

Wellness Visits: Why You Need Them and What to Expect

One of the best ways to get healthy and stay healthy is to see your doctor every year for a wellness visit. No matter your age or how you feel, you should have a wellness visit at least 1 time each year.



What is a wellness visit?

A wellness visit is a routine check-up with your **primary care doctor**. A primary care doctor is the main doctor you see when you are sick or hurt. These visits can:

- **Prevent chronic illnesses**, such as diabetes, heart disease, and arthritis, before they even start
- Catch illnesses early and **keep them from getting worse**
- Help build a **good relationship** with your doctor – This makes it easier for them to help you stay healthy.

What can I expect at a wellness visit?

At a wellness visit, your doctor may:

- Do a **physical exam**, such as get your height and weight, take your blood pressure, and listen to your heart and breathing
- **Run blood tests** to check your heart health, blood sugar levels, liver and kidney function, and immune system
- Check your **vaccination (shot) records** and make sure they are up to date
- Talk with you about **cancer screening** based on your age and gender. You can talk with your insurance company or HR department about what screenings your insurance will pay for.



How much does a wellness visit cost?

Your insurance pays for one wellness visit each year, so there is no cost to you. To make sure you are not charged:

- Go to a **doctor who takes your insurance (in-network)**
- When you call to schedule your appointment, tell the person on the phone you want a **wellness visit**
- **Schedule an appointment for a day and time you can go**. Some clinics will charge you if you miss an appointment and do not notify them.



How Can I Improve My Wellness?

Being healthy is more than eating healthy foods, such as fruits and vegetables. It also includes staying in good physical shape. Follow these tips to improve your physical wellness.



Eat a healthy diet

- Eat lots of fruits and vegetables
 - Choose lean meats; such as turkey and white meat chicken
 - Drink mostly water
 - Avoid junk food, such as chips, cookies, and candy
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Exercise regularly

- Try to exercise 150 minutes a week or 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week
 - Start small (for example, do housework)
 - Try to add extra activity into your every day routine, such as parking further away from entrances or getting up and moving during commercial breaks
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Take care of your teeth

- Brush your teeth for 2 minutes, 2 times each day
 - Floss at least 1 time each day
 - See a dentist and have a dental cleaning at least 2 times a year
 - Avoid foods and drinks with sugar
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Get plenty of sleep

- Get at least 7 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night
 - Turn off or silence TV and other electronic devices before you go to sleep
 - Go to sleep at the same time each night
 - Avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol right before bed
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Avoid tobacco

- Do not smoke or use smokeless tobacco
 - If you need help quitting smoking or using tobacco, talk with your HR department and your doctor
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Manage your stress

- Find healthy ways to cope with stress, such as deep breathing, exercise, or writing down your thoughts
 - Make time to do things you enjoy
 - Talk with your doctor about a referral to see a mental health professional if you feel sad, tired, or overwhelmed all the time
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Have a wellness visit every year

- Have a wellness visit 1 time each year and talk to your primary care doctor about the best plan for you