



## Your Preventive Care

### Take an easy step towards good health

Your number one way to help yourself and your family stay healthy is with preventive care. When combined with healthy eating and exercise, vaccines and early detection are your key to a long and healthy life.

### How often should you get screened?

A lot of factors can come into play when figuring out how often you should be getting certain preventive exams. Age, health status and family history are some of the things to consider when scheduling exams. It's important to talk to your doctor about your screening schedule.

### Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) adult preventive care guidelines

- **Blood pressure.** It's important to get tested for high blood pressure annually, or as needed beginning at age 18. High blood pressure is greater than 140/90.
- **Cholesterol.** It's recommended that men aged 35 and older get checked for high cholesterol levels every five years. Men and women at high risk who are 20 and older should also be screened. Increased cholesterol levels can lead to a higher risk factor for coronary heart disease.

- **Colorectal cancer screening.** Beginning at the age of 50, you should get screened to check for early signs of colon cancer. The CDC recommends getting a sigmoidoscopy every five years (or as needed) or a colonoscopy every ten years (or as needed).
- **Diabetes.** If you're at low risk for diabetes, you should take a blood sugar (glucose) exam every three years. If you're at high risk, then it should be taken annually. If you have symptoms of diabetes, it's important to see a doctor right away.

### Additional preventive care

- **Oral health.** Experts recommend brushing your teeth twice a day, and replacing your toothbrush every three to four months. It's also important to visit your dentist regularly for cleanings and check-ups.
- **Eye health.** Get an eye exam every one to two years, or as recommended. Already wear glasses or contacts? No worries, this just means more frequent check-ups. Regular eye exams are important to your health. This is especially true if you have diabetes, as you're at greater risk for eye complications.

## Adults need vaccines, too

Even as an adult, you may still need vaccines to stay healthy. An annual flu shot can prevent influenza. Beginning at age 19, and every ten years after, you should get the Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis vaccine. At age 60, get a single dose of the shingles vaccine. Check with your doctor about other recommended vaccines.



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*For more information about preventive care, you can visit the website for the United States Department of Health and Human Services at: <http://healthfinder.gov/myhealthfinder>.*