

Routine Healthcare for Men

Routine checkups can find health problems early and help prevent more serious problems. How often you have checkups and tests depends on your age, your health problems, and your family health history. Be sure to talk to your healthcare provider about how often you should have a physical exam and how often you need screening tests.

If you are having any symptoms that you think may mean a problem, don't wait for your next regular checkup to see your healthcare provider. Get it taken care of right away.

What needs to be checked and how often?

If you are feeling healthy and not having any symptoms of illness, the recommended health checks include:

- ✓ **Weight:** At least once a year, preferably each time you visit your provider.
- ✓ **Blood pressure measurement:** At least once a year for all men.
- ✓ **Cholesterol test.** At least every 5 years. You will need more frequent testing if you have abnormal results, a family history of high cholesterol, or a health problem such as diabetes or heart problem.
- ✓ **Blood sugar test for type 2 diabetes:** At least once a year if your blood pressure, blood lipids (cholesterol), or weight is high or you have a family history of type 2 diabetes
- ✓ **Colon and rectal cancer screening:** You should have 1 of these 3 methods of screening if you are 50 to 75 years old and have an average risk of colon cancer:
 - A fecal occult blood test once a year to check for hidden blood in your bowel movements.
 - A sigmoidoscopy exam every 5 years and fecal occult blood testing at least every 3 years between the 5-year exams.
 - A colonoscopy every 10 years.

You may need to start colorectal cancer screening earlier or be tested more often if you have a higher risk of colon cancer. Talk to your healthcare provider about this.

- ✓ **Prostate cancer tests:** The current recommendation is that you do not need routine screening if you don't have a high risk for prostate cancer. Talk with your healthcare provider about the pros and cons of the PSA test for you and decide together if you should be screened.
- ✓ **Gonorrhea and syphilis tests:** You may need to be tested for these infections if you are at high risk for these sexually transmitted infections (STIs)—for example, you have a history of STIs, a new sex partner, or more than 1 sex partner.

- ✓ **HIV test for the AIDS virus:** If you are 15 to 65 years old your healthcare provider may recommend that you be tested for HIV. Younger teens and older adults who are at increased risk should also be screened.
- ✓ **Tuberculosis (TB) test:** Every year if you have a high risk of TB; for example, because:
 - You are a healthcare worker, drug user, or immigrant.
 - You have diabetes, HIV, or another condition that weakens your immune system.
 - You have close contact with someone infected with TB.
- ✓ **Hearing test:** If you are 65 or older.
- ✓ **Eye exam:** Everyone should have regular eye exams. If you don't have problems with your vision or other eye symptoms, you should have an eye exam:
 - At least once during your 20s, and twice during your 30s.
 - Every 2 to 4 years if you are age 41 to 64.
 - Every 1 to 2 years if you are age 65 or older.
- ✓ **Skin:** Every year, if you have any moles or abnormal areas of skin.
- ✓ **Mouth:** Every year for dental problems and for sores of the gums, especially if you smoke, chew tobacco, wear dentures, or have a medical condition such as diabetes or heart disease that can be made worse by problems with your teeth or gums.

You may need other tests as well. You and your healthcare provider need to talk about what is right for you based on your symptoms and your personal and family medical history.

What shots do I need?

Get the shots your healthcare provider recommends for you. They may include vaccines against:

- ✓ Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis
- ✓ Flu
- ✓ HPV (human papillomavirus) through age 26
- ✓ Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)
- ✓ Hepatitis A
- ✓ Hepatitis B
- ✓ Pneumococcal disease
- ✓ Chickenpox
- ✓ Shingles

What else can I do to stay healthy?

- **Ask about testicular self-exams.** Ask your healthcare provider about doing testicular self-exams. These exams help you be more familiar with your body. They could help you notice changes that need to be checked for testicular cancer.
- **Follow a healthy lifestyle.** Eat a healthy diet. Try to keep a healthy weight. If you are overweight, lose weight. Stay fit with the right kind of exercise for you. Try to get at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night. Learn to manage stress. Try deep breathing exercises when you feel stressed. If you smoke, try to quit. Talk to your healthcare provider about ways to quit smoking. If you want to drink alcohol, ask your healthcare provider how much is safe for you to drink.
- **Take care of your teeth.** Visit your dentist regularly. Brush your teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day. Also floss your teeth daily. Healthy gums help prevent heart disease.
- **Practice safe sex.** Use latex or polyurethane condoms during foreplay and every time you have vaginal, oral, or anal sex. Have just 1 sexual partner who is not having sex with anyone else.
- Keep all appointments for provider visits or tests.
- Contact your healthcare provider if you have new or worsening symptoms.

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