



# When was your last checkup?



## Regular well checks can help you get and stay healthy

You want to understand how your body changes as you get older. That's what preventive exams do for you. They give you and your doctor a snapshot of your health. And they give you a chance to talk to your doctor and see if you need to make any changes. They also keep your doctor updated about your health. That way you can get better care if problems come up later.<sup>1</sup>

### What to expect

Most preventive exams start with a talk about your health history and any problems. After that, most doctors will talk to you about things like:<sup>2</sup>

- Medicines you take
- How you eat – and how you could eat better
- How active you are – and whether you should be more active
- Stress in your life or signs of depression
- Drinking, smoking and drug use
- Safety measures like wearing your seat belt and using sunscreen
- Your sexual habits and any risks they pose
- Tests and vaccines you may need

### Get more from your exam

It will help both you and your doctor if you gather some information about your health ahead of time. Before your visit, write down:<sup>2</sup>

- Your health history and your family's, especially if anything has changed since your last visit
- Any medicines you take, how much you take, and how often (include vitamins and over-the-counter drugs)
- Concerns you have about your health
- Any symptoms you're having



#### Sources

<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: Regular Check-Ups are Important (accessed February 2015): [cdc.gov/family/checkup/](http://cdc.gov/family/checkup/)

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: Check-Up Checklist: Things to Do Before Your Next Check-Up (accessed February 2015): [cdc.gov/family/checkuplist/](http://cdc.gov/family/checkuplist/)

<sup>3</sup> Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality website: Women: Stay Healthy at Any Age (accessed February 2015): [ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/prevention/lifestyle/healthy-women.html](http://ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/prevention/lifestyle/healthy-women.html)

<sup>4</sup> Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality website: Men: Stay Healthy at Any Age (accessed February 2015): [ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/patient-involvement/healthy-men/healthy-men.html](http://ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/patient-involvement/healthy-men/healthy-men.html)

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## Don't forget these important screenings

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends these screenings to help you stay healthy.<sup>3,4</sup> Your doctor may suggest other tests or more frequent tests, depending on your risk factors. Some of those risk factors include your age and family history, which could make you more likely to get an illness.

Screening	How Often?
Blood pressure	At least every two years for adults 18 and older
Cholesterol	Regular screenings beginning at age 35 for men and 45 for women (younger if you smoke, have diabetes, high blood pressure or a family history of heart disease)
Skin exam	Self-exams at least once a year; talk to your doctor about screening for skin cancer (especially if you are fair-skinned or spend a lot of time outside)
Diabetes	Regular tests if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol; talk to your doctor about other reasons you may need to be tested

### Women

Screening	How Often?
Mammogram	Every one to two years for women 40 and older, with or without a breast exam
Pap test	Every one to three years for sexually active women between the ages of 21 and 70
Osteoporosis	Routine screening starting at age 65 (age 60 for women with risk factors like a small frame or weight under 155 pounds)
Chlamydia	Routine screening for sexually active women who are 25 and younger; talk to your doctor about tests for other illnesses that spread through sex

### Men

Screening	How Often?
Colorectal cancer	Starting at age 50; talk to your doctor about the right test for you
Sexually transmitted diseases	Talk to your doctor about how often
Abdominal aortic aneurysm	Once between the ages of 65 and 75 if you have ever smoked

## What's the difference between preventive care and diagnostic care?

Some tests can help you stay healthy, catch problems early on and even save your life. These are called preventive care because they can help prevent some health problems. They're different from diagnostic tests, which help diagnose a health problem. Diagnostic tests are for when someone has symptoms of a health problem and the doctor wants to find out why.

It's important to know the difference. For example, your doctor might want you to get a colonoscopy (a test that checks your colon). If it's because of your age or because your family has a history of colon problems, that's called preventive care. But if it's because you're having pain or other symptoms of a problem, that's diagnostic care.

**Visit [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com) for more ways to get healthy – and stay healthy.**



### Helpful resources

For more information, visit [anthem.com](https://www.anthem.com). Under the Health & Wellness tab, select **View All Preventive Health Guidelines** in the lower right corner of the screen. Or use the *myhealthfinder* tool at [www.healthfinder.gov](https://www.healthfinder.gov) to find out which preventive services you need based on age and gender.