

The Cure

- Establish a good working relationship

with a primary care physician you like, respect, and can talk to and see him/her on a regular basis. If health concerns do arise, do not put off seeking medical attention.

- Getting regular exercise,

maintaining a healthy weight, and not smoking are essential to staying healthy, and it will maximize your lifespan and your enjoyment of life.

- If you drink alcohol,

do so in moderation; that is, not more than two drinks daily.

- Identify a trusted friend

or advisor with whom you can discuss job stress, marital issues, or other personal problems.

- Seek help for depression

or feelings of loss of control.

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Men's Health AT RISK



Men's Health Committee
of the Massachusetts Medical Society

The Problem

It has been said that it's a man's world, but this is clearly NOT the case when it comes to health and longevity. In fact, white men die on average six years younger than white women, and black men die 13 years younger. Males are more likely to die than females at all stages of life, from the cradle to old age.

Compared to women, men are

- twice as likely to die of heart disease
- twice as likely to die of liver disease
- four times as likely to die of suicide or homicide
- much more prone to be killed or seriously injured accidentally
- much more likely to suffer from drug or alcohol addiction
- more than two-and-a-half times as likely as women to get AIDS
- at higher risk for learning disabilities, such as dyslexia or attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder

Yet, in spite of all these hazards to men's health, men are often out of touch with a health care system that can seem out of touch with their needs.

Men's Health Network Recommendations

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURES	AGES			
	20–39	40–49	50–65	Over 65
Physical exam	every 3 years	every 2 years	every year	every year
Blood pressure checked	This should be checked at every doctor visit in all age groups.			
Cholesterol level checked	Every 5 years in all age groups, more often if it is abnormal or being treated			
Tetanus/diphtheria booster	Every 10 years in all age groups			
Influenza vaccine	every year starting age 50*			
Pneumonia vaccine	once at age 65**			
EKG (electrocardiogram)	Baseline at age 35–40, repeated at doctor's discretion depending on the presence of high blood pressure or other cardiovascular problems.			
Chest X rays, body scans	Not currently recommended as screening tests in healthy men due to inadequate ability to detect abnormalities and high rate of false positive results.			
Rectal examination with fecal occult blood testing	Yearly after age 50 in all men to detect prostate or bowel cancer. African Americans should consider screening after age 45.			
PSA (prostate specific antigen)	Consider after age 50 or age 45 in African Americans. May allow for early detection of prostate cancer although not proven to do so.			
Sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy	At age 50 and every 5–10 years after***			
Testicular Self-Examination	At all ages. Testicular cancer is the most common cancer of men to age 40.			
Skin examination	At all ages. Skin cancer is increasing at alarming rates due excessive sun exposure.			
Health education	At every physical to emphasize diet and exercise, avoiding risk behaviors and substance abuse, including tobacco and alcohol, etc.			

* Influenza vaccine should be taken annually by anyone with a chronic condition impairing heart, lung, or immune function.

** Pneumonia vaccine should be received at least once by anyone with chronic conditions impairing heart, lung, or immune function.

*** The choice of sigmoidoscopy versus colonoscopy is controversial and should be decided in consultation with your physician.

The table above shows which tests all men should have on a regular basis to stay as healthy as possible and to maximize both the length and quality of life.