

Hey Men, It's Time For A Health Tune-Up

(NAPSA)—Just like taking the car in for an oil change or for the 25,000-mile checkup, men also need to take themselves to the doctor's office to make sure everything is running smoothly.

But statistics show that men do not see a physician for a physical exam nearly as often as women, nor are they as likely to receive health screenings to prevent the onset of more serious conditions. Women live an average of six years longer than men and are less likely to die from the top ten causes of death, including cancer, diabetes and diseases of the heart, kidney and liver. According to a survey conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2001, the rate of doctor visits for such reasons as annual examinations and preventive services was 100 percent higher for women than for men, even excluding pregnancy-related visits.

Now, the Men's Health Network, a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization, has developed *Get It Checked!* to help men keep track of their body's maintenance schedule.

This simple guide outlines 15 different checkups and screenings for men and indicates at what age they should be conducted. Men, want to know how often to see the doctor to check your blood pressure or get a tetanus booster? Refer to the *Get It Checked!* manual. Even that important man-fuel, testosterone, needs to be checked once you've put on enough miles.

CHECKUPS AND SCREENINGS	WHEN?	AGES 20-39	40-49	50+
HEMOCCULT: Screens the stool for microscopic amounts of blood that can be the first indication of polyps or colon cancer.	Every year		✓	✓
COLORRECTAL HEALTH: A flexible scope examines the rectum, sigmoid and descending colon for cancer at its earliest and treatable stages. It also detects polyps, which are benign growths that can progress to cancer if not found early.	Every 3-4 years			✓
CHEST X-RAY: Should be considered in smokers over the age of 45. The usefulness of this test on a yearly basis is debatable due to poor cure rates of lung cancer.	Every year (if smoker)		✓	✓
SELF-EXAMS: <i>Testicle:</i> To find lumps in their earliest stages. <i>Skin:</i> To look for signs of changing moles, freckles, or early skin cancer. <i>Oral:</i> To look for signs of cancerous lesions in the mouth. <i>Breast:</i> To find abnormal lumps in their earliest stages.	Monthly by self	✓	✓	✓
BONE HEALTH: Bone mineral density test. Testing is best done under the supervision of your physician.	Discuss with a physician			Age 60
TESTOSTERONE SCREENING: Low testosterone symptoms include low sex drive, erectile dysfunction, fatigue and depression. Initial screening for symptoms with a questionnaire followed by a simple blood test.	Discuss with a physician		✓	✓
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs): Sexually active adults who consider themselves at risk for STDs should be screened for syphilis, chlamydia and other STDs.	Under physician supervision	✓		Discuss

Source: Men's Health Network

CHECKUPS AND SCREENINGS	WHEN?	AGES 20-39	40-49	50+
PHYSICAL EXAM: Review overall health status, perform a thorough physical exam and discuss health related topics.	Every 3 years Every 2 years Every year	✓	✓	✓
BLOOD PRESSURE: High blood pressure (Hypertension) has no symptoms, but can cause permanent damage to body organs.	Every year	✓	✓	✓
TB SKIN TEST: Should be done on occasion of exposure or suggestive symptoms at direction of physician. Some occupations may require more frequent testing for public health indications.	Every 5 years	✓	✓	✓
BLOOD TESTS & URINALYSIS: Screens for various illnesses and diseases (such as cholesterol, diabetes, kidney or thyroid dysfunction) before symptoms occur.	Every 3 years Every 2 years Every year	✓	✓	✓
EKG: Electrocardiogram screens for heart abnormalities.	Baseline Every 4 years Every 3 years	Age 30	✓	✓
TETANUS BOOSTER: Prevents lockjaw.	Every 10 years	✓	✓	✓
RECTAL EXAM: Screens for hemorrhoids, lower rectal problems, colon and prostate cancer.	Every year	✓	✓	✓
PSA BLOOD TEST: Prostate Specific Antigen is produced by the prostate. Levels rise when there is an abnormality such as an infection, enlargement or cancer. Testing should be done in collaboration with your physician.	Every year		*	✓

*African-American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer may wish to begin screening at age 40 or earlier.



Remember, regular checkups and age-appropriate screening can improve a man's health and extend his life. Regular screening can catch many diseases in an early stage, when treatment is most likely to be successful.

Contact the Men's Health Network at (202) 543-6461 for a wallet-sized version of *Get It Checked!* or for other free information about men's health.