



Annual Wellness Visit

Many people visit their doctors only for annual checkups or when they feel sick. If that's true for you, you may be missing out on an important chance to partner with your doctor to learn how to live a healthier, happier life. It's called an Annual Wellness Visit, and if you're a Medicare member, it's typically covered under your plan and available at no extra cost to you.

What is an Annual Wellness Visit?

While both are very important, a checkup and a wellness visit aren't the same. When you go for a checkup, also called an annual physical, your doctor looks for signs of major problems and does important routine tests.

A wellness visit is different. It's more like a planning session where you and your doctor can spend time talking about your health and your life.

The goal is to create a plan for your health just for you—to help you avoid or reduce the effects of conditions like diabetes, heart disease and obesity. It may also help educate you on how to reduce dangerous fall hazards and visits to the emergency room.

For information on what you and your doctor should talk about at your Annual Wellness Visit, see the list on the back of this flyer.

As you work toward achieving good health, it's important to have both an annual physical and wellness visit once per calendar year.

Can I get an Annual Wellness Visit?

When you first join Medicare, you can typically have a "Welcome to Medicare" preventive visit within the first 12 months. After that, you can have one wellness visit per calendar year. There's no additional cost to you for this visit.

If possible, it's a good idea to schedule your first wellness visit early in the year so you can get started right away on the plan you and your doctor create.



Although the Annual Wellness Visit is provided as a benefit to all Medicare members, if a medical condition is found during the visit, there may be a cost to treat the condition.

Annual Wellness Visit

Annual Wellness Visit checklist

- Assess brain health, memory and depression
- Assess overall physical, joint and emotional health
- Check blood pressure
- Calculate body mass index (BMI)
- Keep track of your doctors
- Keep track of your medicines
- Manage chronic conditions like diabetes, breathing problems or heart conditions
- Plan for preventive screenings and shots
- Review your medical history
- Discuss your functional abilities and level of safety, such as your hearing and risk of falling

To get the most out of your visit, bring these items:

- Medical records, including screenings and shots you've had in the past year
- Family health history
- List of all medicines and supplements you take
- List of all doctors and pharmacists you use
- Any information you have on recent visits with your specialists

References

Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services

www.medicare.gov/coverage/preventive-visit-and-yearly-wellness-exams.html

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