



Medical expenses

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/myTax/2019/In-detail/Medical-expenses/>
- Last modified: 26 Jun 2019
- QC 59127

myTax 2019 Total net medical expenses for disability aids, attendant care or aged care

You can only claim this offset if you had expenses that relate to disability aids, attendant care or aged care.

This is the final year this offset can be claimed. Legislation passed in 2014 abolishes this offset from 1 July 2019.

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Essentials

Disability aids are items of property manufactured as, or generally recognised to be, an aid to the functional capacity of a person with a disability but, generally, will not include ordinary household or commercial appliances.

Attendant care expenses relate to services and care provided to a person with certain disabilities to assist with everyday living, such as the provision of personal assistance, home nursing, home maintenance, and domestic services to a person who is blind or permanently confined to bed or a wheelchair.

Aged care expenses relate to services and accommodation provided by an approved aged care provider to a person who is a care recipient or continuing care recipient within the meaning of the *Aged Care Act 1997*.

Net expenses are your total eligible medical expenses less refunds from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and private health insurers which you,

or someone else, received or are entitled to receive.

If you received a reimbursement amount as part of a compensation payment, you do not have to reduce your eligible medical expenses, unless the amount was received from a government, public authority, society, association or fund.

Eligible medical expenses do not include contributions to a private health insurer or travel or accommodation expenses associated with other categories of medical expenses.

To learn more about eligible expenses and expenses which do not qualify, see [More information](#).

This tax offset is income tested. The percentage of net expenses you can claim is determined by your adjusted taxable income (ATI) and family status. To calculate your ATI, use the [Income tests calculator](#)¹.

Can you claim this offset?

Use the following tables to work out whether you can claim this tax offset. If you are entitled to claim, we will work out your tax offset for you using the information you provide in your tax return.

Single (single at 30 June 2019 and no dependent children)

| ATI threshold | What can I claim? |
|------------------|--|
| \$90,000 or less | 20% of net medical expenses over \$2,377 |
| above \$90,000 | 10% of net medical expenses over \$5,609 |

Family (with a spouse at 30 June 2019, or dependent child or children at any time during the year, or both)

| ATI threshold | What can I claim? |
|---|--|
| \$180,000 or less (plus \$1,500 for each dependent child after the first) | 20% of net medical expenses over \$2,377 |
| above \$180,000 (plus \$1,500 for each dependent child after the first) | 10% of net medical expenses over \$5,609 |

There is no upper limit on the amount you can claim.

When calculating your net eligible expenses you can only include an amount paid for your dependants who were [Australian residents for tax purposes](#).

The disability aid, attendant care or aged care expenses must be for:

- you
- your [spouse](#), regardless of their income
- your children who were under 21 years old (including your adopted children, stepchildren, ex-nuptial children and children of your spouse) regardless of their income
- any other child under 21 years old whom you [maintained](#), who was not a student, and whose ATI for the period you maintained them was less than
 - for the first child under 21 years old
 - the total of \$282 plus \$28.92 for each week you maintained them, or
 - \$1,786 if you maintained them for the whole year
 - for any other child under 21 years old
 - the total of \$282 plus \$21.70 for each week you maintained them, or
 - \$1,410 if you maintained them for the whole year
- a student under 25 years old who is studying full time at school, college or university whom you [maintained](#) and whose ATI was less than
 - the total of \$282 plus \$28.92 for each week you maintained them, or
 - \$1,786 if you maintained them for the whole year
- an invalid or invalid carer if they meet the criteria and, you claimed in relation to them or could have claimed for them had your ATI or the combined ATI of you and your spouse not exceeded \$100,000.

Completing this section

You will need details of:

- expenses you paid that relate to disability aids, attendant care or aged care
 - refunds for these expenses which you or any other person has received, or are entitled to receive, from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) or a private health insurer.
1. Work out your net medical expenses amount using [Net medical expenses tax offset calculator](#)[□], or the [worksheet](#) below.
 2. Enter the amount of your net medical expenses into the Net medical expenses field.
We will work out your tax offset for you based on your ATI and family status.
 3. Select Save and continue when you have completed the Offsets section.

Worksheet

| Row | Calculation | Amount |
|-----|--|--------|
| a | Add up your disability aids, attendant care or aged care expenses. | \$ |

| | | |
|---|--|----|
| b | Add up the refunds for these expenses which you or any other person has received or are entitled to receive. | \$ |
| c | Take row b away from row a. This is your net medical expenses amount. | \$ |

More information

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/myTax/2019/In-detail/Medical-expenses/?page=2>
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Eligible expenses include payments:

- to a carer who looks after a person who is blind or permanently confined to a bed or wheelchair
- to a company for the provision of a carer for a disabled person, to the extent the payments represent remuneration of a person providing services as an attendant or carer
- for disability aids prescribed by a doctor (including the cost of repairs and maintenance, but not including the cost of transport for repairs and maintenance)
- for artificial limbs or eyes and hearing aids (including the cost of repairs and maintenance, but not including the cost of transport for repairs and maintenance)
- for maintaining a properly trained dog for guiding or assisting people with a disability (but not for social therapy)
- for residential or in-home aged care expenses.

Expenses which do not qualify include:

- payments for an air flotation mattress
- payments for a recline lift chair
- amounts withheld by an insurer from a compensation payment for medical expenses previously paid by the insurer
- payments for a personal alarm monitoring service.

Residential aged care expenses and payments for in-home care must have been made to an approved care provider for personal or nursing care and accommodation in respect of an approved care recipient.

An approved care recipient is a person who has been assessed by the aged care assessment team (ACAT) as eligible for residential aged care or in-home aged care.

Residential aged care payments can be for:

- daily fees
- income or means tested daily care fees
- extra service fees
- accommodation charges
- periodic payments of accommodation bonds
- interest on an outstanding instalment of a lump sum accommodation bond
- amounts drawn from a lump sum accommodation bond, and
- daily accommodation payments.

Expenses which do not qualify as aged care medical expenses include:

- lump sum payments of accommodation bonds or refundable accommodation deposits for residential aged care
- interest payments derived by care providers from the investment of accommodation bonds or refundable deposits (because these are not payments for residential aged care)
- expenses for people who were residents of a hostel before 1 October 1997 and who did not have a personal care subsidy or a respite care subsidy paid on their behalf at the personal care subsidy rate by the Commonwealth (unless they have subsequently been reassessed and approved as a care recipient or continuing care recipient under the *Aged Care Act 1997*).

A disability aid for the purpose of this offset is an instrument, apparatus or device generally recognised to be an aid to the function or capacity of a person with a disability. A disability aid will improve a person's quality of life.

A wheelchair or the maintenance of a guide dog are examples of disability aids as they help a person's daily living activities, provide assistance to alleviate the effect of the disability and enable increased participation in society. Disability aids can also include medical or surgical appliances such as:

- a freestanding over-bed frame
- a mobile shower commode
- a dual valve high profile cushion
- an electric scooter
- a speech aid
- a fold down ramp to provide wheelchair access to a car.

For the cost of a medical or surgical appliance to qualify for the offset, the appliance must be prescribed by a medical practitioner. Associated costs also qualify, such as the costs of repairs and maintenance of a speech aid, or registration and insurance of a scooter that has been prescribed by a medical practitioner for aid in mobilisation.

A disability is defined as a restriction or impairment which has lasted or is likely to last, for a period of six months or more, and which restrict a person's every day activities. Such as:

- loss of sight (not corrected by glasses or contact lenses)
- loss of hearing where communication is restricted, or an aid to assist with, or substitute for, hearing is used

- speech difficulties
- chronic or recurrent pain or discomfort causing restriction
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties causing restriction
- blackout, fits or loss of consciousness
- difficulty learning or understanding
- incomplete use of arms or fingers
- incomplete use of feet or legs
- nervous or emotional condition causing restriction
- restriction in physical activities or in doing physical work
- disfigurement or deformity
- mental illness or condition requiring help or supervision
- long-term effects of head injury, stroke or other brain damage causing restriction
- receiving treatment or medication for any other long-term condition or ailment, and still restricted
- any other long-term condition resulting in a restriction.

Definitions

- <https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/myTax/2019/In-detail/Medical-expenses/?page=3>
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Spouse

Your spouse includes another person (of any sex) who:

- you were in a relationship with that was registered under a prescribed state or territory law
- although not legally married to you, lived with you on a genuine domestic basis in a relationship as a couple.

Dependent child

For the purpose of calculating the ATI threshold for this offset, a dependent child is, (regardless of their income):

- your child under 21 years old
- your child, 21 to 24 years old who is studying full time at school, college or university (student under 25 years old).

Maintaining a dependant or maintaining another person

You maintained a dependant or maintained another person if any of the following applied:

- you both lived in the same house
- you gave them food, clothing and lodging
- you helped them to pay for their living, medical and educational costs.

If you had a spouse for the whole of 2018–19 and your spouse worked at any time during the year, we still consider you to have maintained your spouse as a dependant for the whole income year.

We consider you to have maintained a dependant or maintained another person even if the two of you were temporarily separated, for example, due to holidays or overseas travel.

If you maintained a dependant or maintained another person for only part of the year, you may need to adjust your claim accordingly.

Our commitment to you

We are committed to providing you with accurate, consistent and clear information to help you understand your rights and entitlements and meet your obligations.

If you follow our information and it turns out to be incorrect, or it is misleading and you make a mistake as a result, we will take that into account when determining what action, if any, we should take.

Some of the information on this website applies to a specific financial year. This is clearly marked. Make sure you have the information for the right year before making decisions based on that information.

If you feel that our information does not fully cover your circumstances, or you are unsure how it applies to you, contact us or seek professional advice.

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