



Preventive Health Care – Your Annual Checkup

Schedule a checkup with your doctor once a year. Even if you feel fine, see your doctor once a year. A checkup will help you and your doctor find and treat health problems early.



To get the most out of the checkup, be prepared. Bring information with you that the doctor will need. You can ask a supporter to help you get ready for the checkup or to go with you. Use this information to know what to expect at the doctor's office.

At your annual checkup the nurse will:

- **Take your blood pressure** - to test for high blood pressure
- **Get your height and weight** - to see if you are at a healthy weight

At the checkup the doctor will:

- ✓ **Talk to you** - about your general health, medical and family history
- ✓ **Check your body** - for signs of a health problem
- ✓ **Make recommendations** - for preventive tests and shots you may need

Bring a list of medications you take.

 The list should include:

- Medications that a doctor has prescribed
- Over-the-counter medications
- Vitamins and other supplements

The doctor needs to know what medications you take, how many, when and why they are taken.

Bring a list of your questions and concerns. Before the checkup, you may want to practice asking these questions with a supporter.

At the checkup, make sure all your questions get asked. Make sure you understand the doctor's answers.

Don't be afraid to talk to the doctor about your concerns. The doctor's job is to help you stay healthy.



ALWAYS ask the following four questions.

1.WHAT PREVENTIVE TESTS DO I NEED? Preventive tests help the doctor find problems early. Then they are easier to treat. The doctor will recommend tests as needed based upon your age, sex and health history. The doctor may recommend a test for:

✓ High cholesterol	Men and Women
✓ Type 2 diabetes	Men and Women
✓ Colon cancer	Men and Women
✓ Prostate cancer	Men Only
✓ Cervical cancer	Women Only
✓ Osteoporosis	Men and Women
✓ Breast cancer	Women Only

2.WHAT KIND OF TEST IS IT? The doctor may recommend a preventive test. Ask questions to find out more about the test.

- ✓ What is the test for?
- ✓ What can I do to prepare? When and where will I get the test? Do I need to have someone go with me?
- ✓ What kind of test is it? How will it feel? Is there anything else I need to know?
- ✓ Can I eat before the test? Should I take my medications?
- ✓ When and from whom will I get my results?

Make sure to get the test. When you get the test results, make sure you understand them. Don't be afraid to ask the doctor questions.

3.WHAT PREVENTIVE SHOTS DO I NEED? Ask the doctor what shots you may need. For example, you may need flu, pneumonia, tetanus, or other shots to help you stay healthy.



4.WHAT MORE CAN I DO TO STAY HEALTHY? Ask the doctor what more you can do to stay healthy. The doctor may ask how much you exercise, what you eat, or if you smoke. The doctor may make suggestions for changes you can make to improve your health.