

Getting a head start on children's health

Prevention puts them on the right path

Having a baby can be an exciting, joyful time. However, giving your baby a healthy start in life begins even before pregnancy.

Before and during pregnancy

When you are ready to start a family, make an appointment with your physician to talk about your decision. Your doctor may need to advise you about any health conditions or concerns. Plus, as a prospective parent you are sure to have many questions about pregnancy and childbirth. A woman may need to be screened for diseases and disorders, as well as have immunizations that can protect her health.

Because a mother's health can have a direct impact on her baby's health, it's important to stop smoking and avoid alcohol. A folic acid supplement may help lower the risk of certain birth defects, while plenty of rest and appropriate physical activity can help a woman's body prepare for pregnancy.

Pregnant women should begin obstetric care early in pregnancy and continue to have regular prenatal care visits as advised by your physician.

Between visits, it can be helpful to keep a list of questions about your pregnancy, such as concerns about diet or exercise. First-time parents may need information about resources for learning about labor, delivery and caring for a baby.

Welcoming your newborn

Few experiences are as warm and memorable as the first few days at home with a baby. New mothers often focus so much on their newborn's needs that they forget to take care of themselves. Therefore, schedule an appointment to visit your physician four-to-six weeks after your baby is born. The doctor will make sure you are recovering normally from childbirth, are up to date on important screenings and are coping with the demands of being a new parent.

Again, use this visit to talk about any concerns you may have. It's not uncommon to face challenges related to sleeplessness, feelings of depression and difficulties with breast-feeding.



Regular care of your child's health

To confirm healthy growth and development, your child needs a series of general checkups during the first years of life. Depending on the child's age, the physician may check vision, hearing, height, weight and blood pressure. Exams also may include periodic screenings for kidney problems and anemia. Depending on your child's risk for these conditions, screenings for tuberculosis, high cholesterol or elevated blood lead levels may be appropriate.

The pediatrician should measure your child's head circumference regularly through age 2, and dental visits may begin between ages 1 and 3 years. In addition, the pediatrician may offer advice about nutrition, injury prevention and fluoride supplementation, as needed.

Make sure your child sees the doctor for a routine checkup at the following ages:

- At birth
- 2 to 4 days
- 1 month
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 24 months
- 3 years
- 4 years
- 5 years
- 6 years
- 8 years

STAYING healthy

Your lifetime guide to preventive health



Prenatal Care



Children's Health



Adult Health

Experience. Wellness. Everywhere.™

Prevention is an important step to living well. Take the path to a healthy future by reviewing our annual *Preventive Care Guidelines*.

In this guide, we provide the tools you'll need to manage your health and your health care – in proactive and smart ways.

The recommendations reflect up-to-date and reliable information about preventive care, and are based on the advice of professional associations and government sources, as well as input from health care providers.

They include recommended services for every member of your family, from prenatal care to senior health.

As you read through this information, keep in mind that the guidelines are general recommendations for average

Preventive care is key to maintaining a healthier life. The guidelines provided inside are recommended for you and your family.

risk healthy individuals. They do not cover every disease, infection or condition that may affect you. Your health care needs are as unique as you are and may depend on factors such as your age, family health history, current health status, physical activity level, diet and environment. You should speak with your physician about your individual health care needs.

In addition to these guidelines, we offer a wide variety of health and wellness information on our Web site at www.bcbsil.com.



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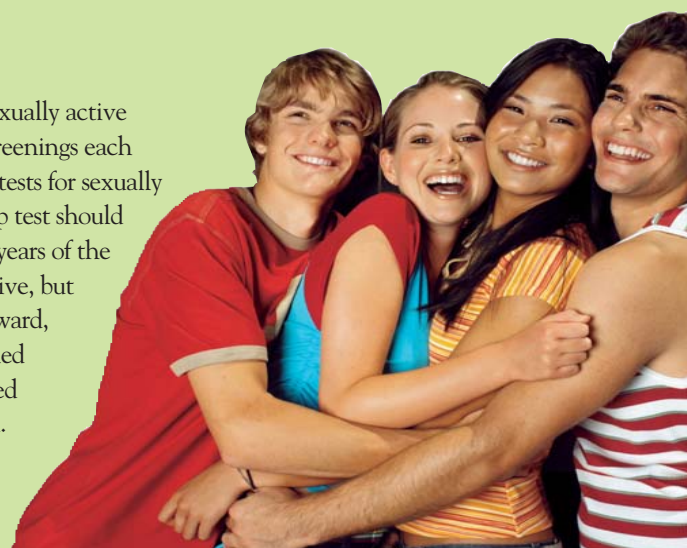
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Pre-teen and teenage years

As your child grows into a teen, he or she needs to continue seeing the doctor regularly. Unless otherwise recommended, most older children need to have routine checkups annually from ages 10 to 17.

When it comes to health care, teens have special concerns and considerations. Therefore, the physician visit may include not only a physical exam and immunizations, but also guidance on issues such as smoking, injury prevention, nutrition, physical activity and sexual health.

Teens who have become sexually active should have appropriate screenings each year, including regular Pap tests for sexually active females. The first Pap test should be performed within three years of the teen becoming sexually active, but no later than age 21. Afterward, Pap tests should be performed every one to two years, based on the testing method used.



Adult Health

Preventive checklist

Staying up to date with your preventive care screenings is much easier and more affordable than treating a serious disease or condition. When a health problem does occur, regular screenings may help detect the problem early and provide a better chance of treating it successfully. Do you know which preventive care services you need?

Men

Prostate cancer — If you are age 40 or older, discuss screening risks and benefits with your physician. Men who are most likely to benefit from prostate cancer testing include: men age 40 or older of African American descent; men age 40 or older with a father, brother or son who has had prostate cancer; and any man age 50 or older.

Abdominal aortic aneurysm — You may need to be screened if you are a man age 65 to age 75 who has ever smoked.

Women

Clinical breast exam — Have this exam performed every three years from ages 20 to 40 and annually after age 40.

Endometrial cancer — At the time of menopause, ask your physician about the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer, and report any symptoms you experience to your doctor.

Mammogram — A screening mammogram is recommended every one or two years starting at age 40. Depending upon your family history, you may need additional evaluation.

Pap test — Testing for cervical cancer should start no later than age 21. You should be screened every year if using a conventional Pap test, or every two years if using a liquid-based Pap test. At or after age 30, you may start being screened every two to three years if you have had three consecutive normal results. You may stop screenings at age 70 if you have had three or more consecutive normal results and no abnormal results in the last 10 years. You may also stop screenings following a total hysterectomy.

Sexually transmitted diseases — Screening is recommended if you are at increased risk for syphilis or gonorrhea. Routine chlamydia testing is also recommended for sexually active women age 25 and younger.

All Adults

Blood pressure — Have your blood pressure tested every two years, starting at age 18.

Cholesterol — Screenings should start at age 35 for most men and age 45 for most women. Men age 20-35 and women age 20-45 who have other risk factors for coronary heart disease should also be screened. The frequency of screenings may be based on your test results; adult diabetics may need to be screened annually, while people with repeated normal results may need screenings every five years or even less often.

Colorectal cancer — Begin having tests at age 50 if you are at average risk. Screenings may include one of the following: an annual fecal occult blood test on three specimens collected at home; a flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years; or both an annual fecal occult blood test and flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years. Other screening options may include a double-contrast barium enema every five years or a colonoscopy every 10 years. If you have an increased risk for colon cancer, you may need to be screened earlier or according to a different schedule.

Diabetes — You may need to be screened for diabetes if you have high blood pressure or high cholesterol. Screening may also be recommended based on your weight, family history of diabetes or other risk factors.

Height and weight — Have your height and weight checked every one to three years starting at age 18.

HIV — You may need to be tested, depending on your risk for infection. All pregnant women should be screened.

Tuberculosis — Testing should be performed if you are at high risk.

Age 65 and Older

Hearing and vision — Regular evaluations are recommended.

Osteoporosis — Bone-density screenings are important if you are a woman older than age 65, or beginning at age 60, if you are at increased risk for osteoporosis-related fractures.

Be well: Immunizations are for adults too

Children aren't the only ones at risk for tetanus, mumps and chicken pox. Most adults need to be re-immunized periodically for the highest level of disease protection.

This information is not intended to replace a doctor's advice. Review the list below and talk to your physician about immunizations you may need.

Diphtheria-tetanus — Vaccine boosters are recommended every 10 years. Some adults should receive Tdap.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) — The vaccine is generally recommended for women ages 18-26.

Influenza — Flu shots are available each year before the peak flu season, which usually begins in late December and continues into early March. An annual flu shot is recommended if you: are age 50 or older, have a chronic condition such as heart or lung disease or diabetes, will be pregnant during flu season, live in a long-term care facility or

Keep your child covered



For the best protection, make sure your child stays up to date on immunizations ("shots") that help to guard against dangerous diseases and infections.

This chart shows the ages at which your child may need certain immunizations. It is based on the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices of the Centers for Disease Control and

Prevention, and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Green bars indicate acceptable age ranges for your child to receive a vaccine. Blue bars indicate an acceptable "catch-up" range if a vaccine dose was missed.

Your child may need other immunizations as well. Speak with your child's doctor for specific information.

VACCINE	AGE	Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	24 months	4-6 years	11-12 years	13-14 years	15 years	16-18 years
Hepatitis B	HepB		HepB			HepB					HepB Series				
Rotavirus				Rota	Rota	Rota									
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis				DTaP	DTaP	DTaP			DTaP		DTaP	Tdap	Tdap		
Haemophilus influenzae type b				Hib	Hib	Hib		Hib		Hib					
Inactivated Poliovirus				IPV	IPV		IPV				IPV	IPV			
Measles, Mumps, Rubella							MMR				MMR	MMR			
Varicella							Varicella				Varicella	Varicella			
Meningococcal												MCV4		MCV4 ²	
Pneumococcal				PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV								
Influenza							Influenza (yearly)								
Hepatitis A							HepA (2 doses)								
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) 3 doses												HPV	HPV		

Range of recommended ages

Catch-up immunization

11-12 year-old assessment

¹ The 6-month dose of Hib may or may not be necessary depending upon the brand of Hib vaccine.

² MCV4 is given at age 15 to those who did not receive it at age 11-12.

have a metabolic disease (such as diabetes or immunosuppression) that required regular follow-up care or hospitalization during the past year. You should also be vaccinated against the flu if you could transmit the virus to those at high risk.

Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) — You should not receive these vaccines if you are pregnant, have an immunodeficiency or your immune system is suppressed.

Measles — If you were born in or after 1957, you should receive at least one dose of the MMR vaccine if you have not been immunized or do not have evidence of immunity and do not have a medical reason to avoid immunization.

Mumps — At least one dose of the vaccine is recommended if you were born during or after 1957 and do not have a history of mumps.

Rubella (German measles) — Immunization is recommended if you are a woman of childbearing age who is not pregnant and not planning to become pregnant within the next four weeks and if your vaccination history is unreliable or laboratory testing does not show immunity.

Pneumococcal — You may need immunization if you are age 65 or older and have never received the vaccine; if you are age 65 or older and received the vaccine more than five years ago but were younger than age 65 at that time; or if you are between ages 18 and 64 and have a chronic condition such as diabetes or heart, lung, liver or kidney disease.

Varicella (chicken pox) — You may need the vaccine if you never had chicken pox and have not already received varicella vaccine. Special consideration should be given to those who have close contact with persons at high risk for severe disease or are at high risk for exposure or transmission of chicken pox.

