

# Annual Health Needs: MEN



## Annual Physical

See your doctor at least once a year for a physical exam. The exam should check your:

- eyes, ears nose and throat
- lymph nodes
- nervous system & mental status
- heart, circulation, blood pressure
- lungs
- abdomen (like your stomach, liver, intestines, etc.)
- bones & joints muscles, muscle strength
- skin
- reproductive system

The doctor may also order certain blood tests or X-rays. The test may look at your cholesterol level or other blood cells. X-rays may be done if you are having a certain problem. They are not part of a routine exam.

## Special Men's Issues

Men have special health needs that should be checked in addition to general physical exams.

The incidence of **prostate cancer** increases with age. Beginning at age 50, the following prevention and early detection strategies are recommended:

- Annual digital rectal exams (DRE)
- Prostate specific antigen (PSA) test every 1-2 years after age 50

**Testicular cancer** is common between the ages of 15-40; however, it can occur anytime in a man's lifetime. Therefore, it is important to examine the testicles on a regular basis. Some sources say testicular exams should be done on a monthly basis.

## Colon Cancer Screening

If needed, you may be screened for colon cancer. This test (colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy) is done if you have a family history of the disease, are over 50 years old or are having symptoms that would suggest that you need an exam earlier than age 50. For example, if you are experiencing bleeding through your rectum, your doctor may order a stool sample and, if indicated, a colonoscopy.

It is recommended to have a flexible sigmoidoscopy every 3-5 years after two negative exams, or as prescribed by your doctor.

## Adult Immunizations

**Don't forget your shots! Always check with your doctor first to see if these immunizations are right for you.**

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## Flu shot

- Annually before flu season starts (usually in October)
- Avoid flu shot if you are allergic to egg yolks.

## Tetanus/diphtheria

- Begin with the full primary series, then follow up with either a booster every 10 years or a single mid-life booster at age 50.

## Pneumococcus

- Also, known as the "pneumonia vaccine"
- The vaccine is given once during your lifetime unless otherwise recommended by your doctor.

**Traveling Abroad? Please visit this website for immunizations** <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel>

## Eye Exams

You should have regular eye exams, especially if you wear glasses or contact lenses. Eye exams should be done:

- Every 3-5 years for people ages 20-39 unless otherwise stated by your doctor
- Every 2 years for African Americans over age 40
- Every 2 years for everyone over age 60

## Dental Exams

See your dentist for regular exams including preventative care such as teeth cleanings, x-rays, etc. Contact your dentist if you experience toothaches, gum tenderness or other problems in your mouth.