

18 checks to ensure that you remain healthy at any age

Written by admin

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There is plenty that women can do to remain healthy and hearty. This includes healthy habits, preventive medicines and screening tests which can find diseases early when they are easier to treat.

1. Be Physically Active. Walking briskly, aerobics, dancing, swimming, and bicycling are a few examples of moderate physical activity. If you are not already physically active, start small and work up to 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity most days of the week. If you already have some health concerns, consult a doctor before you start any strenuous physical activity.

2. Eat a Healthy Diet. Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products; include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts; and eat foods low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars.

3. Stay at a Healthy Weight. There are many conditions that one can get from either being underweight or overweight. Balance calories from foods and beverages with calories you burn off by your activities. To prevent gradual weight gain over time, make small decreases in food and leverage

4. Be screened for **Obesity:** Have your body mass index (BMI) calculated. This is a measure of body fat based on height and weight. An obese person has a BMI of more than calories and increased physical activity.

5. Self examinations and screening for **Breast Cancer: You should learn how to examine your breasts to feel for any changes. This should be done every month. Th** is is an easy exam but helps a lot in detecting lumps, or cysts, in the breast that may be signs

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of breast cancer. It is also recommended that starting at age 40, women should have a mammogram every 1 to 2 years.

6. Get screened for **Cervical Cancer**: Have a Pap smear every 1 to 3 years if you have been sexually active. Women need to start having these tests at around 20, to check for any cellular changes in their cervix. This test helps detect any signs of cancer and has reduced the number of deaths due to cervical cancer since it was introduced in the 1940's.

7. Check for **High Cholesterol**: Experts usually require cholesterol level checks after women are in their 40's but it is recommended to have the baseline check in your 20's. High cholesterol increases your risk for a lot of diseases. Have your cholesterol checked regularly starting at age 45. If you are younger than 45, talk to your doctor about whether to have your cholesterol checked if you have diabetes, have high blood pressure, heart disease runs in your family or if you smoke

8. Check for **High Blood Pressure**: Have your blood pressure checked at least every 2 years. High blood pressure is 140/90 or higher. High blood pressure or hypertension is a dangerous disease since it has no specific symptoms. It can result in sudden heart attacks and other serious health conditions.

9. Be tested for **Colorectal Cancer**: Have a test for colorectal cancer starting at age 50. Your doctor can help you decide which test is right for you. If you have a family history of colorectal cancer, you may need to be screened earlier.

10. Be screened for **Diabetes**: Have a test for diabetes if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol, are overweight or have a family history of diabetes. Diabetics have a sugar level higher than

11. Have your **eyes** checked. Eye defects are not easy to detect unless you have your eyes checked. This exam is very important because some conditions can cause headaches and even dizziness.

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12. Be screened for **Depression**: Your emotional health is as important as your physical health. If you have felt "down," sad, or hopeless over the last 2 weeks or have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things, you may be depressed. Talk to your doctor about being screened for depression.

13. Have a **Skin examination** – This can be done on your own. Check your entire body for any changes in your skin, such as a new mole, or any new marks. Consult a doctor if you find any, they might be more serious than you think. Or not. Either way, it's always good to be careful.

14. Be screened for **Osteoporosis (thinning of the Bones)**. Have a bone density test beginning at age 65 to screen for osteoporosis. If you are between the ages of 60 and 64 and weigh 154 lbs. or less, talk to your doctor about being tested.

15. Be checked for **Chlamydia and Other Sexually Transmitted Infections**: Have a test for chlamydia if you are 25 or younger and sexually active. If you are older, talk to your doctor about being tested. Also ask whether you should be tested for other sexually transmitted diseases.

16. **Know your HIV status**. Have a test to screen for HIV infection if you have had sex, (and especially so if you have been with multiple partners or with someone who is unfaithful or who is HIV-positive), are pregnant, have used or now use injection drugs (or have a partner who does, are being treated for sexually transmitted diseases. Or have a had a blood transfusion.

17. Take **preventive medicines** as needed. However, hormones for example for the relief of menopause symptoms, breast cancer drugs (for those with higher risk of breast cancer and have a mother, sister or daughter who has had breast cancer) without talking to the doctor to assess your personal risks and benefits. You should also ask your doctor about taking aspirin to prevent heart disease if you are older than 45 or if younger than 45 and have high blood pressure, have high cholesterol, have diabetes or smoke.

18. Have the necessary **immunizations**. Have a flu shot every year starting at age 50. If you are younger than 50, ask your doctor whether you need a flu shot. You should also have a pneumonia shot once after you turn 65. If you are younger, ask your doctor whether you need a pneumonia shot.

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