



The Importance of Preventive Care

The ultimate form of self-care is preventive care. Preventive care means giving your health priority, so you can identify any risks for illness and disease. Regular checkups focus on recommended screening tests, vaccinations, as well as education and counseling. Preventive care is key to early identification of any issues so that treatment and lifestyle modifications can be started early and be most effective.



Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

A one-time ultrasound screening for abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is recommended by the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) for men who have a history of smoking.



Blood Pressure Checks

Blood pressure should be checked at each health care visit or at least once per year if blood pressure is less than 120/80 mm Hg. Monitoring will be done more often if you have hypertension.



Breast Cancer Screening

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends all women to have yearly mammograms starting at age 45 and then every other year beginning at 55.



Bone Density

The USPSTF recommends screening for osteoporosis to prevent bone fractures in women age 65 years or older and women younger than 65 years who have one or more risk factors. Risk factors for osteoporosis include smoking, drinking more than two standard alcoholic drinks per day, a diet low in calcium and vitamin D, certain medications, and a family history of osteoporosis.



Cholesterol

The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends a lipid profile be checked every 4-6 years starting at age 20. After age 40, your healthcare provider will perform a 10-year cardiovascular risk assessment to determine if you are at risk for heart disease or stroke.



Colon Cancer Screening

Screening for colon cancer should begin at age 45 and earlier if you have a family history of colon cancer. Several types of tests can be used and discussed with your provider.



Diabetes

The American Diabetes Association (ADA) recommends testing beginning at 45 years old and earlier if overweight or obese with one or more risk factors for heart disease. If normal, glucose tests are then recommended every 3 years.



Lung Cancer

A low-dose CT scan of the lungs yearly for those ages 55-80 who have a 30-pack year history and currently smoke or have quit within the last 15 years.



Prostate Cancer

For men at low to average risk for prostate cancer, the American Urological Association (URA) recommends starting screening between 45 and 55 years old and rescreening every 2 to 4 years until age 69. Men at high risk for prostate cancer include African American men and men with a first-degree relative (father or brother) who have been diagnosed.



Routine Vaccines

- Get seasonal flu vaccine every year.
- Every adult should have the Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) vaccine once if not received as an adolescent and then a Td booster shot every 10 years.
- Shingles vaccine is recommended for healthy adults over 50 years old.
- Pneumococcal vaccines can protect against meningitis and pneumonia and is suggested for adults 65 years or older and earlier for those with certain health conditions.