

UNDERSTANDING YOUR VISIT

Preventive vs. Diagnostic Care



What's the Difference?

Healthcare visits can generally fall into two categories: preventive care and diagnostic/problem-focused care. Understanding the difference can help you know what to expect during your appointment and how services may be covered by your insurance plan.



Preventive Care

FOCUSED ON **STAYING HEALTHY** AND **PREVENTING** FUTURE HEALTH PROBLEMS

Preventive care is designed to identify health risks early, maintain wellness, and help prevent disease before symptoms develop.

- Annual physicals and wellness visits
- Review of medical, family, and social history
- Preventive screenings, such as:
 - Mammograms
 - Pap smears
 - Colon cancer screenings
 - Prostate cancer screenings
 - Bone density testing
- Nutrition and exercise
- Sleep habits
- Smoking and substance use
- Preventive health recommendations



Diagnostic Care

FOCUSED ON **EVALUATING** AND TREATING A **SPECIFIC CONCERN**

Diagnostic care occurs when you have a symptom, concern, condition, or ongoing health issue that requires evaluation, treatment, or management.

- Discussing new symptoms or concerns
- Evaluating illnesses or injuries
- Managing chronic conditions, such as:
 - Diabetes
 - High blood pressure
 - Asthma
 - High cholesterol
 - Thyroid disorders
- Medication changes or treatment adjustments
- Ordering tests, labs, imaging, or referrals
- Procedures or treatments performed during a visit





Can Preventive and Diagnostic Care Happen During the Same Visit?

Yes. Sometimes a patient's annual preventive visit also includes evaluation or management of additional concerns.

1

During your physical, you may discuss a new symptom.

2

Your provider may adjust medications for a chronic condition.

3

Additional testing or treatment may be needed based on your concerns.

When this occurs, the diagnostic portion of the visit may be billed separately from the preventive service according to your insurance plan's guidelines.