

# What you need to know about Men's Health



## Take Charge of Your Health

The single most important way to take care of yourself and those you love is to have a primary healthcare provider and become personally engaged in your health. You know your body better than anyone else. Always tell your healthcare provider about any changes in your health. Maintaining a balance in body, mind, and spirit makes for the best health outcomes.

## Health Facts

- The average life expectancy for men in the US is roughly 76.4 years compared to 81.2 for women.
- Research suggests that a leading reason for the "longevity gap" between men and women is that men do not take care of themselves as well as women.
- Men are more likely than women to:
  - Engage in risky behaviors (smoking/drinking)
  - Not visit a healthcare provider every year and are more likely to have neglected their cholesterol tests
  - To be hospitalized for congestive heart failure (CHF)
  - To be hospitalized for long term complications of diabetes and more than twice as likely as women to have a leg or foot amputated due to complications related to diabetes
  - To be hospitalized for pneumonia that could have been prevented by getting an immunization
- Testosterone levels gradually decline throughout adulthood, about 1% a year after age 30. The effects, such as changes in sexual function and energy level or mood, tend to be subtle and may go unnoticed for years.

- The leading cause of death for men is heart disease, followed by cancer.
- The most common cancers among men (per 100,000) are:
  - **Prostate cancer** (157) - First among men of all races.
  - **Lung cancer** (81) - 2nd among white/black/American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander men. 3rd among Hispanic men.
  - **Colorectal cancer** (53) - 2nd among Hispanic men. 3rd among white, black, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Asian/Pacific Islander men.

## Risk Factors for Common Health Problems

- Delay seeking help or regular check-ups
- Eating out often/fast food
- Unhealthy sun exposure
- Stress
- Alcohol and tobacco use
- Driving too fast
- Not wearing a seat belt
- Unprotected sex
- Poor dental hygiene
- Not enough sleep
- Exposure to pollutants
- No self-exams
- Sedentary lifestyle
- Low testosterone
- Obesity, high blood pressure & cholesterol, depression, diabetes
- Low vitamin D level
- Illegal drug use

To lower your risk, take small steps toward engaging in a healthy lifestyle, and your quality of life will improve for years to come.



*Men die at higher rates than women for all of the top 10 causes of death, many of which are preventable and can be treated if found early.*

A health coach can help you meet your healthy lifestyle goals

Call a TML MultiState IEBP Professional Health Coach at  
1-888-818-2822

Disclaimer: This material is for informational purposes only and should not be used to replace professional medical advice. Always consult your provider before beginning a new treatment, diet or fitness program. This information should not be considered complete, nor should it be relied on in diagnosing or treating a medical condition.

## Annual Preventive Screenings

### Men 18-39

- Preventive Office Visit (Annual Check-up)
- Lipid Panel (Cholesterol Test)
- Comprehensive Metabolic Blood Panel or General Health Panel

### Men 40-50

- Preventive Office Visit (Annual Check-up)
- Lipid Panel (Cholesterol Test)
- Comprehensive Metabolic Blood Panel or General Health Panel
- Fecal Occult Blood Test (see below)

### Men 51 and up

- Preventive Office Visit (Annual Check-up)
- Lipid Panel (Cholesterol Test)
- Comprehensive Metabolic Blood Panel or General Health Panel
- PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen Test)
- Fecal Occult Blood Test (Annually ages 50 to 75, colonoscopy every 10 years. Discuss with provider more frequent screening or screening at younger age.)

## Additional Screenings & Check-ups

- People who have a chronic illness or condition are more likely to experience feelings of sadness, irritability, feeling blue or depressed. Speak with your provider if you experience this and seek professional mental health treatment.
- Depression screening (men have a significantly higher suicide rate than do women)
- Bone health evaluation (thinning of the bones not just for woman)
- Retinal eye exam for chronic conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol
- Dental check-up (studies link dental hygiene and heart disease)
- Vitamin D level (low levels related to many health concerns)
- Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening (once between ages 65 and 75 if you have ever smoked)
- Testosterone level (gradual decline about 1% per year after age 30 until by age 70. Can be as much as 50%). In special cases, with symptoms, your healthcare provider may suggest screening.
- Colorectal cancer screening can detect cancer, polyps, or other abnormal cell growth. Finding and removing polyps or other areas of abnormal cells may be one of the most effective ways to identify the risk of colon cancer. If colon cancer is found early, it is generally more treatable and less likely to spread. Taking the fecal occult blood test (FOBT) yearly can help promote early detection.
- Hepatitis C (HCV) one time screening if born between 1945 and 1965, have ever injected drugs or received a blood transfusion before 1992.
- Other screenings as recommended by your healthcare provider.

More information for health screenings can be found at:  
[www.womenshealth.gov/blog/category/mens-health](http://www.womenshealth.gov/blog/category/mens-health)

# Men's Health

## Lifestyle Changes

### Medical Care

- See your healthcare provider for both regular check-ups and when you are feeling sick.
- Take all of your medicines or a complete list of what you are taking, including over the counter medicines and vitamins, with you when you visit your healthcare provider. Why? The longer you live and the more medicines you take, the more likely you will experience side effects.
- You know your body better than anyone else. Report any changes to your healthcare provider.

While not all listed screenings are covered benefits, being aware of recommendations will help you make informed decisions about your health. Remember to keep out of pocket costs down by verifying coverage and confirming in network provider status by calling Customer Care at 1-800-282-5385.

### Maintain a Healthy Diet

Maintaining a balance in body, mind, and spirit promotes the best health outcomes.

- Increase intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, fish, non fat dairy products, nuts, and seeds.
- Legumes such as dry peas and beans are a good alternative to meat.
- Decrease consumption of trans fats, hydrogenated oils, sodium, and processed foods.
- Lower your risk of falls and fractures by eating plenty of bone-healthy calcium and vitamin D every day. Aim for 1500 mg of calcium daily. Talk with your healthcare provider about how much vitamin D you need.
- Decrease sweets, sugary beverages, and artificial sweeteners.
- Maintain a healthy weight. The recommended normal body mass index (BMI) is between 18.5 to 24.9. Being overweight or obese can lead to sleep apnea, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and the potential for various types of cancer.

### Physical Activity

- Stay as active as your health permits.
- Some activities that can keep you strong and increase your energy are walking, yoga, swimming, etc.
- Participate in moderate physical activity for at least 30 minutes most days of the week.



- Exercise helps with managing your weight; tones your heart, circulation and muscles; keeps your body and your joints flexible; lowers your blood glucose (sugar), blood pressure, and cholesterol; strengthens bones; boosts brain function; reduces stress, lifts your mood, can help prevent and ease depression; and lowers medical costs.
- Aerobic fitness is the most important part of improving fitness by strengthening your cardiovascular system. A strong heart and lungs are the basis on which fitness is built.
- Strength training or maintaining muscle strength is an important part of lifelong health and fitness. When not actively used, muscles shrink and atrophy over time.
- Check with your healthcare provider for recommended guidelines before starting any physical activity, particularly if you have any preexisting conditions.

### Behavioral Changes

- Drink in moderation. For men, no more than 2 alcoholic drinks/day. One drink equals 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1 ½ ounces of hard liquor. The risk of various types of cancer appears to increase with the amount of alcohol you drink and the length of time you've been drinking regularly.
- Eating a large meal or drinking alcohol 2-3 hours before bedtime can affect your sleep, cause weight gain, high blood sugars, and GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease). This is usually the most sedentary time of the day when calorie needs are lower.
- Quit smoking. Work with your healthcare provider and health coach. Call 1-800-QUIT NOW, visit [smokefree.gov](http://smokefree.gov), or [healthfinder.gov](http://healthfinder.gov) and select 'Smoking Cessation' topic of interest.
- Steer clear of pollutants. Minimize exposure to chemicals and outdoor air pollution.
- Prevent respiratory infections by hand washing often and getting recommended vaccines.
- Manage chronic conditions. Follow your healthcare provider's treatment recommendations and monitor as directed (blood sugar, blood pressure, etc).

# Men's Health

## Lifestyle Changes

### Helpful Websites

*AUA Men's Health Checklist*  
[www.aunet.org/common/pdf/education/clinical-guidance/Mens-Health-Checklist.pdf](http://www.aunet.org/common/pdf/education/clinical-guidance/Mens-Health-Checklist.pdf)

*Healthy Men*  
[www.ahrq.gov/topics/topic-mens-health.html](http://www.ahrq.gov/topics/topic-mens-health.html)

*Chose My Plate*  
[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

*Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

*Health A to Z*  
[www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)

*Stress Help Center*  
[www.helpguide.org/home-pages/stress.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/home-pages/stress.htm)

*Tips for Good Health in Later Life*  
[www.healthinaging.org/aging-and-health-a-to-z](http://www.healthinaging.org/aging-and-health-a-to-z)

*Medline Plus*  
[www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus)

*National Cancer Institute at the National Institute of Health*  
[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)  
[www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/data/men.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dcpc/data/men.htm)

*Medline Plus Diabetes Eye Exams*  
[medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000323.htm](http://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000323.htm)

*American Cancer Society Skin Cancer Facts*  
[www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/sunanduvexposure/skin-cancer-facts](http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/sunanduvexposure/skin-cancer-facts)

- Learn to manage your stress. Be aware that some men define themselves by their work, which can add to stress. Managing stress is all about taking charge of your thoughts, emotions, schedule, and the way you deal with problems. Journaling can help identify stressors, and what is working and what is not. Exercise can relax tense muscles, improve mood and relieve symptoms of depression and anxiety. Try to avoid situations that trigger stress for you. Practice effective time management skills, set priorities, pace yourself, and take time out for you.
- Sleep is a barometer of a person's health. Getting 7.5 to 9 hours of sleep each night helps improve concentration and memory



formation, allows your body to repair any cell damage that occurred during the day, and refreshes your immune system, which in turn helps to prevent disease.

- Protect yourself from the sun. When outdoors, cover up and use sunscreen with a skin protection factor of 15 or higher.
- Exercise your brain. Join a book or other discussion club, take classes, do word, number, or jigsaw puzzles. Free games of all kinds to play alone or with others can be found at [games.aarp.org](http://games.aarp.org).
- Stay connected. Spend time with others. Volunteer. Become involved in activities you enjoy.
- When you are feeling overwhelmed, hopeless, or having trouble getting through your daily routine, seek help with a licensed mental health professional.
- Prevent domestic violence. Get help the first time it happens. Domestic violence can be physical, emotional or sexual. There are four phases: tension building, violence, honeymoon and the cycle repeats. Violence may only happen once, but more often, it escalates in intensity and frequency. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233 or TTY 800-787-3224.
- Protect your eyes. Wear protective eyewear when playing sports, while in the sun or with some job related duties. Give your eyes a rest. When spending a lot of time on one thing you can forget to blink and your eyes get fatigued. This is especially important now when so much of our time is spent on electronic devices, i.e. computers, tablets, phones, electronic readers, etc. Try to look away every 20 minutes for about 20 seconds to reduce eye strain.

- Take your medications every day at the same time of the day as prescribed by your healthcare provider. Refill your medications in time so no doses are missed.

### Self Exams

- Each day monitor eyes, sleep, bowel and bladder habits.
- Monthly skin, scalp, inside of mouth and self-breast exam (not just for women).
- Monthly testicular exam (men age 18-39).
- Monitor blood pressure and your weight.
- Blood sugar monitoring as directed by your healthcare provider.

### Immunizations

- Flu vaccine every year
- Pneumonia vaccine for healthy people age 65 yrs and older, PCV13 (Pneumococcal conjugate) followed by PPSV23 (pneumococcal polysaccharide) in 1yr. These can be given earlier as advised by your healthcare provider. When given earlier, discuss frequency of PPSV23.
- HPV ages 19-21
- Combination tetanus/diphtheria booster every 10 years
- Shingles (herpes zoster) vaccine at age 60 or older

Ask your healthcare provider what other immunizations you might need.

### Communication with Your Healthcare Provider

It is important to keep your healthcare provider updated with any changes or concerns with your health. Following your healthcare provider's plan of care optimizes your health outcome. If you are working with a professional healthcare coach, share their suggestions with your healthcare provider.

### Questions to Ask Your Healthcare Provider

- What tests are specific to me with my family history?
- What were the results of my tests? May I have a copy?
- Do I need to follow up with any other provider/specialist?
- When do I need to repeat the tests again?
- What are my diagnoses and treatment options?
- Should I take a daily aspirin?
- Should I be evaluated for sleep apnea?