

Understanding your Medicare Annual Wellness Visit



Monroe Clinic

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What is a Medicare Annual Wellness Visit and why is it a valuable tool for managing your health?

When you make appointments to see your doctor about a specific health concern, there isn't always time to talk about all of the issues in life that effect your overall health. A *Medicare Annual Wellness Visit* provides an opportunity for more discussion.

A *Medicare Annual Wellness Visit* is a once-a-year visit covered by Medicare. It is intended to provide seniors citizens with an opportunity to meet with a member of the health care team to discuss personalized plans to manage health, prevent disease and bring them up-to-date on basic screenings and immunizations.

This is not the same as an annual check up or complete 'head-to-toe' preventative physical exam. The *Medicare Annual Wellness Visit* covered by Medicare does not include this type of hands-on physical examination.



Get Started Right Away.

During your first year of enrollment in Medicare B you may schedule a Welcome to Medicare Visit, and you are eligible for one *Medicare Annual Wellness Visit* every twelve months, thereafter.

Make the most of your Medicare Annual Wellness Visit by coming to your appointment prepared.

Items to bring with you:

- Updates on medical history from the past year.
- Your family history. Before the appointment, write down as much as you can about your family's health history and share it with your doctor. This information may help determine if you are at risk for certain diseases.
- A list of your current prescription and over-the-counter drugs or bring your prescription containers. Be sure to include how often you take them and why you are taking them.
- A list of any other health care providers who are involved in your care (including dentists, eye doctors, chiropractors etc.)
- Copies of advanced directives (power of attorney and/or a living will).
- Updates on immunizations.



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Is my Medicare Annual Wellness Visit the same thing as an Annual Preventative Physical Exam?

No. The two appointments sound similar but there are a few important differences:

Medicare Annual Wellness Visit

- No expense to you.
- Its purpose is to focus on establishing and maintaining a personalized plan to prevent disease and disability, based on your current health and risk factors.
- Breast/pelvic or prostate exam
May be performed, if they are due.

Annual Preventative Physical Exam

- Co-payments or deductibles may apply.
- Its purpose is to identify health problems in the early stages when they may be easier and less costly to treat. This exam is prevention focused, not problem focused.
- Complete physical exam.

Your *Medicare Annual Wellness Visits* are a once-a-year visit covered by Medicare at no expense to you. However, if services are performed in addition to your *Medicare Annual Wellness Visit* (such as discussing a specific and/or new health issue), this may require a co-payment or deductible expense.

Contact Us

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