

6 Health Screenings to Help Men Prevent Disease

Don't let heart disease, stroke and other serious health conditions sneak up on you. Instead, visit your doctor for regular checkups—even if you are feeling well. During your visit, the doctor may recommend health screenings that can detect diseases early, sometimes before you have any symptoms. Here are six screenings that can help you stay healthy:

Blood pressure. Nearly half of all Americans older than age 20 have chronic high blood pressure—130/80 mmHg or greater. Avoiding salty foods, maintaining a healthy weight and using medication, if necessary, can reduce your risk for stroke and heart disease. Men ages 40 and older should get their blood pressure checked every year.

Cholesterol. This simple blood test—after an overnight fast—measures levels of HDL, or “good,” cholesterol and LDL, or “bad,” cholesterol, as well as triglycerides. These fats in your blood can affect your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Prostate cancer. After skin cancer, prostate cancer is the most common cancer among U.S. men. Starting at age 50 or 55, men should discuss the advantages and limitations of prostate cancer screening with their doctors.

Lung cancer. Compared with men who have never smoked, smokers are 23 times more likely to develop lung cancer. Men who are ages 55 to 80 and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years should ask their doctors if they're candidates for a low-dose computed tomography (CT) test screening.

Blood glucose. This simple blood test helps detect Type 2 diabetes and prediabetes, which can increase the risk for heart disease and other complications. It's recommended for adults ages 40 to 70 who are overweight.

Colonoscopy. During this test, the doctor will examine your colon, looking for signs of cancer and small growths that can become cancerous over time, which can be removed during the test. Medical opinions vary about when to begin screening for colorectal cancer—age 45 or 50. Talk with your doctor about the right timing for you.



Sources include the American Cancer Society, American Diabetes Association, American Heart Association, American Lung Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Cancer Institute, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, and U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.