



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

# ASK SHIP

## YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

**Q: I have struggled over the years with depression. I just got on Medicare. Does it cover mental health services?**

**A:** Mental health is very important, and preventive care can help identify patients who are at risk for mental health problems to get them treatment sooner.

Medicare Part B fully covers many preventive services, including screenings to assess your risk for certain mental health conditions. Medicare 100% covers the following preventive benefits:

### **Annual depression screening**

All people with Medicare can get one free evaluation for depression per year as long as the doctor accepts Medicare assignment.

### **Alcohol misuse screening**

Some people with mental health problems may struggle with alcohol or drug abuse. Medicare covers one alcohol misuse screening per year. All Medicare enrollees who are not

alcohol-dependent may qualify. If you're alcohol-dependent, you may qualify for counseling

### **'Welcome to Medicare' visit**

This introductory preventive visit includes a review of your risk for depression. You'll need to have the exam within the first year of getting Medicare.

### **'Wellness' visit**

During this annual visit, your doctor will evaluate your physical and mental health, and you'll have the opportunity to bring up any mental health concerns with your physician. Your doctor may make recommendations based on your risk factors or refer you for additional treatment.

After you meet your Medicare Part B deductible, you pay 20% of the Medicare-approved amount for outpatient treatment of a condition.

Medicare covers counseling services,

diagnostic assessments including, but not limited to:

- Psychiatric evaluation and diagnostic tests
- Individual therapy
- Group therapy
- Family counseling (if the goal of therapy is to help your condition)
- Alcohol abuse counseling (up to four sessions)

If you receive inpatient mental health services, Medicare Part A helps pay. These services can be either in a general hospital or in a psychiatric hospital that only cares for people with mental health conditions. There's a cap on Medicare coverage for inpatient services if you stay at a psychiatric hospital.

If you or someone you know has questions about mental health coverage by Medicare or any other Medicare questions, call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD or online at [www.medicare.in.gov](http://www.medicare.in.gov). You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.