

Direct Primary Care (DPC) is a Better Approach to Healthcare

A Patient's Perspective

Direct Primary Care (DPC) is a better approach to healthcare and a strategy that personalizes and simplifies the doctor-patient relationship. Insurance is removed from the equation, and as a result, doctors manage smaller caseloads and provide a more personalized care experience that is not restricted by limited appointment time and cumbersome insurance regulations. The practice charges a flat monthly fee, covering most primary care services, including check-ups, preventive care, chronic disease management, and minor urgent care needs.

My personal experience with the DPC model of care has led me to believe that it is superior to insurance-regulated care but also works well when combined with a traditional healthcare plan.

Advantages of Direct Primary Care

1. **Affordable and Predictable Costs**



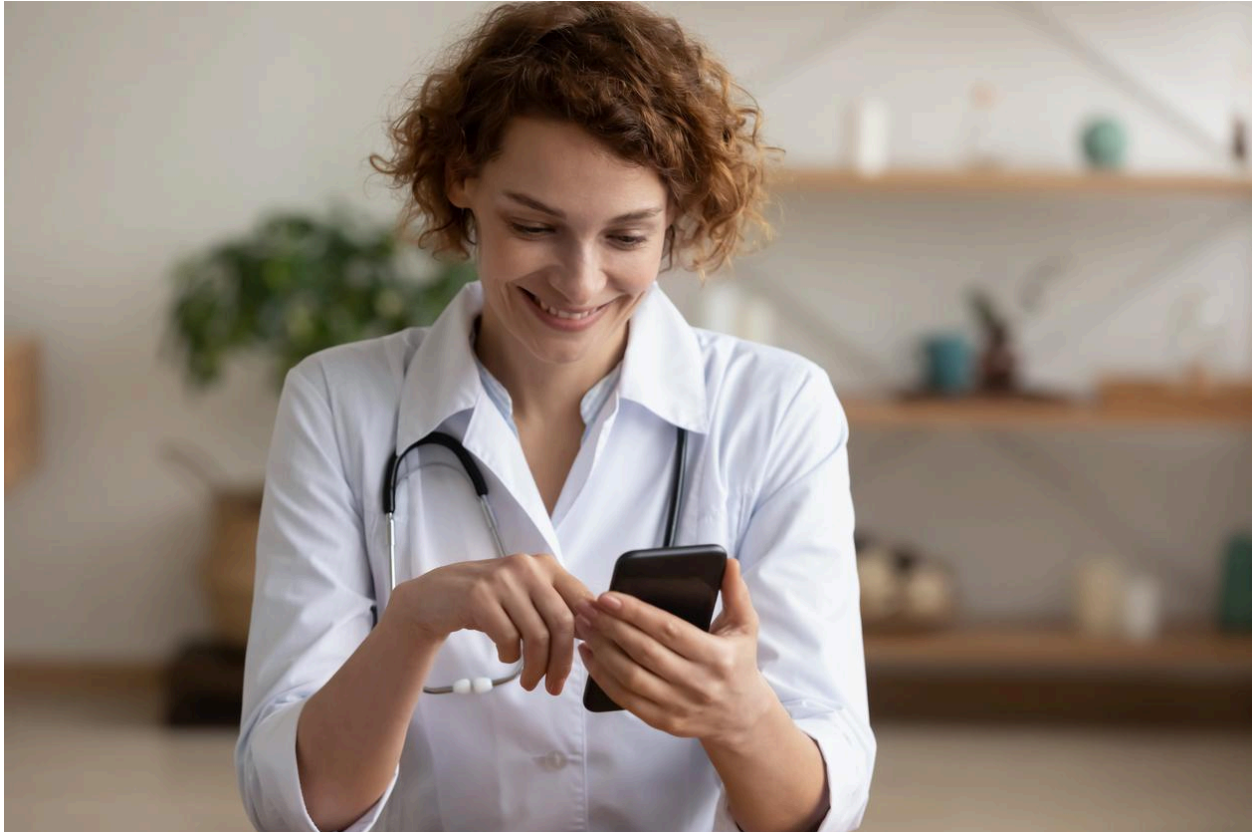
The DPC practice I am a member of (and all DPC practices) operates on a fixed monthly membership fee. There are no copays when I schedule a visit with my doctor, and finances never cause me to self-restrict my access to care when needed. This empowers me to establish and maintain a relationship with my doctor, who uses her medical expertise to work with me as I establish healthcare goals and maintain my health. Surprise medical bills, co-pays, and deductibles are removed from the equation, making healthcare costs predictable and manageable.

2. Longer, More Personalized Appointments



DPC physicians maintain smaller caseloads. As a result, they spend more time with each patient. When I visit my provider, the atmosphere is casual and comfortable. She knows me by name, is familiar with my medical record, and takes the time to understand my reason for needing care. I have time to ask questions and seek clarification. The relationship feels friendly, comfortable and unencumbered by a ticking clock. As a result, my doctor listens, understands my concerns, creates tailored treatment plans, and follows up appropriately.

3. Improved Access to Your Doctor



As a DPC patient, I have the time and freedom to ask questions and access care. I can schedule a visit, reach my doctor by phone, text my provider and her team, send an email, or use a secure portal. This direct communication reduces unnecessary office visits and enhances continuity of care. Emergency care for the flu or a UTI is often easily managed by phone. Follow-up questions are asked and answered via secure text or email. There's a simplicity to this that is difficult to describe to the layperson who has only experienced a more traditional healthcare model. This simplicity improves care, reduces costs, and helps providers build stronger patient bonds.

Timely communication also makes using my traditional healthcare plan easier when necessary. An example of this is when I've needed a pre-authorization for a medication. Timely communication from my doctor and her medical team ensured that my insurance provider promptly received the forms and documentation they needed. When they had questions, I could communicate them with my provider, and she responded promptly. A process that could have taken weeks with a traditional healthcare provider was finalized within days. As a result, my medications were covered with little delay and no missed dosages.

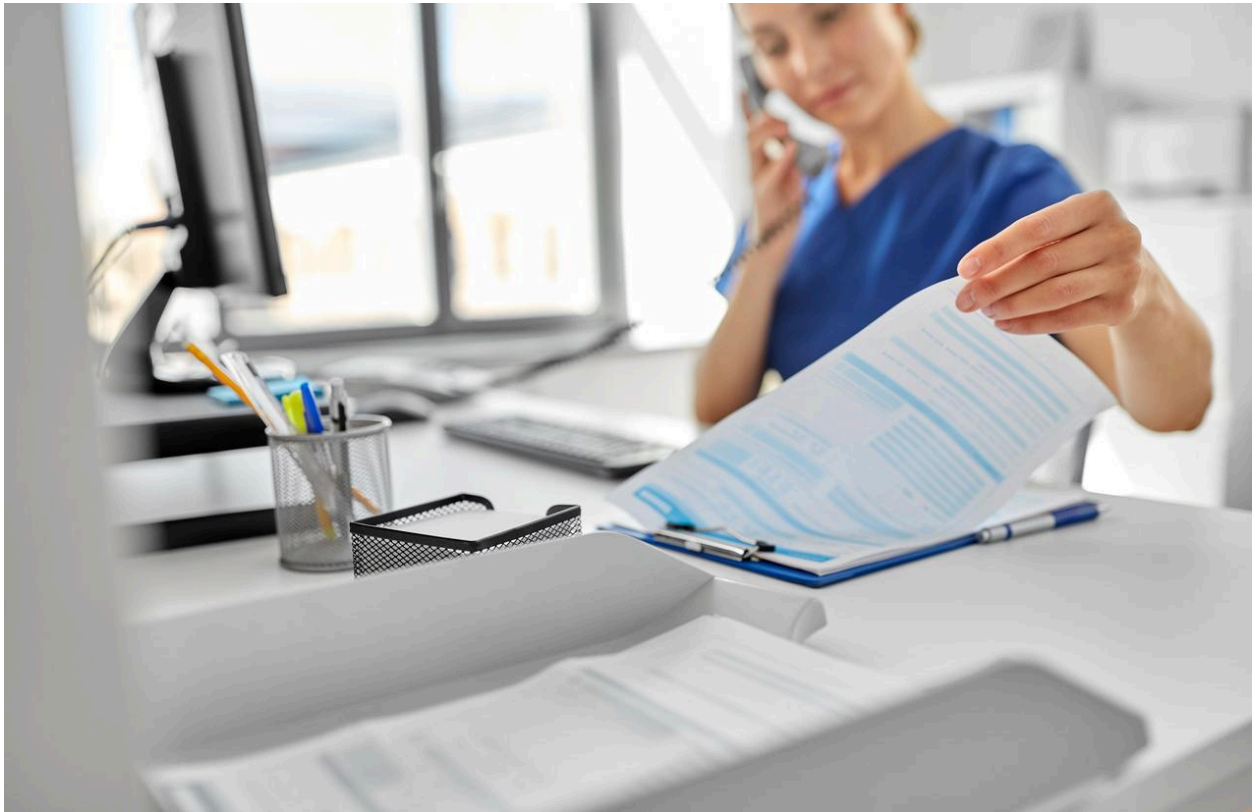
4. **Same-Day or Next-Day Appointments**



Anyone with flu symptoms or a UTI overnight knows how valuable a same-day or next-day appointment is. However, those same individuals also know how cumbersome securing one with a traditional provider can be. Conditions like these often result in a visit to the nearest urgent care clinic and a 10-minute appointment with a provider you do not have a relationship with. While the care is valued, the experience is not always optimal.

My experience with a DPC provider has been different. Since my physician manages fewer patients, she can offer quicker appointment access. I have reaped the benefits of this for urgent but non-emergency medical issues. The practice provided timely care without long wait times. Fast access to care helps me find relief from symptoms sooner and reduces the risks associated with a lingering health condition.

5. No Insurance Hassles



By bypassing insurance billing, DPC physicians are less encumbered by administrative tasks and spend more time on patient care. This streamlined approach reduces paperwork and bureaucratic delays for services and medications.

The DPC practice I belong to can also pass certain savings on to patients. Rather than billing insurance for labwork and paying high out-of-pocket deductibles and copays, I pay the established wholesale rate through my DPC provider. This results in significant cost savings for my family and eliminates the possibility of discrepancies due to coding errors or other administrative blunders.

6. Emphasis on Preventive Care



An article published on [Very Well Health](#) states, “The cost of healthcare—including the perceived costs of healthcare—drives many people away from the treatment or preventive care they may desperately need.” Traditional healthcare contributes to this with high deductibles, copays, and out-of-network costs. As a result, doctors frequently do not see patients until a problem presents. They are then forced to focus more on solving problems than preventing them.

With a focus on long-term health, DPC doctors prioritize preventive care through routine screenings, wellness check-ups, and personalized lifestyle recommendations, leading to better overall health outcomes. My DPC provider schedules follow-ups related to my current medications, any health care concerns, and my progress as frequently as every three months. Labs are collected every six months. While the frequency of visits varies from patient to patient, the ability to focus on maintaining health and preventing more serious health concerns does not. Improved preventative care is a significant advantage of DPC.

7. Better Chronic Disease Management



Alongside preventative care, DPC doctors also have a significant advantage in disease management. Patients with conditions like high cholesterol, obesity, diabetes, hypertension, or gout benefit from consistent follow-ups and personalized care plans without the limitations imposed by insurance-driven healthcare.

My DPC doctor empowers me to take control of my health. By visiting her more often, she helps me to keep a better handle on any health conditions and remain aware of diseases I am more susceptible to due to environmental or genetic factors. Through frequent communication, she can better recognize potential signs that need further diagnosis and schedule prompt in-person or virtual visits so we can diagnose concerns and address them quickly.

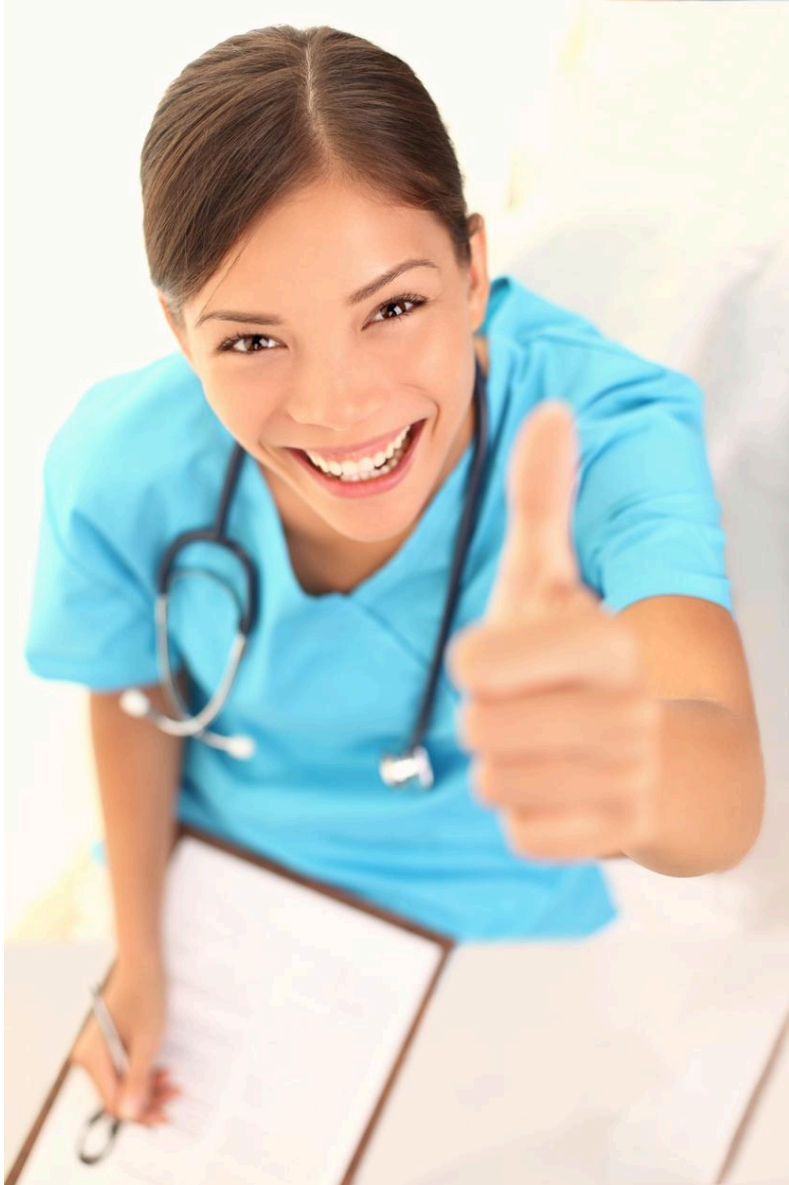
8. Stronger Doctor-Patient Relationship



I have a fantastic relationship with my doctor and enjoy seeing her. How many people can say that? This relationship directly results from the DPC model, which fosters more meaningful connections.

The relaxed atmosphere, increased time per visit, and better accessibility empower my doctor to genuinely get to know patients for more than just their healthcare needs. The result is enhanced patient-centered care.

9. **Greater Physician Satisfaction**



While I cannot speak directly for my doctor, she genuinely seems happy with her job. The same is true of everyone I've encountered at the practice I belong to.

A recent [American Academy of Family Physicians \(AAFP\) survey](#) supports this. Three hundred seventy-four members participated in the survey. Almost all of the respondents (94%) who were already in a DPC model reported satisfaction with their practice, while about half (57%) of those who weren't in a DPC model reported satisfaction. Burnout was also far less frequently reported by those practicing DPC (12%) than those not practicing DPC (46%). Physicians practicing in a DPC model often report higher job satisfaction, as their primary focus is on patient care. Administrative and insurance constraints and paperwork less encumber them. Happier doctors lead to less burnout, improved attention span, and better patient experiences.

Direct Primary Care is revolutionizing healthcare, and from a patient's perspective, it is a model that more individuals and businesses should consider. It makes sense to make healthcare more accessible, affordable, and patient-centered. Patients receive high-quality, more personalized, and continuous care without the unpredictability of bills, regulations and paperwork imposed by traditional insurance plans.

Consider DPC if you are looking for better chronic disease management, preventive care, or an improved doctor-patient relationship.