

Taking Care of You Self-Care Screening Schedule

Are you **Taking Care of You?** Refer to the list of major screening tests and adult immunizations to take charge of your health. Schedule the screenings/immunizations you need and make note of when others should occur; the steps you take might save your life.

The following recommendations are from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and are made for healthy adults. If you have specific medical concerns, please consult your physician immediately. Infants, children, and pregnant women need other types of preventive care which are not addressed here.

Blood Pressure Screening

When: Every 2 years unless it is 120 - 139/80 - 89 mmHg or higher. Then have it checked every year.

If you have diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems, or certain other conditions, you may need to be monitored more often.

Body Mass Index

When: Weigh yourself every three months. Calculate BMI using an online calculator.

If you are in the overweight or obese category based on your BMI, you should consult your physician.

Pap Smear and Pelvic Exam

When: Women should have a Pap smear done once every 2 years starting within 3 years of onset of sexual activity or age 21, whichever comes first. Pelvic exams may be done more often to check for other disorders.

If your Pap smears have been normal 3 times in a row, your doctor may tell you that you only need a Pap smear every 3 years. Women who have had a total hysterectomy (uterus and cervix removed) may choose not to have Pap smears. Sexually active woman should be screened for chlamydia infection.

Prostate Exam

When: Most men, age 50 or older, should discuss screening for prostate cancer with their health care provider. African American men and those with a family history of prostate cancer should be examined at age 45.

Screening tests may include the PSA blood test and a digital rectal examination.

Eye Exam

When: Adults over the age of 40 should have regular eye exams every 2 years. Once you turn 45, make sure your eyes are checked for glaucoma.

Cholesterol Screening

When: Men over age 34 should be checked every 5 years. Women over age 44 should be checked every 5 years.

If you have diabetes, heart disease, kidney problems, or certain other conditions, you may need to be monitored more often.

Breast Exams

When: Beginning at age 20, women should do a monthly breast self-exam. A complete breast exam should be done by a health care provider every year.

Women should contact their doctor immediately if they notice any change in their breasts, whether or not they do self-exams.

Immunizations

When: You should receive a flu vaccine every year after age 50.

Ask your doctor if you should get a vaccine to reduce your risk of pneumonia.

You should have a tetanus-diphtheria booster vaccination every 10 years.

A shingles or herpes booster vaccination may be given once after age 60.

Mammograms

When: Women over the age of 40 should have a mammogram done every 1 - 2 years, depending on risk factors.

Colon Cancer Screening

When: Adults between the ages of 50 and 80 should be screened for colorectal cancer. African Americans should start screenings at age 45.

People with risk factors for colon cancer such as long-standing ulcerative colitis, personal or family history of colorectal cancer, or history of large colorectal adenomas may need a colonoscopy more often.

Osteoporosis Screening

When: All women ages 50-70 with risk factors (white or Asian descent, BMI less than 19, low calcium intake and tobacco use) for osteoporosis should discuss screening with their doctor.

All postmenopausal women with fractures should have a bone density test (DEXA scan). Women under 65 who have risk factors for osteoporosis should be screened.

Dental Exam

When: Annual visit to dentist for an exam and cleaning. Brush and floss teeth everyday.

Physical Exam

When: Every 2 - 5 years. Physicians don't recommend annual physicals any more.

Your height, weight, body mass index (BMI), and recommended screenings and immunizations should be checked at each exam. Routine diagnostic tests (x-rays, etc...) are not recommended.

Information provided by Medline plus – A service of the U.S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health