

Your Health



What You Need To Know

How to Take Charge of Your Health

Protect your health.

To get the most out of a doctor's visit, you must be an active partner with your physician.

How do I get ready?

Before going to the doctor's office, list all of your concerns. Write down all the prescriptions, over-the-counter drugs and vitamins that you take.

What information should I give?

Be sure and tell your doctor about any changes that have occurred since your last visit — a change in your habits, or a health problem that sent you to the emergency room. Have your health history in mind, as well as that of your family.

Describe your symptoms clearly and concisely — and be candid, your doctor needs to know everything.

What information should I get?

Your doctor expects you to ask questions: What causes my condition? How can we treat it? If it's chronic, how might it change how I live?

How can I learn more about my condition?

Tell me about my prescription (or treatment) and possible side effects. In order to maintain your health, don't smoke, make healthy food choices, get physically active and keep a healthy weight.

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Women

It is easy to think that heart attacks only happen to men. Yet heart disease claims the lives of one out of three American women. So have your cholesterol levels and blood pressure checked on a regular basis.

Also:

- Have your doctor screen for diabetes.
- Have a mammogram every one to two years starting at age 40.
- Have a PAP smear every one to three years if you have been sexually active or are older than age 21.
- If you are over 65, have a bone-density test.

Seniors

If you need to, bring a friend or relative along to help you keep track of what your doctor tells you. After age 65, you are at a higher risk of developing cancer and diabetes – and suffering strokes and heart attacks.

So get all the screenings and medical exams recommended for a person of your age, gender and medical history.

- Have your cholesterol levels and blood pressure checked on a regular basis.
- Get your flu and/or pneumonia shot.
- Stay physically active and involved.

African-American Adults

You are at a higher risk of developing certain cancers and diabetes, and to elevated cholesterol levels and higher blood pressure that can lead to strokes and heart attacks.

- Have your cholesterol levels and blood pressure checked on a regular basis.
- Have your doctor screen for diabetes.
- For men, talk to your doctor about when to undergo colorectal cancer tests, as well as prostate cancer screening.
- For women, counter your greater risk of cancer by getting regular PAP smears and breast exams.

Asian-American Adults

Adults in most Asian-American groups have a somewhat lower risk of developing certain cancers, as well as suffering strokes and heart attacks. This is good news, but it does not mean that you are invulnerable.

- Have your cholesterol levels and blood pressure checked on a regular basis.
- Have your doctor screen for diabetes, especially if you have Native Hawaiian ancestry.
- For men, talk to your doctor about when to undergo colorectal cancer tests, as well as prostate cancer screening.
- For women, get regular PAP smears and breast exams.

Hispanic/Latino Adults

You have an elevated risk of developing diabetes and certain cancers.

- Have your cholesterol levels and blood pressure checked on a regular basis.
- Have your doctor screen for diabetes.
- For men, talk to your doctor about when to undergo colorectal cancer tests, as well as prostate cancer screening.
- For Latinas, counter your greater risk of contracting cervical cancer by getting regular PAP smears. Also, don't forget to ask for your regular breast exam.