

STAYING

Your lifetime guide to preventive health

healthy



BlueCross BlueShield
of Illinois



Prenatal Care



Children's Health



Adult Health

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A Division of Health Care
Service Corporation, a
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Plan for a healthy future

When it comes to your health care, you are in charge

Whether you decide to skip dessert or take a moment to buckle up before a drive, you constantly make decisions that can have a positive impact on your personal health and safety. Today, you can take another important step on the path to a healthy future by reviewing our annual Preventive Care Guidelines.

Each year, we provide this information to you to help you make the most of your health, your health care — and your health plan benefits. As a member of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, you enjoy access to a range of disease screenings, immunizations, physician visits and other care services.

With these benefits, however, comes an obligation to use them responsibly. This includes selecting your medical services carefully and making wise choices that support your efforts to stay healthy.

The guidelines in this issue have been revised to reflect up-to-date and reliable

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

As you read through this issue, keep in mind that the guidelines are general recommendations. 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.

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

Remember: As a health care consumer, you are your own best advocate for quality.

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



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 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 to have checked?

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.

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 PCP 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. If you have a family history of certain genetic risks for breast cancer, 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.

Age 65 and Older

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

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.

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 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 should have immunizations too

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

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

Diphtheria-tetanus — Vaccine boosters are recommended every 10 years.

Hepatitis A — The 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.

Give your child a better ‘shot’ at a bright future



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.

Brown 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.

Recommended Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule

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		HepB	HepB		HepB ¹	HepB			HepB Series						
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis				DTaP	DTaP	DTaP		DTaP			DTaP	Tdap	Tdap		
<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b				Hib	Hib	Hib ²	Hib								
Inactivated Poliovirus				IPV	IPV	IPV				IPV					
Measles, Mumps, Rubella							MMR				MMR	MMR			
Varicella							Varicella			Varicella					
Meningococcal												MCV4			
Pneumococcal				PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV								
Influenza					Influenza (Yearly)										
Hepatitis A					Hepatitis A Series										

Range of recommended ages (brown bar) Catch-up immunization (blue bar) 11-12 year-old assessment (yellow bar)

¹The third dose of HepB may be given at age 4 months or at 6-18 months.

²The 6-month dose of Hib may or may not be necessary depending upon the brand of Hib vaccine.

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 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, do not have evidence of immunity or 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 lack 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 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 disease.

Varicella (chicken pox) — You may need the vaccine if you are an unvaccinated adult who has not had chicken pox. 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.



From prenatal care to teen health

Prevention helps lay the groundwork for life

Having a baby can be an exciting, joyful time for a woman. However, giving your baby a healthy start in life begins even before you become pregnant.

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 you have. Plus, as a prospective parent you are sure to have many questions about pregnancy and childbirth. You also may need to be screened for diseases and disorders, as well as have immunizations that can protect you.

Because your health can have a direct impact on your baby's health, it's important for you 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 your body prepare for pregnancy.

Before and during pregnancy

Begin obstetric care early in your 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 you have about your pregnancy, such as concerns you may have about your diet or exercise. First-time mothers 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 motherhood.

Again, use this visit to talk about any concerns you may have. If you are like most new mothers, you may face challenges related to sleeplessness, feelings of depression and difficulties with breast-feeding.



Take charge of your child's health care

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 pediatrician 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

Growing up, growing healthy

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

When it comes to health care, teens have special concerns and considerations. Therefore, the physician visits 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.

