



Preventive Care Visits with Medicare

Understanding your choices

- *Welcome to Medicare Visit*
- *Medicare Annual Wellness Visit*
- *Regular Checkup*

Dear Park Nicollet Patient,

As a Medicare Part B beneficiary, you may have questions about preventive care visits. This booklet will help you understand your choices. Read this booklet carefully before scheduling your next preventive care visit.

The information in this booklet is for general purposes only.

Check with Medicare and any supplemental health insurance you have to understand your specific benefits.

Your health care team

All older adults with Medicare Part B can now get a free wellness visit every year. This “Annual Wellness Visit” is different from the existing “Welcome to Medicare Visit” you are eligible for and the regular checkup that you may be used to having.

This booklet will help you understand:

- When you can have each type of visit and how often
- What happens at each visit
- How each visit is paid for

It’s important to understand how the 3 types of preventive care visits differ so you:

- Know what to expect at each visit
- Can let your clinic know what type of visit you want when you call to schedule an appointment with your doctor
- Are aware of what Medicare does or does not pay for

Which visits are free?

- A regular checkup is not covered by Medicare.
- The Annual Wellness Visit and the Welcome to Medicare Visit are both free if you have Medicare Part B.

But Medicare Part B has specific requirements for when and how often you can have your Welcome to Medicare Visit and the Annual Wellness Visit. How long each appointment is depends on your individual needs.

During any of the 3 visits, your doctor may provide care services that are not covered by Medicare Part B or supplemental health insurance as part of the visit. These services may be billed separately. Or your doctor may ask you to come back for another visit to take care of the other services you need.

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The Welcome to Medicare Visit

When and how often can I have the Welcome to Medicare visit?

- The Welcome to Medicare Visit is a once-in-a lifetime benefit.
- You can only have a Welcome to Medicare Visit within the first year that you are enrolled in Medicare Part B.

How is the Welcome to Medicare Visit paid for?

The Welcome to Medicare Visit is covered for free by Medicare Part B.

What happens at the Welcome to Medicare Visit?

The Welcome to Medicare Visit includes the following services:

- Review your medical and social history—medications, family health history, diet and physical activities
- Check your height, weight, body mass index and blood pressure
- Review your risk factors for depression
- Review your ability to do regular daily activities—includes your risk for falling, home safety and any problems with hearing
- Check your vision

- Talk about end-of-life planning if you want
- Get a written checklist for follow-up care for:
 - » Preventive services, such as a screening test for diabetes
 - » Health concerns, such as losing weight or quitting smoking

How can I get the most out of my Welcome to Medicare Visit?

- Bring your medical records, including immunization records.
- Bring the bottles for all of your prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements you take. Or bring an up-to-date list. The list should include how often you take each medication, how much you take of each one and why you are taking it.
- Make sure you know as many details as possible about your family health history.

The Welcome to Medicare Visit is a once-in-a lifetime visit.

The Annual Wellness Visit

When and how often can I have the Annual Wellness Visit?

- Effective January 1, 2011, you can have your first Annual Wellness Visit:
 - » Beginning 12 months after your Welcome to Medicare Visit
- Or
 - » Beginning 12 months after the date that your Medicare Part B coverage began
- You cannot have an Annual Wellness Visit during your first 12 months of coverage under Medicare Part B.
- You do not need to have a Welcome to Medicare Visit before getting an Annual Wellness Visit if you have already had Medicare Part B for at least 12 months.

How is the Annual Wellness Visit paid for?

The Annual Wellness Visit is covered for free by Medicare Part B.

What happens at the Annual Wellness Visit?

The Annual Wellness Visit includes some of the same services you get as at the Welcome to Medicare Visit:

- Review your medical and social history—medications, family health history, diet and physical activities

- Check your height, weight, body mass index and blood pressure
- Review your risk factors for depression
- Review your ability to do regular daily activities—includes your risk for falling, home safety and any problems with hearing
- Look at your risks for developing certain diseases and other health problems and set a schedule for screening services for the next 5 to 10 years—This schedule is based on your health, screening history and age.

Many of these screening services are free. Previously, Medicare has not covered these services. Examples of important preventive health screening services include colon cancer screening or mammograms.

- Create a “personalized prevention plan”
- Update your plan each year going forward based on your current health and risk factors

The Annual Wellness Visit includes setting a schedule for preventive health screening services.

Additional services at your Annual Wellness visit include:

- Check for cognitive problems—your ability to think, reason and remember
- Review treatment recommendations for any conditions, including their risks and benefits
- Update your list of current clinicians

How can I get the most out of my Annual Wellness Visit?

- Make a list of contact information for your other clinicians. This information will help your doctor coordinate your care with them.
- Bring the bottles for all of your prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements you take. Or bring an up-to-date list. The list should include how often you take each medication, how much you take of each one and why you are taking it.
- Think about your personalized prevention plan. Are you practicing healthy lifestyle habits? Which unhealthy habits would you most like to change? Are you eating a healthy diet? Do you do regular physical activity? What new stresses are going on in your life? How's your sleep going?

The Regular Checkup

When and how often can I have a regular checkup?

- How often depends on your supplemental health insurance (if you have any).
- How often also depends on your age, medical history, health problems and risk factors. Talk to your doctor.

How is the regular checkup paid for?

- Medicare Part B does not cover a regular checkup.
- Check with your supplemental health insurance to find out if a regular checkup is covered.
- You may be responsible for a co-pay or co-insurance after meeting a deductible.

What happens at a regular checkup?

The regular checkup includes some of the same services as you get at the Welcome to Medicare Visit or the Annual Wellness Visit:

- Review your medical and social history—medications, family health history, diet and physical activities
- Review your history of risk factors
- Discuss regarding reducing risk factors

At a regular checkup, you also will get:

- A physical exam from “head to toe”
- Clinical laboratory tests and diagnostic procedures

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Do I still need to schedule a regular checkup?

It's your choice. At a regular checkup, you will have a more complete exam from “head to toe.” You may have certain tests depending on your age, medical history, health problems and risk factors.

If you have supplemental health insurance, find out if a regular checkup is covered.

How can I get the most out of my regular checkup?

- Bring the bottles for all of your prescriptions, over-the-counter medications and supplements you take. Or bring an up-to-date list. The list should include how often you take each medication, how much you take of each one and why you are taking it.
- Check your supplemental health insurance benefits before scheduling your appointment.

