knowing she and her family were well protected, but she got a job out of it, too! She called her local newspaper and is writing an article for them on the benefits of critical illness insurance.

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