

Physical Exam & Office Visit

Dear Patient:

Our goal is to provide you with the best medical care possible. Annual physical exams give us a chance to address your overall physical and emotional health. The **preventative** care we provide during a physical also includes an *assessment of dietary and exercise habits, review of vaccinations, discussion of screening tests, lifestyle behaviors, etc.* We often look in on chronic stable problems such as high blood pressure, arthritis, and/or other ongoing medical conditions, though we do not always charge for that, depending on the degree of difficulty or amount of time spent.

Regular office visits differ from the **preventative** and wellness care provided at a physical because they address *other new ongoing or poorly controlled medical problems*. These types of problems need to be addressed in an appointment separate from a **preventative** or physical exam. If, however, we adequately cover required preventative and wellness care during the physical, sometimes we will have time to address other issues. You OR your doctor may identify an issue that may need to be addressed during a physical, **separate from preventative care**.

We would like to attempt to correct a misperception that is occurring at times regarding "double charges". Our goal is to address as much as we can in a quality manner during visits. Please note that the insurance companies do allow providers to address additional complaints beyond a physical examination, if there is time. If additional problems are found or addressed, an additional office evaluation code will be generated in addition to a preventative physical examination code. We are required to submit billing in this fashion, if we address care beyond preventative care at the physical examination. *This essentially generates an extra charge to the insurance company for issues addressed beyond preventative care, which in turn may require you to pay additional copay, coinsurance or deductible charges.*

The coding rules set by the health care industry, specifically state, *"If an abnormality is encountered or a pre-existing problem is addressed in the process of performing this preventative medicine evaluation service, then the appropriate visit code should also be reported."* We can actually fail an audit if we violate these rules.

You have entrusted us with your medical care. Please also trust that we practice the highest integrity with our billing practices. Our goal is to provide excellent care and take appropriate time doing it. Please speak with your provider if you have any questions regarding the charges from your preventative care/physical today.

Sincerely,

Your Providers at Southern Family Medicine

I have read the Physical Exam and Office Visit letter and understand that I may be billed an additional charge from my insurance company. This charge may be a copay, coinsurance or deductible and I will be responsible for payment of this additional charge.

Patient Name

Date

Patient or Guardian Signature

LET US KNOW IF YOU WOULD LIKE A COPY