



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at USI Insurance Services

Men should visit their doctors regularly in order to talk about their overall health, ask questions, establish a relationship with their doctor and get the recommended preventive health screenings.

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MEN'S HEALTH PREVENTIVE SCREENINGS, PART I

Preventive care, including regular doctor visits, is important for everyone. The following screenings are recommended for men to maintain good health and catch health problems early.

Body Measurement

The American Heart Association recommends that men over age 20 have body measurements taken every two years, although your frequency may vary based on age and existing medical conditions. Measuring height, weight, waist and body mass index will determine whether you are overweight or obese and if your weight is a threat to your health. People who are overweight are more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure and increase their risk for other serious conditions.

Blood Pressure

Men should receive blood pressure screenings at least every two years. Preventive screening of blood pressure can lead to early detection of high blood pressure (hypertension). The cuff placed around the arm during a blood pressure screening measures the amount of pressure the heart generates when pumping blood through the arteries (systolic pressure), and the amount of pressure in the arteries when the heart is at rest between beats (diastolic pressure). Narrowed arteries limit the flow of blood. In general, the more blood your heart pumps and the narrower your arteries are, the harder your heart must work

to pump the same amount of blood.

The longer high blood pressure goes undetected and untreated, the higher the risk of heart attack, stroke, heart failure and kidney damage.

Cholesterol Screening

Men age 20 or older should have their cholesterol tested every five years or more frequently if the doctor recommends it. High levels of cholesterol raise the risk of heart attack and stroke. Cholesterol is a form of fat carried in the blood by lipoproteins.

Low-density lipoprotein (LDL) “Bad” Cholesterol deposits cholesterol on the artery walls.

High-density lipoprotein (HDL) “Good” Cholesterol carries cholesterol away from the arteries to the liver for disposal.

Problems occur when LDL deposits too much cholesterol on the artery walls, or when HDL doesn't take enough away. This can lead to a buildup of cholesterol-containing fatty deposits (plaques) in the arteries, a condition known as atherosclerosis.

A simple finger-prick screening can measure the different kinds of lipids in your blood, as well as total cholesterol. Lipid levels are important in determining your heart health.

Fasting Blood Sugar

The fasting blood sugar test measures the level of sugar (glucose) in the blood after fasting for eight hours. High glucose levels can be an indication of diabetes. The American Diabetes Association recommends a blood sugar test every three years for men age 45 and older. If you are at risk for diabetes, your doctor may perform these tests at an earlier age, and more frequently. You should also receive a blood sugar test if you experience symptoms of diabetes such as excessive thirst, frequent urination, unexplained weight loss, fatigue or slow-healing cuts or bruises.