

PARTNERING WITH A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

WHAT IS A PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER?

A Primary Care Provider (PCP) is a medical doctor who is trained to prevent, diagnose and treat illness or injuries. They will be involved in your long-term care and will keep you on the path to staying healthy and creating a plan for your future health.

If everyone saw a primary care provider, the U.S. would save an estimated

\$67B
every year.

HOW YOU BENEFIT:

Think of your health-care providers as a team. Your PCP acts as a coach that coordinates your health throughout your life. They'll guide you through ways to stay healthy, prevent diseases and handle part of the responsibility for your mental and physical wellbeing. You may work with a specialist as well, but in most cases, a primary care provider oversees your care from the big picture perspective and ensures nothing is overlooked.

Adults with primary care were significantly more likely to fill more prescriptions and to have a routine preventive visit in the past year.



They were also significantly more likely to receive more high-value care such as cancer screenings, including colorectal cancer screening and mammography.



Access to primary care helps keep people out of emergency rooms, where care costs are at least

4x

as much as other outpatient care.

TYPES OF PCPS:

Medical terms can be confusing. Here is a quick look at the different types of Primary Care Providers.

- Family practitioners: see patients of all ages or an entire family
- Pediatricians: specific to children and teenagers from birth to age 18
- Internists: specific to 18 years and older
- Geriatricians: specific to older people
- Advanced Practice Providers: typically a Physician Assistant or Nurse Practitioner who can work in any of the above fields

BENEFITS OF A PCP CHECKUP:

- Detect problems early on and prevent issues or concerns from progressing
- Ensure appropriate screenings and exams are completed timely
- Treat short term issues directly
- Refer to a specialist for more advanced care
- Complete care over the course of your lifetime
- Lower medical costs (33% lower overall health-care costs, 19% lower odds of premature death) than those who only see specialists

WHAT TO EXPECT IN AN ANNUAL VISIT

Your Primary Care Provider is focused on getting to know you, your health history and your goals. Here is a quick look at what to expect and how to prepare. You will work with your primary care provider to assess your health and establish personal health goals. Your open and honest feedback will help your PCP provide the highest level of care. Remember, they are your trusted advocate and are focused on helping you.

BEFORE (WHAT TO KNOW/BRING)

- Know your family history of medical conditions
- Know your physical and mental health conditions (or make a list)
- Know where the office is and your transportation ahead of time
- Bring your insurance card and photo ID
- Bring a list of your current medications and questions to ask your PCP

DURING

During your visit, your PCP office may:

- Check your vitals (height, weight, blood pressure)
- Perform a physical exam (listen to your heart and lungs)

Have a conversation to discuss your:

- Medical history
- Family history
- Mood
- Health changes or concerns
- Medications
- Concerns around health inequities like food, housing, transportation or financial needs
- Alcohol, drug and/or tobacco use

AFTER

If necessary, your PCP will:

- Arrange for you to meet with a specialist or schedule a follow up appointment
- Order appropriate follow-up tests or exams

You can help by:

- Following the plan that was created with your PCP
- Filling any medications post-visit
- Alerting your PCP of changes, issues or concerns

Find a primary care provider that is right for you at Methodist Health System or Nebraska Medicine. Visit [NebraskaHealthNetwork.com/primarycare](https://www.NebraskaHealthNetwork.com/primarycare).

