

UNDERSTANDING YOUR MEDICARE ANNUAL WELLNESS VISIT

What is the Medicare Annual Wellness Visit (AWV)?

The purpose of the AWV is to update your personal health information and to develop a personalized plan to prevent disease and disability based on your current health status and risk factors.

What is included in a Medicare AWV?

1. Personal Health Risk Assessment in the form of a questionnaire for you to complete
2. Review of your medical and family health history
3. Update of your medications, allergies, health care providers, and specialists
4. Vital signs assessment: height, weight, pulse, blood pressure, body mass index (BMI)
5. Screening for cognitive impairment/dementia
6. Screening for depression
7. Review of risk factors and preventive treatment options pertinent to you
8. Completion of a Personalized Preventive Plan of Services outlining preventive measures for you
9. Screening breast, pelvic, and rectal exams as well as Pap smears and prostate cancer screening blood tests, and referrals for other appropriate screening tests (mammogram, colonoscopy, bone density)

What is NOT included in a Medicare AWV?

1. Physical examination beyond basic measures and vital signs as above.
2. Review or management of ongoing health issues, including medications.
3. Diagnosis, review, or management of new health issues, illnesses, or injuries.
4. Blood tests, urinalysis, xrays, EKG, or follow-up tests related to old or new problems.
5. Procedures such as skin biopsies, joint injections, lesion removals, cryotherapy, etc.

At Sound Medical, we feel that your health is better assessed with MORE than the bare minimum Medicare AWV requirements. Accordingly, it is our practice to perform a physical examination at the time of your AWV. We may recommend blood and urine tests be performed periodically as screening measures, as well as other medically appropriate tests (blood tests, EKGs, xrays, etc.) that are pertinent to your health situation. We believe that taking time to review your existing and new health issues during your AWV is an important part of addressing your healthcare needs. The alternative would be to have you return for additional visits to address any new or ongoing health issues. Extra visits are inconvenient and inefficient and may result in missing important disease management factors and health education opportunities. While we clearly cannot always complete the AWV requirements as well as address multiple other issues in one 30 minute appointment, we do our best to provide the appropriate services at the most appropriate time. Thank you for your understanding in this regard.

If you and your MD or PA address issues beyond the limited scope of the Medicare AWV, those services must be billed separately and will result in you being responsible for a deductible/copay or coinsurance (your share of the cost of your care). This is not 'double billing', nor is it illegal or a violation of Medicare rules. It is the way your care must be coded and billed for us to be in compliance with Medicare laws, and for us to be paid for services rendered. We appreciate your trust in Sound Medical for your healthcare needs, and we appreciate your understanding of these sometimes complex issues. We are always happy to discuss these and any other concerns you may have regarding your Medicare AWV, as well as your other health-related questions.