



# Get Preventive Exams

**CHALLENGE**  
Get preventive exams.

## Requirements to Complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Make an appointment for a preventive test, routine exam, or immunization – Compile your family health history. When you keep the appointment, make note of it on your monthly **Health Challenge Calendar**.
2. Read “Even healthy people need regular checkups” and “Be wise: Immunize.”
3. To complete the Challenge, you must compile your family health history and have a recommended preventive exam or routine checkup, or get an immunization this month.
4. Keep records of your completed Challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



## Even healthy people need regular checkups

Living a healthy lifestyle is certainly a key strategy for a healthy, long life. But it is not a guarantee that you will never get a serious illness. It is also important to get regular checkups and screenings as recommended by your doctor, and immunizations as necessary.

A screening test is an exam that looks for a disease early – often before any symptoms have appeared, and usually when the condition is easier to treat.

### Recommended exams

**Cholesterol check:** Have a blood test to measure your total cholesterol, LDL, and HDL at least once every 5 years, starting at age 35. If you smoke, or have diabetes, or if heart disease runs in your family, start having your cholesterol checked at age 20.

**Blood glucose level:** Schedule a test right away if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol to check for diabetes and increased coronary risk. Otherwise, follow the advice of your physician.

**Blood pressure:** If your blood pressure is in a healthy range (less than 120/80), have it checked at least once every 2 years. If it is higher, ask your doctor how often you should monitor it.

**Colorectal cancer test:** Begin regular screening for colorectal cancer at age 50, or sooner if you have a family member with colorectal cancer or your doctor recommends earlier screening.

**Depression:** If you’ve felt “down,” sad, or hopeless, and have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things for 2 weeks straight, ask your doctor to screen you for depression.

Take a Depression Self-Assessment:

[www.wellsource.info/wn/depression-selftest.pdf](http://www.wellsource.info/wn/depression-selftest.pdf)

**Sexually transmitted diseases:** Talk to your doctor to see if you should be screened for sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV.

**Eye exam:** Have your eyes refracted and examined once every 2-4 years – from age 40-64 – and once every 1-4 years after that (or as recommended by your doctor) to detect glaucoma and other eye diseases. If glaucoma is left untreated, blindness can result.

**Dental exam:** See your dentist for a teeth cleaning and exam annually until age 65, then once every 6 months.

**Hearing:** The American Speech-Language-Hearing Association recommends adult hearing screening at least every decade until age 50, with more frequent monitoring after that age.

**Osteoporosis test:** Have a bone density test at age 65 to screen for osteoporosis (thinning of the bones). If you have risk factors (e.g., you smoke, have a history of fractures, or you’re between the ages of 60 and 64 and weigh 154 pounds or less), ask your doctor if you should be tested.

**Health counseling** about physical activity, healthy weight, safety, substance use, and other healthy lifestyle issues.



Recommended immunizations and screening tests for men:  
[www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/men/men.pdf](http://www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/men/men.pdf)

### Additional recommendations for men

**Prostate cancer screening:** Talk to your doctor about the possible benefits of prostate cancer screening if you are considering having a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test or digital rectal examination (DRE).



Recommended immunizations and screenings for women:  
[www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/general/general.pdf](http://www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/general/general.pdf)

### Additional recommendations for women

**Mammogram:** Have a mammogram once every 1-2 years starting at age 40 or earlier if a family member has had breast cancer.

**Pap smear:** Have a Pap smear once every 1-3 years if you have been sexually active or you are older than 21.

**Chlamydia test:** If you are 25 or younger and have been sexually active, get tested for Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease. If you are older, ask your doctor if you should be tested.

### Additional recommendations based on health risks

Some people need certain screening tests earlier, or more often, than others. For example, being overweight may increase your risk of developing diabetes. Depending on your history, your doctor may recommend additional screenings or other actions for reducing your personal risk of disease. Your family health history can help identify if you have higher risk for some diseases, and help you look for early warning signs of disease.

Ask your doctor which tests are right for you, at what age the testing should begin, and how often you should be tested.

Recommended screening tests for high-risk women:  
[www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/highrisk/highrisk.pdf](http://www.womenshealth.gov/screeningcharts/highrisk/highrisk.pdf)

## Be wise: Immunize

If you're a healthy adult, you may not spend much time thinking about immunization. However, keeping current on recommended immunizations is an effective way to prevent many serious illnesses.

- ✓ Have a **flu shot** every year starting at age 50.
- ✓ Have a **tetanus-diphtheria shot** every 10 years.
- ✓ Have a **pneumonia vaccination** once at age 65. (You may need it earlier if you have certain health problems, such as lung disease.)
- ✓ Ask your doctor if you need to be vaccinated against hepatitis. The **hepatitis B vaccine** is recommended if some other risk factor (medical, occupational, lifestyle, etc.) is present. The hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for all travelers to certain countries.
- ✓ If you were born after 1956, you may need a **measles-mumps-rubella vaccine**. It's also recommended for healthcare workers, travelers, and adults going to college.
- ✓ If you've never had chickenpox, you can be vaccinated against it with the **varicella vaccine**. Adults are 10 times more likely than are children to develop complications with chickenpox.
- ✓ The **meningococcal vaccine** is recommended for first-year college students living in dormitories and for adults living where they might be exposed to the virus.
- ✓ A single dose of **zoster vaccine** is recommended for adults age 60 and older, even if they've had a prior outbreak of herpes zoster (shingles).
- ✓ The **HPV vaccination**, which can help prevent cervical cancer, is recommended for all females age 9-26 who have not completed the 3-shot series.

## What to do next:

- Compile a family health history** using My Family Health Portrait: <https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/fhh-web/home.action>
- Make an appointment with your health provider** for a physical exam. Discuss which tests you should have and how often is right for you.
- Schedule a preventive exam** such as a mammogram or a glaucoma screening.
- Get your blood pressure checked.**

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2009.



## Screening Guidelines

One positive way to reduce the risk of serious illness is to get regular preventive exams as recommended for your age and gender. Screening tests and preventive exams can help identify health problems early, while they are still easily treatable. See the Screening guidelines below to see what preventive tests are recommended.

SCREENING GUIDELINES – Quick Reference				
Screening or Test	Age 20-34	Age 35-49	Age 50-64	Age 65+
Blood glucose level	If high blood pressure or high cholesterol, ages 20+	Follow physician's advice		
Blood pressure	Once every 2 years, if normal range; otherwise consult physician			
Breast self-exam	Regular self-exam for women ages 20+			
Cholesterol check	If family history of heart disease, ages 20+	Every 5 years from age 35		
Colorectal cancer test	If family history, follow physician's advice		Regular screening ages 50+	
Dental exam	Teeth cleaning and exam annually			Once every 6 months after age 65
Depression	Consult physician if you feel "down," sad, or hopeless for more than 2 weeks			
Eye exam		Vision testing every 2-4 years, ages 40+	Glaucoma testing every 1-4 years, or as recommended by physician	
Hearing screening	At least every 10 years until age 50		More frequent monitoring after age 50	
Mammogram	If family history of breast cancer, ask physician	Yearly for women ages 40+		
Osteoporosis			If risk factors, ask physician	Bone density test at age 65
Pap smear	Every 1-3 years ages 21+			
Prostate cancer screening		Yearly for men at high risk, ages 40+	Yearly for all men, ages 50+	
Sexually transmitted disease/Chlamydia	If sexually active, ask physician			
Testicular self-exam	Monthly self-exam for men ages 20+			

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2009.

## Immunization Guidelines

Vaccines are among the greatest public health achievements of the 20th century. Up-to-date immunizations can protect both adults and children from disability and death due to infectious diseases. Are you and your loved ones protected? See the list below for immunization guidelines.

IMMUNIZATION GUIDELINES – Quick Reference				
Chicken pox ( <i>Varicella</i> )	One vaccine for adults with no history of chickenpox – ask physician			
Flu shot			Yearly after age 50	
Hepatitis B	Recommended for travelers and with certain risk factors – ask physician			
Herpes zoster ( <i>Shingles</i> )			One vaccine after age 60	
HPV ( <i>Human papilloma virus</i> )	Recommended for females age 9-26 years old			
Measles-Mumps-Rubella	Recommended for travelers, healthcare workers, college students, and adults born after 1956			
Meningococcal	Recommended for 1st year college students living in dormitories			
Pneumonia				One vaccine at age 65
Tetanus-Diphtheria	Every 10 years			

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 2009.





# Get Preventive Exams

## Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. When you have a preventive test, routine exam, or immunization, write it on your monthly Health Challenge calendar.
3. Making the appointment is the first step, but doesn't mean that you have completed the Challenge. You must keep the appointment or have the immunization. Then keep up this healthy practice for a lifetime of good health!
4. Turn in your Health Challenge™ if requested, or enter your completion of this Health Challenge™ on the Health Activity Tracker report for the month, if applicable. Keep this record for evidence of completion.

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MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____	HC [ ] ex. min. _____		
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I had a health test, immunization, or exam this month. Type of test, exam, or immunization: \_\_\_\_\_

I compiled my Family Health History.

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking

### Other wellness projects completed this month:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

