

Achieving Your Best Health: The “Welcome to Medicare” Preventive Visit

As a Medicare patient, you are entitled to a one-time preventive visit within the first 12 months that you have Medicare Part B. This visit is called the “Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit, and it’s a great chance for you and your physician to truly begin a partnership for your good health.

The “Welcome to Medicare” visit includes a review of your medical history, education and counseling about preventive services, certain screening tests, shots and referrals for other care (if needed). The visit is a perfect opportunity to get up to date on screening tests and immunizations. It also offers an important chance to talk with your doctor about your family’s medical history.

Please review the Q&A below. If you have additional questions after reviewing this information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with us. We look forward to partnering with you in achieving your best health.

What happens during the “Welcome to Medicare” visit? During the visit, your doctor will:

- review your medical and family medical history
- check your height, weight and blood pressure
- calculate your body mass index (BMI)
- give you a simple vision test

Depending on your general health and medical history, your doctor may order further tests (as approved by Medicare). You will get advice to help you prevent disease, improve your health, and achieve your best health. You will also get a written plan (like a checklist) letting you know which screening tests and other preventive services you need.

What does not happen during the visit?

- This visit will not cover or treat any established chronic conditions such as diabetes or high blood pressure.
- The “Welcome to Medicare” visit is not the time to adjust medications.
- It is not a thorough, complete physical examination. Your provider may examine you, but it will be based solely on your risk factors.

What should you bring to the visit? When you come to your “Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit, please bring the following items:

- Your **medical records**, including immunization records (if you’re seeing a new doctor). You may call your old doctor to get copies of your medical records.
- Your **family health history**. Try to learn as much as you can about your family’s health history before your appointment. Any information you can give your doctor can help determine if you’re at risk for certain diseases.
- A **list of prescription and over-the-counter drugs** that you currently take, how often you take them, and why.

Who is covered, how much does the visit cost, and how often is it covered?

This visit is covered only one time, and you must have the visit within the first 12 months you’re enrolled in Part B. You pay nothing if your doctor accepts Medicare.

What are my costs if I have a Medicare Replacement Plan?

While most Medicare Replacement Plans follow Medicare guidelines, it is your responsibility to verify your benefits with your insurance company.

What if I’ve had Medicare for over 12 months but didn’t participate in the “Welcome to Medicare” preventive visit?

No problem! You may still participate in the Medicare annual “Wellness” visit.