

Keeping a pulse on your health



Preventive screening tests are among the most important things you can do to protect your health. Screenings can help find diseases early, when they may be easiest to treat and before you have symptoms. Talk to your doctor about whether—and when—you should get these common screening tests based on your age, health history and other personal risk factors. [Here are some common screenings...](#)



Screening



Purpose of Test



What You Should Know

Blood Pressure

Checking for elevated blood pressure at every health care visit can help you find out if your blood pressure is out of the target range.

Over the long term, high blood pressure raises your risk of heart attack, stroke, kidney disease and dementia.

Breast Cancer Screening (Mammogram)

A low-dose X-ray of the breasts. May detect early breast cancer and some conditions that can lead to breast cancer.

Talk to your doctor about when it's best to get screened, based on your age, personal and family history, genetics and other risk factors.

Cervical Cancer Screening (Pap Smear) with/without HPV testing

This test collects cells from the cervix to look for changes and/or the human papillomavirus (HPV, the most common STD infection) that may lead to cervical cancer.

Your doctor can tell you when to start getting Pap smears, how often you should have them, and if you should have HPV testing.

Cholesterol

This test checks the levels of lipid (fatty particles) in your blood.

Check every 4-6 years if you don't already have high levels. Combined with other risks, elevated levels raise the risk of heart disease and stroke.

Colon Cancer Screening (Colonoscopy)

A thin lighted scope helps find polyps in the colon that may become cancerous. If polyps are removed, cancer can be prevented.

There are other screening tests available besides colonoscopy. Talk to your doctor about which test is best for you.



Screening



Purpose of Test



What You Should Know

Dental Exam

The exam and any associated X-rays screen for cavities, gum disease, oral cancer, etc. A twice-a-year cleaning is needed to maintain oral health.

Most dental insurance covers the cost of two visits per year to an in-network doctor. Check with your insurance company to review your benefits.

Diabetes Screening

Diabetes screening can be either fasting glucose or HbA1c.

High levels may indicate diabetes or prediabetes; some people may need this checked more often. A longer test, called a glucose tolerance test, is sometimes needed.

Osteoporosis Screening

A bone density test that can reveal early signs of bone loss and assess your risk for osteoporosis.

Talk to your doctor about when you should be screened based on risk factors, and personal and family health history.

Physical Exam

Allows you and your doctor to assess your overall health, keep tabs on conditions you may have, ensure you're up-to-date on age-appropriate and risk-based screenings and immunizations.

Bring a list of medications and supplements you take, including dose and frequency. Discuss any personal or family health history changes.

Prostate Screening

A prostate-specific antigen test (PSA) measures the level of PSA—created by the prostate—in the blood. High levels could indicate prostate cancer, a noncancerous condition or an enlarged prostate gland.

Talk to your doctor about PSA screening for men aged 55-69 and those aged 40-55 who are at high risk.

Skin Cancer Screening

A doctor will perform a full-body skin exam looking for moles, birthmarks, or other pigmented areas that look abnormal in color, size, shape, or texture.

If your doctor notices something abnormal, they may recommend further testing. Performing your own regular skin checks can be helpful to find abnormalities early. If you see something questionable, call your doctor.

Vision Exam

Regular exams check vision, screen for eye problems such as cataracts, and for complications of diseases like diabetes and high blood pressure, which can affect vision.

Optometrists are skilled eye care professionals who can meet vision screening and other needs. Ophthalmologists treat eye diseases and can perform surgeries.



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