It's Your Body!

You know your body better than anyone. Always tell your doctor about any changes in your health, including your vision and hearing. Ask them about being checked for any condition you are concerned about, not just the ones here. If you are wondering about diseases such as glaucoma or skin cancer, for example, ask about them.

Use the information in this pamphlet to help you stay healthy. Learn about which screening tests to get, whether you need medicines to prevent diseases, and steps you can take for good health.

Take Preventive Medicines If You Need Them

Aspirin
If you are 55 or older, ask your doctor if you should take aspirin to prevent strokes.

Breast Cancer Drugs
If your mother, sister, or daughter has had breast cancer, talk to your doctor about whether you should take medicines to prevent breast cancer.

Estrogen for Menopause (Hormone Replacement Therapy)
Do not use estrogen to prevent heart disease or other diseases. If you need relief from symptoms of menopause, talk with your doctor.

Immunizations
- Get a flu shot every year.
- If you are 65 or older, get a pneumonia shot.
- Depending on health problems, you may need a pneumonia shot at a younger age or need shots to prevent diseases like whooping cough or shingles.
- Talk with your doctor about whether you need vaccinations.
TAKE STEPS TO GOOD HEALTH

- Be physically active and make healthy food choices.
- Get to a healthy weight and stay there.
- Balance the calories you take in from food and drink with the calories you burn off by your activities.
- Be tobacco free. For tips on how to quit, go to www.smokefree.gov. To talk to someone about how to quit, call the National Quitline: 800-QUITNOW.
- If you drink alcohol, have no more than one drink per 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.

GET THE SCREENINGS YOU NEED

Screenings are tests that look for diseases before you have symptoms, for example blood pressure checks and mammograms. Some screenings, such as blood pressure readings, can be done in your doctor’s office. Others, like mammograms, need special equipment and maybe done at a different office. After a screening test, ask when you will see the results and who to talk to about them.

Breast Cancer
Ask your doctor if a mammogram is right for you based on your age, family history, overall health, and personal concerns.

Cervical Cancer
Have a Pap smear every 1 to 3 years if you are 21 to 65 years old and have been sexually active. If you are older than 65 and recent Pap smears were normal, you do not need a Pap smear. If you have had a hysterectomy for a reason other than cancer, you do not need a Pap smear.

Colorectal Cancer
Have a screening test starting at age 50. If you have a family history of colorectal cancer, you may need to be screened earlier. Several different tests can detect this cancer. Your doctor can help you decide which is best for you.

Depression
Emotional health is as important as physical health. Talk to your doctor about being screened for depression, especially if during the last 2 weeks:
- You have felt down, sad, or hopeless.
- You have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things.

Diabetes
Get screened for diabetes if your blood pressure is higher than 135/80 or if you take medication for high blood pressure. Diabetes (high blood sugar) can cause problems with your heart, brain, eyes, feet, kidneys, nerves, and other body parts.

High Blood Pressure
Have your blood pressure checked at least every 2 years. High blood pressure is 140/90 or higher. High blood pressure can cause stroke, heart attack, kidney and eye problems, and heart failure.

High Cholesterol
Have your cholesterol checked regularly if:
- You use tobacco.
- You are obese.
- You have diabetes or high blood pressure.
- You have a personal history of heart disease or blocked arteries.
- A man in your family had a heart attack before age 50 or a woman, before age 60.

HIV
Talk with your doctor if an HIV screening is right for you.

Osteoporosis (Bone Thinning)
Have a screening test at age 65 to make sure your bones are strong. If you are younger than 65, talk to your doctor about whether you should be tested.

Overweight and Obesity
The best way to learn if you are overweight or obese is to find your body mass index (BMI). You can find your BMI by entering your height and weight into a BMI calculator. A BMI between 18.5 and 25 is normal weight and 30 or higher may be obese. If you are obese, talk to your doctor about seeking help to change your behaviors to lose weight. Overweight and obesity can lead to diabetes and cardiovascular disease.