

Outpatient Center Visit vs. Physician Office Visit

Is There a Difference? How Does it Affect Me?

Inova has established outpatient centers that are off-site from the hospital. This allows greater convenience for patients. Even though the outpatient center is not on the hospital campus, it is still considered to be a part of the hospital and is considered an outpatient department of the hospital. For your insurance company's purposes, your appointment is categorized as an **"outpatient center visit,"** not a **"physician office visit."**

Some of your physicians may have a "private practice" — that is, it is owned by an individual physician or a group of physicians. Visits to private practices are considered to be office visits.

Inova Health System is a not-for-profit healthcare system based in Northern Virginia that consists of hospitals and other health services, including emergency- and urgent-care centers, home care, nursing homes, mental health and blood donor services, and wellness classes. Governed by a voluntary board of community members, Inova's mission is to improve the health of the diverse community it serves through excellence in patient care, education and research. Inova provides a healthy environment for its patients, families, visitors, staff and physicians by prohibiting tobacco use on its campuses.

inova.org



Inova
Health System

**Billing Questions:
Outpatient Center Visit
vs. Physician Office Visit**



Q. The outpatient center is in a medical office building with many other physician offices. How can I tell the difference between a physician's office and a hospital-based outpatient center?

- Most outpatient centers that display the Inova Health System logo are an outpatient department of the hospital (exceptions include Inova's Urgent Care centers).



- Terms such as outpatient, outpatient center, hospital-based and employed physician may be used in an outpatient center, such as the center with which you have scheduled your appointment.

Q. Does being seen in an outpatient center affect my co-pay?

- Many insurance carriers process outpatient center visits differently than they process physician office visits.
- You may be responsible for a percentage of the bill or a higher specialist co-pay, instead of the co-pay you usually pay at your physician's office.
- The amount of co-pay or deductible for each type of visit may be printed on your insurance card. You may also want to check with your health insurer's Member Services Department. Their telephone number should be listed on the back of your insurance card.

Q. I don't have a deductible for "office visits." Why will my charges be applied to my deductible?

- The center you're visiting is an outpatient department of the hospital. Your insurance carrier may process your claim as a hospital-based outpatient visit instead of a physician office visit.
- Your policy may include a deductible for hospital-based outpatient services. When your deductible is met, your insurance should begin payment based on your specific plan.

Q. I was told that I may receive two separate bills. Why?

- When you are seen at your physician's office, the bill you are given for that service covers both the physician's professional services, and the costs involved in running the office which include rent, staff salaries and the cost of any equipment.
- When our physician sees you at a hospital-based outpatient center, the physician's professional service fees are billed separately from the costs to run the outpatient center. These two bills are called the Inova Facility Outpatient Center Charge (right) and the Physician's Professional Service Fee (bottom).

Q. My physician gave me a referral. Why do I need an authorization?

- For hospital-based outpatient services, some insurance companies require a pre-authorization instead of a referral. Physician offices generally require referrals for their office visits. It may not be clear to your physician that the specialist they want you to see is hospital-based, and that a pre-authorization instead of a referral is required for the visit. You may want to check with your health insurer's Member Services Department. Their telephone number should be listed on the back of your insurance card.

**Inova Bill for Outpatient Center Charge
Questions: 703-321-2999**

INNOVA HEALTH SYSTEM
2990 TELESTAR CT.
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22042

IF PAYING BY CREDIT CARD OR MASTERCARD, FILL OUT BELOW

STATEMENT DATE: 07/15/2008
STATEMENT DATE: 06/07/2008

PAY THIS AMOUNT: \$37.50
SHOW AMOUNT PAID HERE: \$

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN THIS PORTION WITH YOUR PAYMENT
MAKE CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO:
INOVA FAIRFAX HOSPITAL
P.O. BOX 37019
BALTIMORE, MD 21297-3019

YOUR STATEMENT

Dear John Q. Patient,
Thank you for choosing Inova Fairfax Hospital for your health care services. We have billed and received payment from your insurance carrier. If you have any questions about your insurance payments, you should contact your insurance companies.

SUMMARY OF CHARGES

Statement Date	June 7, 2008
Date(s) of Service	05/04/2008
Patient Name	John Q. Patient
Account Number	0123-4567-89
Total Charges	\$ 178.00
Amount Billed to Primary Insurance	\$ 178.00
Primary Insurance Payments Received	\$ 140.50
Amount Billed to Secondary Insurance	\$ 0.00
Secondary Insurance Payments Received	\$ 0.00
Other Adjustments	0.00
Patient Payments	0.00
Patient Services Charges	0.00

ACCOUNT SUMMARY

INNOVA OUTPATIENT CENTER
PO BOX 8696
VA BEACH, VA 23450-7327

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

(800) 477-5240
GET YOUR FLU SHOT

JOHN Q. PATIENT
1234 MAIN STREET
ANYTOWN, USA 12345-0000

INNOVA OUTPATIENT CENTER
PO BOX 8696
VA BEACH, VA 23450-7327

**Bill for Physician's
Professional Service Fee
Questions: 800-477-5240**

INNOVA OUTPATIENT CENTER
PO BOX 8696
VA BEACH, VA 23450-7327

IF PAYING BY MASTERCARD OR VISA, FILL OUT BELOW

STATEMENT DATE: 06/03/2008
STATEMENT DATE: 06/03/2008

PAY THIS AMOUNT: \$282.00
SHOW AMOUNT PAID HERE: \$

PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN TOP PORTION WITH YOUR PAYMENT

STATEMENT

INNOVA OUTPATIENT CENTER 3300 GALLOWS ROAD, FALLS CHURCH VA 22042

STATEMENT DATE	PATIENT NAME	ACCOUNT NUMBER	REFER DR. PLACE OF SERVICE	INNOVA PHYSICIAN OUTPATIENT CLINIC
06/03/2008	JOHN Q. PATIENT	KT9999999999	INOVA PHYSICIAN, MD	
DATE	UNITS	DESCRIPTION	CHARGES	PAYMENTS
05/04/2008	1	99215 OFFICE VISIT	282.00	0.00