

Nutrition and Lifestyle Changes You Need Now



1. Eat a high-fiber, low-fat **diet**, including 7-9 servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
2. **Exercise** for at least 30 minutes per day most days of the week, for healthier bones, weight and stress management, and cardiovascular health.
3. **Don't smoke**. If you do, quit. Talk to your health care provider for help.
4. Get enough **sleep**, at least 7-8 hours daily.
5. Spend time enjoying personal, intellectual or creative pursuits that you find **relaxing**.
6. See your health care provider for regular **health screenings**.

People have different medical needs at different times. If you are pregnant or have diabetes, for example, you should see your provider routinely for guidance in managing your condition.

Routine Screenings & Immunization Considered Essential for the Average Healthy Woman

- Blood pressure
- Blood cholesterol levels
- Diabetes test
- Breast exam
- Mammogram
- Skin check
- Dental check
- Rectum/colon exam
- Tetanus and diphtheria booster (every 10 years)
- Vision and hearing tests
- Pap smear
- Pelvic exam
- Influenza vaccine (annually)

The screening schedule that's best for you is based on your age, your medical history and your individual risk factors.

More Take-Home Tips

Discover your daily calorie need.

Depending on your age and activity level, your body needs a certain amount of calories to maintain your present weight — or fewer calories to lose weight. **Did you know?** Safe, effective weight loss consists of only about 1-2 pounds per week. Your best bet is to eat a healthy, low-fat diet, exercise regularly, and burn more calories than you take in.



Fit in time for some fitness.

In addition to exercise workouts, you can find physical activity in household tasks that get your body moving and your heart pumping. **Tip:** Add up fitness bits (such as in three 10-minute sessions) and accumulate at least 30 minutes per day most days of the week. Add a half-hour yoga routine or aerobics session and you'll see results.

Quit smoking. Quitting lowers your risk of having a heart attack or stroke, or developing cancer. If you are pregnant, it will improve your chances of having a healthy baby. The people you live with, especially your children, will be healthier, and you will save money.

Watch for depression. It often runs in families, triggered by a stressful life event, or a result of hormonal changes, particularly after childbirth (postpartum), or during menopause or the years leading up to it (perimenopause). **Signs:** sleep problems, fatigue or lack of energy, feelings of worthlessness and guilt, agitation and restlessness, feelings of hopelessness, inability to enjoy activities that normally make you happy, or thoughts of death or suicide. If you have symptoms, get help.

Final thought: Women often manage the health care of a spouse or loved one while neglecting their own. Taking care of yourself can safeguard your health for a longer and better life, and a healthier you is good for your loved ones too.

WOMEN'S HEALTH

TAKING CARE OF YOU



HOW ARE YOU FEELING?

The secret to looking and feeling your best at any age isn't a new hairdo or the latest fad diet. It's as simple as adopting healthful habits now that can help you prevent disease, stay strong, and enjoy life for years to come.

Wife, mother, grandmother, daughter, student, employee — your life is full of things and people who need you. But don't forget to take care of yourself too.

Are You Doing All You Can to Stay Healthy?

Check the habits that apply to you.

- I get 7-8 hours of sleep most nights.
- I have coping skills to ease stress.
- I keep my weight within a healthy range.
- I don't smoke.
- I limit alcohol to no more than one drink per day or less.
- I eat a balanced, low-fat diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables and fiber.
- I get at least 30 minutes of heart-pumping exercise nearly every day to fight bone loss, control weight and ease tension.
- I partner with my health care provider to have regular checkups and screenings appropriate for my age and health issues.
- I protect myself from the sun's harmful rays.
- I take time for fun and friendship.

DID YOU CHECK 7-10 boxes? Keep up the good work! 4-6 boxes? Make some changes now to be healthier in the future. 3 boxes or less? It's never too late to start living a healthier lifestyle.

How well do you know your risks?

Whether you love a deep suntan, you drive to the store without wearing your seat belt, or you have a family history of breast cancer or other conditions, identify your risks. Address your personal habits that can increase your chances for illness or injury.

WOMEN'S HEALTH CONCERNS: Prevention and Early Detection Are Key

HEART DISEASE

Heart disease is your main health threat. Heart health for women starts with regular exercise, a low-fat, high-fiber diet, and healthy blood pressure and blood cholesterol levels. Limit sodium and minimize saturated and trans fats in your diet. Eat at least 7 servings of fruits and vegetables per day and make sure at least half your grains are "whole."

Note: The most common sign of heart attack is chest pain, but women may also experience other symptoms such as shortness of breath, nausea, vomiting, back or jaw pain.

BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women. Risks increase as you age, particularly if you have a family history; if you had your first child after 30 or you have not had a child; if you are overweight or obese; and with alcohol use.

Ask your health care provider about the role mammography and breast self-exams (BSE) should play in your screening. BSE and breast self-awareness are options that you can use to detect changes in your breasts that could warrant a doctor's advice. The best screening tests for detecting breast cancer early are regular exams by your physician and periodic mammograms.

MENOPAUSE

Good general health can affect how well you handle this life change. Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is effective in relieving hot flashes and sleep disturbances associated with reduced hormones at menopause. But HRT may carry serious risks. It's no longer recommended for heart health. Discuss the benefits and risks with your health care provider.



TYPE 2 DIABETES

Diabetes means your blood glucose (or blood sugar) is too high. Formerly called adult onset diabetes, type 2 diabetes is considered a major health threat. Being overweight and inactive increases your chances for developing this disease that, when left untreated, usually leads to serious health problems including heart disease and eye, kidney, nerve, gum and tooth damage.

What is prediabetes? With prediabetes your blood glucose levels are above normal, but not high enough to warrant a diabetes diagnosis. Heed the warning though. People with prediabetes are at increased risk for developing type 2 diabetes as well as heart disease and stroke. The good news: With modest weight loss and moderate physical activity, you can delay or prevent type 2 diabetes and even return your glucose levels to normal.

OSTEOPOROSIS

Osteoporosis is a bone-thinning disease that typically begins by age 30 or 40 and increases risk of fracture and disability. Weight-bearing activities such as walking help retain bone mass. Risk factors include low estrogen levels, having a small frame and a lack of calcium in the diet.

Good sources of calcium: low-fat dairy products such as cheese, yogurt and milk; vegetables including collard, turnip and mustard greens and broccoli; tofu, canned salmon or sardines; fortified orange juice and some boxed cereals.



Did You Know?

When stressful situations go unresolved, the body stays tense. That tension contributes to fatigue, insomnia, backache, headache and digestive problems. Research suggests that it may also play a role in heart disease and psychological disorders such as depression and anxiety. Find healthy ways to cope with stress, and talk to your health care provider if it interferes with your daily life.