



January 26, 2018 | by [The Polyclinic](#)

At The Polyclinic, we want to keep you healthy, out of the hospital, and doing what you love. One great way to stay healthy is to take advantage of the preventive visits covered by Medicare. The **Welcome to Medicare Visit** and the **Annual Wellness Visit** (also known as an AWW) are not the same as a traditional physical exam and have specific benefits and coverage defined by Medicare.

The Welcome to Medicare visit is a preventive visit covered by Original Medicare

As the name suggests, you are eligible for the Welcome to Medicare visit within the first 12 months of enrolling in Medicare Part B. Medicare Advantage plans cover the same preventive services as Original Medicare, provided you see in-network providers.

During this initial visit, your doctor will:

- Review your current prescriptions, health and medical history
- Check your height, weight, and blood pressure
- Calculate your body mass index (BMI)
- Conduct a simple vision test
- Review potential risk for depression and other mental health conditions
- Discuss disease prevention, health, and wellness improvements

After the assessment, your doctor will share a personalized care plan with recommendations for screenings, immunizations, and other preventive services. You will be billed separately for any services or screenings not covered by Medicare, so additional health concerns may require a separate follow-up appointment.

After your initial Welcome visit, you'll start receiving [Annual Wellness Visits](#) to review your medical conditions, and how to manage them and prevent complications. You are eligible for an AWV every 12 months if you have been enrolled in Medicare Part B longer than 12 months.

What to bring to each visit:

- Medical and immunization records from outside providers
- Family health history
- A list of your prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, including supplements

The AWV is different from a “head-to-toe” physical

The traditional annual physical is an examination to check your vital signs, heart, lungs, head, neck, abdomen, reflexes, and skin. A wellness visit is considered a ‘hands-off’ visit focused on health history, risk factors, review of age-appropriate screenings, and education on disease management and self-care.

During this visit, your doctor will:

- Update your medical history, including a list of your providers and prescriptions
- Discuss disease prevention, health, and wellness improvements
- Check your height, weight and blood pressure
- Review your personal plan of care, including what health screenings are covered by Medicare

In addition to the AWV, Medicare beneficiaries can access many free preventive care services, such as cardiovascular disease screenings, prostate cancer screenings, and mammograms.

Schedule your AWW

Insurance coverage depends on timing and your plan. For patients with Original Medicare Part B with or without a supplement plan, schedule your AWWs one full year (365 days) apart to ensure insurance coverage. For patients with a Medicare Advantage plan, schedule one AWW per calendar year to ensure coverage (January-December). Exceptions may apply for some plans.

Contact our [Patient Panel Management Team](#) at 206-860-5510, Monday-Friday, 8 am – 5 pm

They are dedicated to helping you understand and schedule your annual wellness and preventive visits when you are on a Medicare, Medicare Supplement, or Medicare Advantage plan at The Polyclinic.



Dear Patient,

Thank you for scheduling your Medicare Wellness Visit with us.

What you can expect at your Medicare Annual Wellness visit:

This is a **PREVENTIVE CARE VISIT**. We will:

- Collect your medical and family health history
- Share education and counseling about preventive services, including alcohol screening, depression screening, cognitive screening and advance care planning.
- Develop a personalized prevention plan including:
addressing your safety and risk of falls at home
checking for signs of memory problems or dementia

Please come prepared for your appointment:

- **Fill out the enclosed forms** and return to us at your visit or by email to ouremailaddress.com or via our web portal
- If you are unable to complete the forms in advance, please come to our office 45 to 60 minutes ahead of your appointment time to complete them. They are necessary for your assessment and planning
- **Bring your Medicare Insurance card** with you so that we may verify your eligibility for this visit.
- Be prepared with a **list of any concerns** you would like the physician to address.
- **Bring all current medications** or a list of them

There is no charge for the Annual Wellness visit.

However, your physician may need to treat other acute and chronic health issues in addition to performing your wellness exam (the same appointment).

Charges for these separate services will be filed to Medicare and may result in out of pocket expense for you depending on your coverage for illness visits.

Sincerely,

The physicians and staff of (your practice)

Telephone number

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand that you will be financially responsible for the portion of your physical not covered by your insurance.

Signature

Date