



## Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age Checklist for Your Next Check-up

What can you do to stay healthy and prevent disease? You can get certain screening tests, take preventive medicine if you need it, and practice healthy behaviors.

Top health experts from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force suggest that when you go for your next checkup, talk to your doctor or nurse about how you can stay healthy no matter what your age.



### Screening Tests: What You Need and When

Screening tests, such as colorectal cancer tests, can find diseases early when they are easier to treat. Some men need certain screening tests earlier, or more often, than others. Talk to your doctor about which of the tests listed below are right for you, when you should have them, and how often. Based on scientific evidence, the Task Force has made the following recommendations about which screening tests you should have.

- **Cholesterol Checks:** Have your cholesterol checked at least every 5 years, starting at age 35. If you smoke, have diabetes, or if heart disease runs in your family, start having your cholesterol checked at age 20.
- **Blood Pressure:** Have your blood pressure checked at least every 2 years.
- **Colorectal Cancer Tests:** Begin regular screening for colorectal cancer starting at age 50. Your doctor can help you decide which test is right for you. How often you need to be tested will depend on which test you have.
- **Diabetes Tests:** Have a test to screen for diabetes if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol.
- **Depression:** If you've felt "down," sad, or hopeless, and have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things for 2 weeks straight, talk to your doctor about whether he or she can screen you for depression.
- **Sexually Transmitted Diseases:** Talk to your doctor to see whether you should be screened for sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV.
- **Prostate Cancer Screening:** Talk to your doctor about the possible benefits and harms of prostate cancer screening if you are considering having a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test or digital rectal examination (DRE).

### Should You Take Medicines to Prevent Disease?

- **Aspirin:** Talk to your doctor about taking aspirin to prevent heart disease if you are older than 40, or if you are younger than 40 and have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, or if you smoke.
- **Immunizations:** Stay up-to-date with your immunizations:
  - Have a flu shot every year starting at age 50.
  - Have a tetanus-diphtheria shot every 10 years.
  - Have a pneumonia shot once at age 65 (you may need it earlier if you have certain health problems, such as lung disease).
  - Talk to your doctor to see whether you need hepatitis B shots.



### What Else Can You Do To Stay Healthy?

**Don't Smoke.** But if you do smoke, talk to your doctor about quitting. You can take medicine and get counseling to help you quit. Make a plan and set a quit date. Tell your family, friends, and co-workers you are quitting. Ask for their support.

**Eat a Healthy Diet.** Eat a variety of foods, including fruit, vegetables, animal or vegetable protein (such as meat, fish, chicken, eggs, beans, lentils, tofu, or tempeh) and grains (such as rice). Limit the amount of saturated fat you eat.

**Be Physically Active.** Walk, dance, ride a bike, rake leaves, or do any other physical activity you enjoy. Start small and work up to a total of 20-30 minutes most days of the week.

**Stay at a Healthy Weight.** Balance the number of calories you eat with the number you burn off by your activities. Remember to watch portion sizes. Talk to your doctor if you have questions about what or how much to eat.

**Drink Alcohol Only in Moderation.** If you drink alcohol, have no more than 2 drinks a day. A standard drink is one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.



## Screening Tests Checklist

Take this checklist with you to your doctor's office and fill it out when you have had any of the tests listed below. Talk to your doctor about when you should have these tests next, and note the month and year in the right hand column. Also, talk to your doctor about which of the other tests listed below you should have in the future, and when you need them.



	The last time The following screening test was: (mm/yy)	I should schedule my next test for: (mm/yy)
Cholesterol:	_____	_____
Blood Pressure:	_____	_____
Colorectal Cancer	_____	_____
Sexually Transmitted Diseases	_____	_____
Prostate Cancer	_____	_____

### More Information:

For more information on staying healthy, order the following free publications in the Put Prevention Into Practice (PIIP) program from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (call the AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse at 1-800-358-9295), or find them at: [www.ahrq.gov/clinic/ppipix.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/ppipix.htm).

- More copies of this fact sheet, *Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age—Checklist for Your Next Checkup* (in English and [Spanish](#)), Publication Nos. APPIP 03-0011 and APPIP 03-0013, February 2004.
- *The Pocket Guide to Good Health for Adults* (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)), Publication Nos. APPIP 03-0001 and APPIP 03-0010, May 2003.
- *The Pocket Guide to Staying Healthy at 50+* (in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)), Publication Nos. AHRQ 04-IP001-A and AHRQ 04-IP001-B, January 2000. Revised November 2003.

The information in this fact sheet is based on research from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the [U.S. Preventive Services Task Force](#) (USPSTF), the leading independent panel of private-sector experts in prevention and primary care. The Task Force conducts rigorous scientific assessments of the effectiveness of a broad range of clinical preventive services. Its recommendations are considered the "gold standard" for preventive services delivered in the clinical setting. Additional details about the recommendations can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality U.S. Preventive Services Task Force Web site ([www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm](http://www.ahrq.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm)) or by calling the AHRQ Publications Clearinghouse (1-800-358-9295).

The [Put Prevention Into Practice](#) (PIIP) program of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality is designed to increase the appropriate use of clinical preventive services, such as screening tests, chemoprevention and immunizations, and counseling. The PIIP program is based on the recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force. PIIP tools and resources enable doctors and other health care providers to determine which preventive services their patients should receive and make it easier for patients to understand and keep track of their preventive care.

