

## **Elliot believes in Wellness at Any Age – Now, so does Medicare.**

Effective January 1, 2011 Medicare began covering an **Annual Wellness Visit** with your primary care provider. And, there are no co pays or deductibles for this visit.

Your first **Annual Wellness Visit** will include, among other things, a medical history, health risk assessment and an evaluation of physical condition and screening for cognitive impairment. In addition, your doctor will work with you to set a prevention plan, including appropriate health screenings. If after your visit, your doctor determines additional testing is necessary, there may be a fee associated with some services.

The **Annual Wellness Visit** is not an annual physical, nor should it be confused with the “Welcome to Medicare Visit” – a onetime visit for patients new to Medicare.

Your doctor should be someone who knows you as a person, not just a sick person. The **Annual Wellness Visit** is a strategy session designed to help you and your doctor develop an ongoing health plan intended to keep you healthy, safe and independent for a long time.



### **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 doctor’s schedule but may be possible. However, 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. What is covered during the new Annual Wellness Visit?**

### **Your first Annual Wellness Visit will include:**

- Routine measurements such as height, weight, blood pressure and body-mass index;
- Review of medical and family/social history;
- Establishing a list of current providers, suppliers, and medications;
- A personal risk assessment (including any mental health conditions and cognitive impairment);
- A review of functional ability and level of safety;
- Detection of any cognitive impairment;
- Screening for depression;
- Establishing a schedule for Medicare's screening and preventive services you qualify for over the next 5 to 10 years;
- Other advice or referral services that may help intervene and treat potential health risks;
- Voluntary advanced care planning.

### **Subsequent Annual Wellness Visits will include:**

- Measurement of weight, blood pressure, and other measurements deemed appropriate;
- An update to medical and family history;
- An update to the list of providers, suppliers, and medications;
- A review of the initial personal risk assessment;
- Detection of any cognitive impairment;
- An updated screening schedule; and,
- A review and update to list of referral services to help intervene and treat potential health risks.

## **6. Is the Annual Wellness Visit the same thing as an annual physical exam?**

No. 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 may not replace an annual physical.

## **7. Will I actually see a doctor during the Annual Wellness Visit?**

You will see your primary care provider which could 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 physician can determine an appropriate preventive health screening plan.

## **8. Do I have to have my Welcome to Medicare Visit before my Annual Wellness Visit?**

You don't have to have a "Welcome to Medicare" visit before getting an Annual Wellness Visit, but if you choose to have the Welcome to Medicare Visit, you'll have to wait 12 months before you can have your first Annual Wellness Visit.

## **9. What if I require further tests or screenings?**

Medicare covers many screenings for people who are at high risk for certain diseases. During your Annual Wellness Visit, you and your doctor will decide on the appropriate tests and screenings. If your doctor performs other tests, screenings or procedures that are not covered as part of the Annual Wellness Visit, applicable deductibles and co-payments may apply.

## **10. How do I schedule my Annual Wellness Visit or my Welcome to Medicare 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 EPN primary care physician office to speak with a patient service representative.