



Your Guide to Better Health and Wellness with Medicare.

Medicare Annual Wellness Visit

Please read this information carefully.

Effective January 1, 2011, Medicare began covering an Annual Wellness Visit. This visit is with your primary care site and there are no copays or deductibles for this visit.

The Annual Wellness Visit is not an annual physical, nor should it be confused with the “Welcome to Medicare” Visit (a one-time visit for patients new to Medicare). The Annual Wellness Visit is designed to help you, your doctor and their staff to develop an ongoing health plan intended to keep you healthy, safe and independent.

Your Annual Wellness Visit will include, but is not limited to:

- Medical history
- Health risk assessment
- Evaluation of physical condition
- Screening for cognitive impairment
- A prevention plan set by your provider, including appropriate health screenings

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What does the Annual Wellness Visit cost?

- There is no out-of-pocket cost for this visit; however, if additional testing is required, you may incur a copay or deductible expense.

2. When am I eligible for an Annual Wellness Visit?

- After you have had Medicare Part B for more than 12 months. If you have had a “Welcome to Medicare” Visit within the last 12 months, you will need to wait 11 full months from the date of your “Welcome to Medicare” Visit to schedule your Annual Wellness Visit.

3. What if I am sick? Can I schedule my sick visit and Annual Wellness Visit at the same time?

- Possibly. It will depend on the severity of the illness and your doctor’s schedule; however, should you be seen for a sick visit and an Annual Wellness Exam during the same appointment, you will be charged for the sick visit.

4. How often can I have my Annual Wellness Visit?

- You can have an Annual Wellness Visit once every year (11 full months from your previous visit).

5. What is covered during the Annual Wellness Visit?

- Your first Annual Wellness Visit will include:

- Routine measurements such as height, weight, blood pressure and body mass index (BMI)
- Review of medical and family history
- Establishing a list of current providers, suppliers and medications
- A personal risk assessment (including any mental health conditions)
- A review of functional ability and level of safety
- Detection of any cognitive impairment
- Screening for depression
- Establishing a schedule for Medicare’s screening and preventive services you qualify for over the next 5-10 years
- Other advice or referral services that may help intervene and treat potential health risks
- Voluntary advanced care planning

- Subsequent Annual Wellness Visits will include:

- Measurement of weight and blood pressure, as well as other measurements deemed appropriate
- An update to medical and family history
- An update to the list of providers, suppliers and medications
- A review of the initial personal risk assessment
- Detection of any cognitive impairment
- Screening for depression
- An updated screening schedule
- A review and update of the list of referral services to help intervene and treat potential health risks

6. **Is the Annual Wellness Visit the same thing as an annual physical exam?**
- No. An annual physical is a much more extensive physical examination. In addition to collecting a medical history, this visit may also include the following: vital signs checked, a lung exam, head and neck exam, abdominal exam, neurological exam, dermatological exam and extremities exam. The Annual Wellness Visit should not be viewed as a replacement of your annual physical, and may or may not be covered by your insurance.
7. **Will I actually see a doctor during the Annual Wellness Visit?**
- Most of your time will be spent with an allied health professional, such as a nurse or medical assistant who will gather most of your medical history in order for your physician to determine an appropriate preventative health screening plan. Please note, there may be times when you see a physician and times when you see an advanced practice clinician, nurse or medical assistant.
8. **What is the difference between the “Welcome to Medicare” Visit and the Annual Wellness Visit?**
- Medicare covers a one-time “Welcome to Medicare” Visit (see below for what your provider will cover at this visit)
 - Medicare also covers an Annual Wellness Visit every 11 months from the date of your last visit (see previous page for what your provider will cover during this visit)
9. **When am I eligible for my “Welcome to Medicare” Visit?**
- Medicare covers a one-time “Welcome to Medicare” Visit within the first 12 months you have Medicare Part B. If you did not receive your “Welcome to Medicare” Visit and have been with Medicare for more than 12 months, you are eligible for your Annual Wellness Visit; not a “Welcome to Medicare” Visit.
10. **What does the “Welcome to Medicare” Visit cost?**
- Effective January 2011, there is no out-of-pocket expense for this visit.
11. **What is covered in the “Welcome to Medicare” Visit?**
- A “Welcome to Medicare” Visit is similar to the Annual Wellness Visit and includes:
- A thorough review of health, education, and counseling about the preventative services covered by Medicare and referrals for other care if needed
 - Establishing a schedule for Medicare’s screening and preventive services you qualify for over the next 5-10 years
 - A review of medical and social history with attention to risk factors for disease detection
 - A review of an individual’s potential for depression or other mood disorders
 - A review of an individual’s functional ability and level of safety
 - An examination to include an individual’s height, weight, blood pressure, visual acuity, BMI measurement and other factors deemed appropriate by the examining physician or qualified non-physician practitioner
 - End-of-life planning, upon individual’s consent
 - Education, counseling and referral based on the results of the reviews and evaluation services included in this visit as listed above
 - EKG with interpretation and report
 - Hearing assessment
12. **Do I need to have my “Welcome to Medicare” Visit before my Annual Wellness Visit?**
- You do not need to have a “Welcome to Medicare” Visit before an Annual Wellness Visit; however, if you have chosen to have the “Welcome to Medicare” Visit, you will have to wait 12 months from the date of that visit before you can have your first Annual Wellness Visit.
13. **What if I require further tests or screenings?**
- Medicare covers many screenings for people who are at high risk for certain diseases. During your Annual Wellness Visit, you and your doctor will decide on the appropriate tests and screenings.