

Healthful Habits and Avoiding Injury

Exercise

Get regular moderate exercise (at least 30 minutes, three days a week) by participating in activities that you enjoy such as walking, playing basketball, tennis or swimming. These activities will help you maintain a healthy weight and lower your risks for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, colon cancer, obesity and stress.

Diet

Eat a variety of foods that are low in fat, cholesterol, sodium and sugars and rich in fruits, grains and vegetables. Maintain or improve your weight by balancing the food you eat with your physical activity.

Risk Behaviors

- *Sun Exposure:* Avoid unprotected sun exposure to decrease your chances of skin cancer and premature aging.
- *Tobacco and Drug Use:* Cigarette smoking is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. It increases your chances of cardiovascular disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and lung cancer. If you smoke, talk to your physician about smoking cessation programs and drug therapies available to help you quit smoking.

Substance abuse affects 5.5 million Americans, and can cause medical complications and social problems. Avoid or keep alcohol consumption moderate (no more than one drink daily).

Illegal drug use should be avoided. If you have a substance abuse problem, talk to your doctor. All information is confidential, and they can help you or refer you to a healthcare professional who specializes in chemical dependency.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Prevent sexually transmitted diseases by partner selection and barrier protection. If you are sexually active or have more than one partner, testing for STD's should be conducted annually, or as directed by your physician.

Self Examinations

- *Testicular Self-Examinations:* Perform monthly.
- *Skin Self-Examinations:* Perform monthly.

Injury Prevention

- *Motor Vehicle:* Wear your seat belt and drive sober and defensively.
- *Workplace:* Practice hearing and eye safety.
- *Household:* Prevent falls. Practice firearm safety. Keep poisons/medicines out of children's reach.
- *Recreational:* Wear helmets. Avoid hazardous activities.
- *Suicide:* Seek help for stress, depression and suicidal thoughts.
- *Domestic Violence/Homicide:* Avoid or seek help for abusive situations.

Screening Examinations and Tests

Examinations

- *Physical Examination:* Initially at age 18; then as recommended by your physician.
- *Digital Rectal Exam:* Beginning at age 40; then as recommended by your physician.
- *Blood Pressure Screening:* Beginning at age 18; then every 1-2 years.
- *Hearing/Vision Screening:* Beginning at age 18; then every 1-2 years.
- *Dental Checks:* All adults on professional advice of dentist. Should include cleaning.

Tests

- *Cholesterol:* Beginning at age 18; then every 5 years.
- *Prostate Specific Antigen:* Annually beginning at age 50 (age 40 for high risk, family history and African Americans).
- *Stool for Blood:* Beginning at age 40; then as recommended by a physician.
- *Sigmoidoscopy:* Beginning at age 50; then every 3-5 years.

Other examinations and tests for people with certain risk factors:

Skin examination, blood count, lipid profile, bone mineral density, blood sugar, thyroid test, HIV test, sexually transmitted disease tests, TB skin test, colonoscopy, genetic testing and personal counseling.

Immunizations

- *Tetanus-Diphtheria Booster:* Every 10 years.
- *Hepatitis B Vaccine:* Once for all men who are at an increased risk for hepatitis B by either occupation, having close contact with hepatitis B, practicing at risk sexual activity, receiving blood products, or using intravenous drugs.
- *Influenza Vaccine:* Every year in the autumn for men beginning at age 50 and all men wishing to decrease their chance of having the flu. Every year in the autumn for men with diabetes, lung disease, kidney disease, blood disorders, cancer, other chronic medical diseases or who are residents of a long term care facility.
- *Pneumococcal Vaccine:* At age 65 or younger for men with indications for the influenza vaccine and those without a spleen.



What is preventive healthcare?

Preventive healthcare is decreasing your risk of injury and disease by doing the following:

- *Practice healthful habits and avoid injury.*
- *Undergo screening examinations and tests for early detection of disease.*
- *Receive appropriate immunizations to prevent illness and disease.*

Who can help with preventive healthcare?

The preventive healthcare steps outlined above require you to take an active part in your healthcare. This means working closely with your healthcare providers.

Several types of healthcare providers offer preventive healthcare services including: family physicians, internists, urologists, dermatologists, dentists, ophthalmologists and nurse practitioners. Some people have several healthcare providers that take care of some portion of their preventive healthcare needs.

Regardless of your situation, you should be aware of what role each provider plays in your preventive care. If you are not sure, ask them.

When should preventive healthcare occur?

Most of these guidelines can be met by periodic visits to the appropriate healthcare provider. Because preventive healthcare is important, it is usually best to have a visit devoted entirely to preventive healthcare rather than try to “fit it in” at a visit made because of a problem you are having.

Why these guidelines?

These guidelines are compiled from the most recent recommendations by the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American College of Physicians and the US Preventive Services Task Force.

These guidelines are for healthy adult men without medical problems. If you have a medical problem, some of these guidelines may differ for you. Ask your healthcare provider for advice.

Be an active participant in your health.

We recommend that you read these guidelines and become actively involved in your preventive healthcare. Follow the recommended healthy habits and avoid injury. If you have not participated in preventive healthcare before, please ask your healthcare provider(s) about them.

We hope these guidelines help you in your efforts to stay healthy!



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Men's Healthcare Guidelines

Courtesy of Hattiesburg Clinic