

Partners in Health

Make our goals be your goals

Our practice is dedicated to improving the health and well being of our patients. We strive not only to treat your illnesses, but also to prevent them. We are participating in a research project that will help us to provide you with better health care. The recommendations listed below have been scientifically shown to benefit your health. Take charge of your health by checking up on us and making sure these goals are met!



For all people over age 18:

- Have your **blood pressure** checked at least every **2** years.
- Have your **cholesterol** checked at least every **5** years.
- If you are overweight, have a blood test to **check for diabetes**, or high blood sugar, every year. Also, ask your doctor to help you learn how to lose weight and choose foods that are healthy for you.
- If, over the past 2 weeks, you have frequently felt down, depressed, or hopeless or you have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things, you may be depressed and should tell your doctor.
- If you consume alcohol, tell your doctor. Your doctor can help you assess whether you have a drinking problem and provide treatment if necessary.
- If you smoke, tell your doctor. Your doctor may be able to help you **stop smoking**.
- Men over age 40 and women over age 50 should talk with their doctor about taking an **aspirin** a day to prevent heart problems.
- If you are over age 50, get stool cards to check your stool for blood. Your doctor may also suggest that you have either a colonoscopy or sigmoidoscopy, which are tests used to **check for colon cancer**.



For people over age 65:

- Make sure your doctor is aware of all medications that you are taking. There are some medications that should not be prescribed for older patients.



For Women:

- If you are sexually active and have not had a hysterectomy, you should have a **pap smear** to check for cervical cancer **every 1-3 years**.
- If you are between the ages of 16 and 25 and have ever been sexually active, you should be checked for Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted infection, every year.
- If you are over age 40, you should start having **mammograms every 1-2 years**.



Vaccines:

- *Who should get a **flu shot** every year?*
People older than age 50, **or** people with diabetes, asthma, COPD, heart disease or heart failure, kidney disease, or alcohol abuse
- *Who should get a **Pneumococcal vaccine** (one time shot unless recommended more often by your doctor)?*
People older than age 65, **or** people with diabetes, asthma, COPD, heart disease or heart failure, kidney disease, or alcohol abuse
- *Who should get a **Hepatitis A vaccine** (two shot series)?*
People with liver disease or those traveling to foreign countries



For people with diabetes:

- Have an **A1C** test every 3-6 months. An A1C is a measure of your average blood sugar over the past three months. It is more accurate than a single blood sugar reading. People with diabetes should have an **A1C less than 7**.
- Have your **blood pressure** checked at least twice a year. Having diabetes and high blood pressure raises your risk of having heart disease or a stroke. To keep you from having these problems, your **blood pressure** should be **less than 130/80**.
- If you have high blood pressure and diabetes, make sure you are taking either an **ACE Inhibitor** or an **Angiotensin Receptor Blocker (ARB)** unless you are allergic to them. These medications help lower your blood pressure and protect your kidneys.
- Have a **urine test** every year to make sure your kidneys are working properly. If you have too much protein in your urine, you should be taking an **ACE Inhibitor or ARB**.
- Your lipid levels should be checked every year. Your **LDL-C**, or “bad” cholesterol, should be **less than 100**. Your **HDL-C**, or “good” cholesterol, should be **over 45**. Your **triglycerides** should be **less than 150**.
- If you have diabetes and are over age 40, you should talk with your doctor about taking an **aspirin** a day to prevent heart problems.



For people with heart and/or blood vessel disease:

- Have your cholesterol checked every year. Your **LDL-C**, or “bad” cholesterol, should be **below 100**.
- Make sure you are taking a **cholesterol lowering medication**.



For people with hypertension (high blood pressure):

- If your blood pressure has been **over 140/90** at least three times in the past year, you have high blood pressure and should be treated. Your blood pressure should be **less than 140/90**.
- If you have high blood pressure, have your blood pressure checked at least **twice a year**.
- You should also talk with your doctor about taking an **aspirin** a day to prevent heart problems.



For people with heart failure:

- Most people with heart failure should be on an **ACE-Inhibitor** or **ARB** and a **Beta-Blocker**, which relaxes the heart. You may also benefit from a medicine called **spironolactone**.



For people with atrial fibrillation:

- You should be taking an **anticoagulant** (coumadin or an anti-platelet agent) to keep you from having a stroke unless you have had bleeding problems.



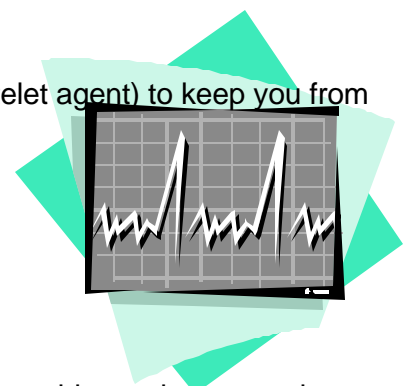
For people with asthma (older than age 5):

- You may benefit from taking an **anti-inflammatory** medication.



A word about antibiotics:

Viruses cause most colds, coughs, and sore throats. If you have a cold, cough, or sore throat, taking antibiotics will usually not help you. Taking antibiotics for these kinds of illness also increases your chance of being infected with resistant bacteria that cannot be killed by antibiotics. If your illness gets worse or lasts a long time, tell your doctor so further treatment can be given.



For links to health information on the Internet, visit
<http://www.musc.edu/pprnet/educate.htm>.