

# Medicare Coverage of IPPE and Annual Wellness Visits

The Medicare **Annual Wellness Visit** (AWV) is a strategy session designed to help you and your primary care provider develop an ongoing health plan intended to keep you healthy, safe, and independent for a long time.

Your “Welcome to Medicare Visit” – also known as an Initial Prevention Physical Exam (IPPE) – is your first Annual Wellness Visit. This visit will include:

- Review of medical, family, and social history
- Review of potential risk factors for depression and other mood disorders, as well as cognitive impairments
- Review of functional ability and level of safety
- Review of preventative services
- Vision screening
- End-of-life planning and education

Your subsequent Annual Wellness Visits will be similar to your first visit.

Annual Wellness Visits are covered once every 12 months at no cost to the patient.

During your Annual Wellness Visit, you and your provider will decide on the appropriate tests and screenings. Medicare covers many screenings for people who are at high risk for certain diseases. If your provider performs other tests, screenings, or procedures that are not covered as part of the Annual Wellness Visit, you may incur a copay or deductible expense.

The **Annual Wellness Visit is not an annual physical exam**. An annual physical is a much more extensive physical examination. In addition to collecting a medical history, it may also include a lung exam, head and neck exam, abdominal exam, neurological exam, dermatological exam, and extremities exam. The Medicare Annual Wellness Visit does not replace an annual physical. Medicare does not cover routine physical exams.

## Scheduling a Medicare Annual Wellness Visit

To help determine when you become eligible for your first Medicare Annual Wellness Visit, as well as when to schedule subsequent Annual Wellness visits, call your Foundation Medical Partners provider's office to speak with a patient service representative who will happily assist you.

For your convenience, many providers will complete the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit along with a regular office visit to address any specific concerns you may have – such as a new or chronic illness – in one combined visit. If you wish to combine your visits, there will be two charges: one for the AWV and one for the office visit. If you prefer to address your medical conditions at a separate visit, please advise the clinical staff when you are brought to the exam room.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What does the Annual Wellness Visit cost?

You pay nothing out of pocket for this visit. However, you may incur a co-pay or deductible expense if additional testing is required.

### 2. When am I eligible for my Annual Wellness Visit?

After you have had Medicare Part B for more than 12 months OR 12 months after your initial "Welcome to Medicare Visit".

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

It will depend on the severity of the illness and your provider's schedule. However, if you do have both appointments at once, you will be charged for a sick visit at that time.

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

You may have an Annual Wellness Visit once every 12 months.

### 5. Will I see a doctor during the Annual Wellness Visit?

You will see your primary care provider. They may be a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant. However, some of your time may be spent with an allied health profession, such as a nurse or medical assistant, who will gather much of your medical history so that your provider can determine an appropriate preventive health screening plan.

Reference: <https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/preventive-services/medicare-wellness-visits.html>