



your health & well-being

Is it time for that checkup?

Preventive care. It's what you do for yourself, and for the people who love you. Invest some time in learning about any conditions you may have, so you can understand and manage them more effectively.

Some health problems, such as heart disease and cancer, can often be caught early and treated successfully. Others, like diabetes and high blood pressure, need regular monitoring and treatment. That's why it's important to have regular medical checkups. Work together with your Primary Care Physician (PCP) and get the screenings and preventive care information you need. Once you understand your risk factors and know what to watch out for, you can take action to ensure your health is the best possible.

Preventive Health Screenings for Adults:

Cholesterol Level

If your total cholesterol level is high, you may be at increased risk for heart disease. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that you have a cholesterol screening every five years starting at age 20.

Blood Pressure

High blood pressure (also called hypertension) can lead to conditions that increase your risk of having a heart attack, stroke or kidney failure. According to the American Heart Association, you should have your blood pressure checked at least once every two years, or as often as your doctor recommends. If you have to track it frequently, consider getting a home blood pressure monitor.

Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer can often be treated successfully if caught early. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends that you have a fecal occult blood test every year after age 50 (this test checks your stool for blood). Your doctor may also recommend a colonoscopy test once every 10 years after age 50.

Tests for Men:

Prostate Cancer

According to the ACS, prostate cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related death in men. Talk with your PCP about prostate cancer screenings, generally after age 50. You may be given one or more tests, such as a prostate-specific antigen blood test. If you have risk factors, this screening may be done at any age.

Testicular Cancer

Testicular cancer is the most common type of cancer in men ages 15 to 35. Ask your PCP about the symptoms of the disease. Learn about performing monthly testicular self-exams so that you can check for signs of testicular cancer.

Tests for Women:

Cervical Cancer

A Pap test has helped physicians to find and successfully treat cervical cell abnormalities in thousands of women, before the abnormalities could become cervical cancer. Women ages 19 to 64 who are sexually active and still have a cervix should have this important test at least every three years. Women over age 65 should have a Pap test as often as their doctor advises.

Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women. For an individual woman, the lifetime risk of developing breast cancer is 1 in 8. Studies have shown that mammography is an effective way to detect cancer early, when it is most treatable. That's why it's recommended that all women age 40 or older get a mammogram every year.

More Preventive Steps for All Adults

Exercising, eating a balanced diet and stopping smoking are also essential to staying healthy whatever your age, health history, or risk factors.

If you haven't seen your PCP recently, call today for an appointment!

Source: CIGNA Preventive Care Guidelines



it's time to feel better



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april tip of the month

Making the Most of Your Doctor Appointment

Chances are you will be more satisfied with your health care if you share the responsibility with your health care professionals – your doctors are the experts on medical care, but you are the expert on yourself. Often there is more than one option for diagnosing or treating a condition. By being a partner with your health professional, you can help make the choices that best fit your values, beliefs, and lifestyle. You will also feel more confident about carrying out the chosen treatment.

Some tips for being a good partner with your health care professional:

- Build a relationship with your health team, and let them know that you want to be a partner in your health care. Be clear about your expectations.
- Be an active participant in each appointment and listen carefully to what is said.
- It can be helpful to write down your health concerns or problems before you go to the appointment, and also to take notes about your discussion while you are still in your doctor's office.
- If you don't understand a diagnosis or treatment, ask questions.
- If you think that you cannot carry out the prescribed treatment, let your doctor know.
- Prepare your child for tests and exams. Let your child know why he or she is seeing a health care professional and what will be done during the visit. Your child's age and developmental level will determine how best to prepare him or her.

On myCIGNA.com this month

Getting those tests completed is only part of what you need to do. With your doctor's guidance, you also need to understand and track your results. A personal health record (PHR) can help.

Your PHR allows you to track your own medical information such as test results, medications, allergies, and more. The information is stored on a remote secure website, ready for you to access at any time, from anywhere in the world. No need to worry if you are traveling, changing doctors, or if your home records are damaged.

Go to myCIGNA.com, myHealth tab, and set up your own personal health record today.

