



# Your “Welcome to Medicare” Preventive Visit

Did you know that when you sign up for Medicare Part B you are entitled to a free first visit with your doctor? This visit is covered by Medicare, but it must be scheduled within the first 12 months of signing up for Part B. Read below to see what you can expect at your first visit. Make sure you confirm your doctor accepts Medicare and ask what to bring with you to make the most out of your time with the doctor.

## What to Expect—Your doctor will:

- Assess and record your and your family’s medical history. Make sure to tell the doctor about any current health conditions and the prescriptions you take.
- Check your blood pressure, vision, weight, and height. This is to get a baseline for your care.
- Make sure you are up-to-date with preventive screenings and services. Such services may include cancer screenings and shots.
- Order further tests, if you need them.
- Give you a plan or checklist for free screenings and preventive services that you will need. You may qualify for help with monitoring your heart health or smoking cessation resources.

## What to Bring—It is important that you bring:

- Any medical records, including immunization records. Even if your current doctor does the visit, bring as much information as you can. This will help to ensure nothing is overlooked.
- Family health history. Try to learn as much as you can about your family’s health history before your visit. Knowing your family’s health history will help you and your doctor better know what to watch for in the future. It will also help to determine what screenings you should get.
- Prescription drugs. Bring a list of all drugs you take. That includes prescription, over-the-counter, vitamins, and supplements. Be ready to tell the doctor how often you take them and why. If you do not want to make a list, just grab all of the bottles and bring them with you.

Source: CMS. Initial Preventive Physical Examination. Issued on January 21, 2020. Available at [https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/MPS\\_QRI\\_IPPE001a.pdf](https://www.cms.gov/Outreach-and-Education/Medicare-Learning-Network-MLN/MLNProducts/Downloads/MPS_QRI_IPPE001a.pdf).

## Patient voice—Derek F.

2020 is off to an exciting start! Last year, President Trump signed the Advancing American Kidney Health Executive Orders. This really put kidney disease front and center, setting new goals to increase kidney transplantation and have more patients use peritoneal and home hemodialysis. The orders also bring more awareness to kidney disease so it can be diagnosed earlier and slow/prevent people with kidney disease from getting to the point of kidney failure. With these new goals in place, Medicare (CMS) has put our HSAG ESRD Networks to work helping to improve patient care and our quality of life. The Network Patient Advisory Committees (PACs) are also ready to work on these important initiatives and support the ESRD Networks.



Increasing home dialysis use and adding more patients to the transplant waitlist are two of the focus areas for the ESRD Networks this year. I have several friends currently on home hemodialysis and they are feeling great! They tell me they do not have the feeling of getting washed out after treatment. They also enjoy a less restrictive diet and are can drink more fluids.

I was on peritoneal dialysis before getting a transplant and it allowed me to continue doing the things most important to me. In addition to focusing on transplant and home dialysis, the Networks will work to continue to reduce blood stream infections and the use of catheters for dialysis access, both of which put our lives in danger. There will also be a dedicated effort to get more patients back to school or work through vocational rehabilitation and Ticket to Work programs. These are exciting times for those of us with kidney disease. Stay strong and hopeful, kidney warriors! —Derek F., Transplant Patient

If you have questions about how to voice a concern or grievance, check out this helpful tool created BY patients FOR patients: <https://esrdnetworks.org/resources/toolkits/patient-toolkits/dialysis-patient-grievance-toolkit-1>. To file a grievance, please contact Network 7 at **1.800.826.3773**.



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