

MEDICARE ANNUAL WELLNESS VISITS

What is a Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV)?

A Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) is a free service for patients (mostly those over age 65) who have Medicare Part B or Medicare Advantage coverage through insurance companies like Anthem, Humana or United Healthcare. The purpose of the annual wellness visit is to identify health risks and help patients reduce them.

During the AWV, your provider and his/her care team will take a complete health history and provide certain screenings (such as falls risk, depression or vision and hearing), and a limited exam to check your blood pressure, weight, etc. At the end of the visit, you will be given recommendations for other wellness services and healthy lifestyle changes.

What is it NOT?

This is not a traditional head to toe physical. It is also not an office visit to discuss chronic medical problems or new problems. Certainly these topics may be discussed, but if significant time is spent on these issues, your wellness visit will not get sufficient attention due to time constraints.

Per Medicare and most insurance companies' rules, discussing any other health problems during your wellness visit will be subject to a separate charge, and you will be responsible for the cost of additional services that may be subject to a copayment, deductible and/or co-insurance.

Please let our staff know if you need the provider's help with a health problem, medication refill or something else so that we can schedule additional time for an additional charge or a separate appointment.

How do I get the most from my wellness visit?

If you have new medical issues, these may be best addressed in a dedicated visit, not during your wellness exam.

Similarly, your chronic medical conditions may also be better discussed at a follow up visit.

You will be asked to fill out a detailed questionnaire about your health and overall wellness. If you have MyChart access, you can do this on line as part of e-check in starting 7 days prior to your visit.

If you don't have access to MyChart, the office will mail the questionnaire to you. Please complete this and bring it with you to your annual wellness visit. If you wait to complete this when you arrive, it may take time from your visit with the provider.

What is covered?

We want to help you stay healthy. An annual wellness visit helps us achieve this goal. During this visit, we will review what wellness services and preventive screenings you may be eligible to receive. You will leave with educational material on a healthy lifestyle. You will also receive a listing of the wellness services and screenings you've received in the past as well as a schedule of when these may be due again in the future.

These visits are covered only once a year, and the date of your future visit will be dependent on the date of the current visit. Medicare and most Medicare Advantage insurance companies require that there be at least 11 months between annual wellness visits.