

# STAYING HEALTHY

YOUR LIFETIME GUIDE TO PREVENTIVE HEALTH

## Your health, your health care

*The benefits of taking charge of your health care*

Welcome to our annual preventive care guidelines issue.

We provide this information each year to help you take charge of your health.

An effective preventive care plan is key to managing your health and health care.

For example, focusing on prevention and early detection of diseases and illnesses can help you maintain a healthy lifestyle.

These guidelines are a good source of information for managing your family's health. Inside you will find recommended screenings, immunizations and doctor visits for all ages, from infancy to the senior years.

At each stage of life, we experience changes that affect our physical and mental well-being. Regular pediatrician visits can help chart your young child's development. Older children and adolescents may need guidance as they mature. As adults, our busy lives require that we find a healthy balance.

In addition, our 2005 Preventive Care Guidelines provide information about care before, during and after pregnancy, to help give your child a bright and healthy future.

A good preventive care plan is only one of your responsibilities as a health-conscious consumer. It's important to stay informed about any medical conditions you may have, make lifestyle choices that will benefit your health and select your health care providers and services wisely.

If you have recently joined Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, please familiarize yourself with the guidelines on the following pages. If you are a longtime member, review them again, as they reflect recent changes.

These are general guidelines; your individual needs may differ from these recommendations. Talk to your doctor about your personal health needs and what preventive care steps you can take.



Prenatal Care

Children's Health

Adult Health

*Preventive care is key to maintaining a healthier life.*

*The guidelines provided inside are recommended for you and your family.*

# Routine tests — a key to prevention

## Follow your step-by-step health exam schedule

Staying current with preventive tests and exams is important and a good way to take charge of your health. Screenings may help avoid problems or detect them early, providing a better chance of successful treatment. Speak with your physician about these tests and others you may need:

### Men

- [ ] **Prostate cancer**  
If you are age 50 or older, or are in a high risk group, discuss screening risks and benefits.
- [ ] **Abdominal aortic aneurysm**  
You may need to be screened if you are 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 doctor about the risks and symptoms of endometrial cancer, and report any symptoms you experience to your physician.
- [ ] **Mammogram**  
You should have a screening mammogram every one or two years starting at age 40.
- [ ] **Pap test**  
Beginning at age 21, if using a conventional Pap test, you should be tested for cervical cancer each year or every two years if using a liquid-based Pap test. At 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 risk for syphilis or gonorrhea. Routine chlamydia testing is also recommended for sexually active women younger than age 26.

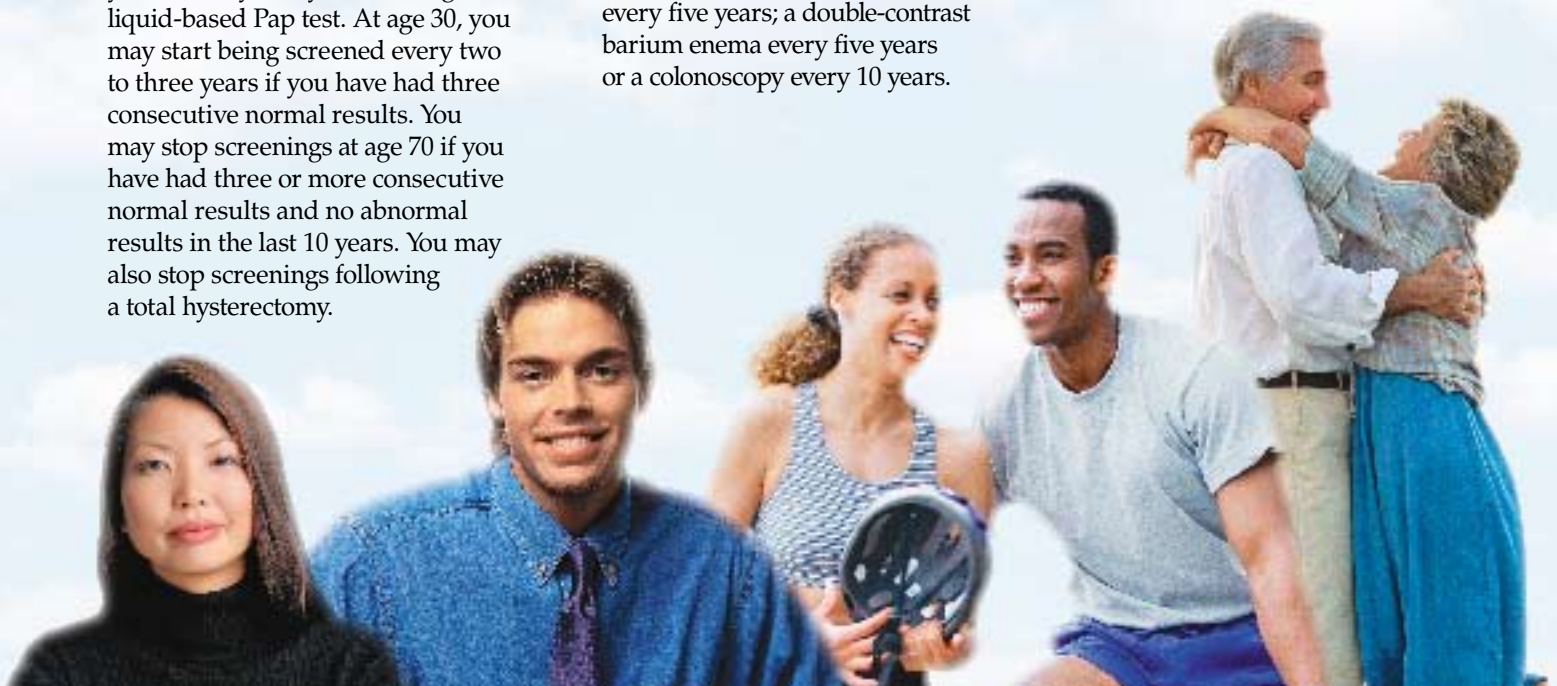
### All adults

- [ ] **Blood pressure**  
Have your blood pressure tested every two years, starting at age 18.
- [ ] **Cholesterol**  
Monitor your total and high density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol levels starting at age 35 if you are a man or at age 45 if you are a woman. You may need to begin screening as young as age 20 if you have risk factors for coronary heart disease. With normal results, the test should be repeated approximately every five years.
- [ ] **Colon cancer**  
Begin having tests at age 50 or earlier if you have an increased risk. Screenings should include one of the following: an annual fecal occult blood test on three specimens collected at home; a flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years; an annual fecal occult blood test and flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years; a double-contrast barium enema every five years or a colonoscopy every 10 years.

- [ ] **Diabetes**  
You may need diabetes screenings with a fasting glucose 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.
- [ ] **Tuberculosis**  
Testing should be performed if you are at high risk.

### Adults 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 risk for osteoporosis-related fractures.



# Immunizations for adults

## Roll up your sleeve for disease protection

As an adult, staying current with immunizations is an important protection against serious infections.

Compare your medical records to the list below, placing a check mark next to any immunizations you may need. Then, show the list to your physician to help determine whether you should be immunized.

[ ] **Diphtheria-tetanus** — A vaccine booster is recommended every 10 years for adults.

[ ] **Flu** — Flu shots are available during the fall in preparation for flu season, which usually lasts from late December through 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, will be pregnant during the flu season, have a compromised immune system, live in a long-term care facility or could transmit the virus to those at high risk.

[ ] **Hepatitis A** — This vaccine is recommended if you have a blood clotting disorder or liver disease, or if you use illegal drugs or engage in other high-risk behavior.

[ ] **Hepatitis B** — Immunization is recommended if you have not been vaccinated and are a dialysis patient, receive clotting factor concentrates, may be exposed to the virus through your job or are in another high-risk group.

### Measles, mumps and rubella

[ ] **Measles** — Even if you have received this vaccine, you may need a second dose. Immunization is recommended if you were born in or after 1957, have not been immunized or do not have evidence of immunity and do not have a medical reason to avoid immunization.

[ ] **Mumps** — One dose of the vaccine is recommended.

[ ] **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 four weeks, and your vaccination history is unreliable.

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

[ ] **Varicella (chicken pox)** — Even healthy people can experience serious complications from chicken pox. You may need the vaccine if you have not had chicken pox and may be at risk for exposure or transmission of the virus. If you live with children or work in a school, day care or health care setting, you are considered to be at risk.

*This information is not intended to replace a doctor's advice.*

*Talk to your physician to see if these immunizations are right for you.*

# Make sure your child has maximum disease protection

Immunizations help protect your child from dangerous diseases and infections. Based on recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, the chart below shows the ages and age ranges when your child may need immunizations.

For example, the first two doses of the hepatitis B vaccine should be given at birth, the second between ages 1 month and 4 months, and the third dose between ages 6 months and 18 months. The purple bar indicates an acceptable “catch-up” range if the vaccine was missed. Some children may need other immunizations. For specific information, speak with your child's physician.

Vaccine	Range of recommended ages						Catch-up vaccination					
	Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months	6 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	24 months	4-6 years	11-12 years	13-18 years
Hepatitis B	Hep B #1									Hep B series		
		Hep B #2		Hep B #3								
Diphtheria Tetanus, Pertussis			DTaP	DTaP	DTaP			DTaP		DTaP	Td	Td
Haemophilus influenzae type b*			Hib	Hib	Hib	Hib						
Inactivated Poliovirus			IPV	IPV	IPV					IPV		
Measles, Mumps, Rubella						MMR #1				MMR #2	MMR #2	
Varicella						Varicella			Varicella			
Pneumococcal Conjugate			PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV						
Influenza					Influenza (Yearly)							



\*Number of doses needed varies; ask your doctor.

# Pregnancy, child and teen care

## Your role in your child's health care



**H**aving a healthy baby begins with a healthy pregnancy. Take an active role in your health care. If you are planning to become pregnant, talk to your physician about any health conditions you have, such as high blood pressure or diabetes. Make sure you ask questions and raise any concerns you have. Your physician may recommend screenings for genetic disorders, tuberculosis, HIV or sexually transmitted diseases. You may also need immunizations to help protect against rubella, chicken pox and hepatitis B.

To prepare for pregnancy, stop smoking and avoid alcohol. Take a look at what you're eating. Folic acid helps lower the risk of certain birth defects. Ask your doctor if a folic acid supplement is right for you. Adequate rest and physical activity are also important.

### Prenatal care

Seeing your physician early and often while you are expecting will provide the opportunity to detect complications as well as an overall assessment of the well-being of you and your baby.

Below is a recommended schedule:

- *Every four weeks up to 28 weeks*
- *Every two or three weeks from 29 weeks to 36 weeks*
- *Weekly from 36 weeks to delivery*



These visits are great opportunities to ask your physician any questions you have about diet, exercise or other aspects of your health during pregnancy. If you are going to be a mother for the first time, talk to your physician about resources to help you learn more about pregnancy, labor and delivery.

### Taking care of your baby — and yourself

As a new mother, you will experience the joys and challenges of having a newborn at home. While you will naturally want to focus on your baby's needs, don't neglect your own. Schedule a visit with your physician four to six weeks after delivery to help make sure you are recovering normally and are up to date on important screenings. Again, use this visit to ask questions about nutrition, sleeplessness or other concerns.

### Taking charge of your child's health care

Every child has unique health needs. During the first and second years, however, most need general exams at the following ages: newborn, 2 to 4 days, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months and 24 months.

Checkups are recommended at ages 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 years. Each routine exam should include assessments of your child's vision, hearing, height, weight and blood pressure. Some exams may also include tests such as a urinalysis or blood test for anemia. Tests for tuberculosis, high cholesterol or elevated blood lead levels will be based on risk.

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

## Watching your child mature into adulthood

**F**rom growing pains to braces, the teen years are a time of physical and emotional changes. As a result, your child should see his or her physician annually from ages 10 to 17, or more often if recommended.

In addition to conducting physical exams and providing needed immunizations, the doctor can be a trusted source of information — for you and your teen — about nutrition, exercise, tobacco and alcohol use, substance abuse and sexual health, among others.

Sexually active teens should be screened for sexually transmitted diseases each year, and sexually active females need to have regular Pap tests. The initial Pap test should be performed within three years of the teen becoming sexually active, but no later than age 21, with subsequent Pap tests every one to two years, depending on the type of test.

