



02/22/2021

Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) vs. Annual Physical Exam

This notification is to clarify when an Annual Wellness Visit (“AWV”) or Annual Physical Exam should be completed and the coverage for each service.

Annual Wellness Visit (AWV)

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (“CMS”) defines an AWV as “a visit to develop or update a personalized prevention plan and perform a Health Risk Assessment (“HRA”). Medicare offers an initial AWV or Initial Preventative Physical Exam (“IPPE”) for members only once within 12 months of being enrolled in Medicare Part B. After the initial visit Medicare covers a yearly AWV every 12 months at no cost to the member as long as the provider accepts assignment.

Annual Physical Exam

CMS defines an Annual Physical Exam as “an exam performed without relationship to treatment or diagnosis for a specific illness, symptom, complaint, or injury.” The exam includes a detailed medical/family history and the performance of a detailed head to toe assessment with hands-on examination of all the body systems. Other aspects of the Annual Physical Exam may include, as appropriate, follow-up orders for referral to other practitioners, lab tests, clinical screenings, EKG, etc. The Annual Physical Exam also emphasizes prevention, i.e., the recommendations for preventive screenings, vaccination(s), and counseling about healthy behaviors. Fee-for-service Medicare does not cover Annual Physical Exams.

Exceptions:

ATRIO’s PPO plans cover Annual Physical Exams as a supplemental benefit. For PPO members, the Annual Physical Exam is considered to be a preventative service and is covered at no cost to the member. Annual Physical Exams are not covered under ATRIO’s Special Needs Plans (SNP) but are instead covered as a Medicaid benefit.

Please see link below for any further questions regarding Annual Wellness Visits and Annual Physical Exams:

<https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/preventive-services/medicare-wellness-visits.html>

If you have any additional questions regarding the Annual Wellness Visit and Annual Physical Exam benefits, please contact ATRIO Customer Service at (877)672-8620, Monday through Friday, 8am to 8pm. TTY/TDD user's call 711.

ATRIO Health Plans

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