



## Routine Preventive Exams (Annual Physicals)

**PLEASE FAST 12 HOURS BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT. DRINK PLENTY OF WATER**

Many patients have health insurance plans that cover the entire cost of a yearly preventive health care visit, otherwise known as an annual physical.

**The purpose of this exam is prevention focused, not problem focused. This exam is to identify potential health problems in the early stages when they may be easier and less costly to treat.**

Preventive care (or well services) and promotion of healthy lifestyle, is the philosophy of Advanced Integrative Medicine's care. Here are some common questions pertaining to your annual physical:

### What is the purpose of a routine preventive exam (annual physical)?

The purpose of a routine preventive exam is to identify potential health problems in the early stages when they may be easier and less costly to treat. We all know that keeping a healthy weight and not smoking are enough to keep most of us in good health, with or without an annual exam. Still, no one can argue with keeping up a good relationship with your doctor through regular visits.

### What is the definition of a routine preventive exam?

The physical exam is an essential part of any doctor's visit and may include the following:

- Past medical, social and family history
- Complete physical exam and review of the body systems (vitals, general appearance, heart exam, lung exam, head and neck exam, abdominal exam, neurological exam, dermatological exam, extremities exam, male/female exam, laboratory tests, spirometry, ekg)
- Review of medications and administration of immunizations
- Counseling/anticipatory guidance/risk factor reduction interventions
- Review of age/gender appropriate screening tests

This exam is prevention focused and not problem focused. See below for more details.

### Why did I receive a bill after my routine preventive exam when it was supposed to be covered at 100%?

This exam is prevention-focused rather than problem-focused. That means it is designed to prevent minor issues from becoming serious. It is not meant to evaluate, diagnose or treat existing problems. This has changed due to insurance coverages and requirements NOT our office and our providers.

If you have an existing or new problem that needs to be addressed during your preventive office visit, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, skin rash, high cholesterol, headaches, etc., your provider then bills part of the exam as your annual preventive exam and part of the exam as treatment of your diagnosis. Again, due to changes in insurance procedures.



The portion of your visit related to the treatment of your diagnosis would apply toward your deductible and coinsurance, which means you may owe a balance. If your provider feels that the majority of the visit was spent with your other medical concerns, the entire visit may be considered a medical treatment visit and would not be billed as preventive. It's important to note that your healthcare provider has the right to code and bill as they see the service from his/her viewpoint.

If you have an existing problem that needs to be addressed during your preventive office visit, such as high blood pressure, diabetes, skin rash or high cholesterol, etc. your provider again, will bill part of the exam as your treatment of your existing diagnosis and part for your annual exam.

In addition, some lab tests may not fall under preventive care if they are preformed for specific problems or existing conditions that require ongoing oversight. For example, once you have been diagnosed with high cholesterol, a lipid panel is no longer considered screening. Instead, it is considered oversight and management of the disease.

Every insurance company has a list of lab services they consider to be screenings. If you need to know what these are, ask your insurance company before you have your labs drawn. Advance Integrative Medicine must bill all services according to the reason indicated by the provider. Please initial that you understand and agree to this      x  

### **Will my provider only address what my health plan covers for a routine preventive exam?**

Your provider does not know what your health plan benefits will cover, he/she sees many patients with various insurance plans throughout the day. You are responsible for knowing what services are covered under your health plan. Review your Summary of Benefits prior to your preventive exam or call Customer Service for your benefit information.

### **What can I do to make sure I receive 100% coverage of my routine preventive exam?**

Take the following steps to make sure your routine exam is billed appropriately:

- When you call to schedule your routine preventive exam, please make sure to use the terms: "routine preventive exam", "complete physical exam", or "annual physical", NOT "check up", which imply that you are checking up on a health problem.
- When you talk with your provider, let them know you are there for your routine preventive exam.
- If you bring up health problems (i.e. skin rash, high blood pressure) during your routine preventive exam, understand that you may be charged related to the treatment of that problem.
- Do not 'save up' all your health concerns for your routine preventive exam. If you do have a current chronic problem, you may need other diagnostic visits and services during the year.
- Please be aware with some insurance plans they are not covering your co pay and this will have to be paid at the time of service.

What if I feel there has been an error on my bill ( this does not include the red highlighted above)?  
Please call the billing office at 347-732-1357 to answer any of your questions.

I have reviewed and agree:

\_\_\_\_\_ (print name legibly) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date of birth)