

## INSURANCE

# How to Be A Better Medicare Patient

NewsUSA

(NU) - The doctor is in. But are you prepared to make the most of your appointment?

One of the most important steps you can take to invest in your long-term health is to develop a strong relationship with your primary-care physician. Yet you might not realize that there are actions you can take to be a better patient that will, in turn, help you get the most out of that doctor-and-patient relationship.

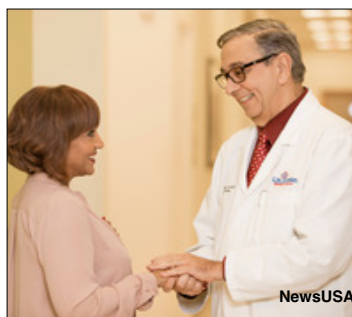
“Start with scheduling an annual checkup,” says Donna M. Perisee, M.D., Ph.D. of Humana, a leading health-and-well-being company. “This is how your doctor gets to know you and your unique medical history. From there you can collaborate on a health plan that includes preventive care as well as a treatment plan.”

If you have Medicare, that annual “wellness” visit is generally covered in full. A thorough exam allows your primary-care physician to pick up on a variety of illnesses and can catch potentially serious conditions early on. Finding, diagnosing and treating problems early may improve your chance of living a healthier, longer life.

Your doctor and the practice’s staff may also be able to assist with important services such as creating nutrition and exercise goals, as well as scheduling preventive services such as flu shots and cancer screenings.

To maximize every visit with your physician, Humana’s Dr. Perisee recommends that you:

- Always bring all of your medicines to your office visits for review. You can use a clear, zipper-locked bag to keep them together.



**Saleh Hernandez-Cassis, MD, greets Ignacia Molina, a patient at CAC-Florida Medical Center in Kendall, Fla.**

- Think about and write down any medical concerns you have, including how long you have been experiencing them. Please be as complete as you can.

- Mark down dates or bring a calendar to show the frequency of problems, such as headaches, stomach, muscle or joint pain problems.

- Try to arrive for each office visit 10 minutes before to get checked in and update any necessary paperwork.

- Inform your primary-care doctor of any labs or medical tests from other doctor’s visits to allow your primary-care doctor to better coordinate your care.

Investing in your relationship with your primary-care physician can also ensure that you get the most from your 2018 Medicare plan. Your physician can help you complete all your covered annual screenings and coordinate any specialist visits you may need.

The doctor is in. Are you ready?