

Keeping the Record Straight

Staying healthy by creating good health habits and keeping a record of your health history is important at any age. Today is the right time to make sure you are communicating and working with your doctors on the preventive measures that are important to your overall health. By having a checklist for your next check-ups, you can help your doctors help you to better health.

Screening tests can give you peace of mind about your health, or find diseases early when they are most treatable. Many preventive screenings are covered by APWU Health Plan's High Option. The U.S. Preventive Task Force recommends the preventive screening tests for men and women listed below.

By talking to your doctor about your health history, what tests are right for you, and how often you should take them, you and your doctor can design a prevention program to help you stay in the best health possible. Keeping a checklist of tests you take, and the results, helps you improve communication with your doctor, and facilitates a discussion about what tests and preventive measures are best for you.

Checklist for Men

- Cholesterol Checks: Check at least every five years, starting at age 35, or earlier if you have a history of smoking, diabetes or a family history of heart disease.
- Blood pressure: Check at least every 2 years.
- Colorectal Cancer tests: Begin regular screening at age 50.
- Diabetes tests: If you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, have a test to screen for diabetes.
- Depression: If you've felt "down", hopeless or depressed for two weeks straight, talk to your doctor about screening for depression.
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Talk to your doctor about whether you should be screened for STDs, such as HIV.
- Prostate Cancer Screening: Talk to your doctor about benefits/harms of prostate cancer screening.

Checklist for Women

- Mammograms: Every 1-2 years starting at age 40
- Pap smears: Every 1-3 years
- Cholesterol checks: Regular check-ups starting at age 20
- Blood Pressure: Every 2 years
- Colorectal cancer tests: Beginning at age 50
- Diabetes test: If you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol
- Depression: Talk to your doctor about screening if you have felt "down" or hopeless for two straight weeks
- Osteoporosis tests: Have a bone density test at age 65 for screening, between age 60-64 if you weigh less than 154 lbs.
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases: Talk to your doctor about whether you should be screened for Chlamydia or other STDs.

Keep a list of the tests you have taken, and when you took them. Talk to your doctor about when you should have the tests in the future, and note the date on your check-list.

Source: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality