



Women's Health Checklist

Annual Physical Exam

- ☐ **Yearly physical.** An annual visit with your primary care provider helps ensure you are up to date with health screenings and vaccinations. In addition, it provides an opportunity to discuss health-related topics like diet, exercise, sleep habits and any changes to your health with your physician. During the exam, your doctor will take your height and weight, listen to your heart and lungs, and examine your body for any abnormalities. Your provider will also take a blood sample to check for any issues with your heart, kidneys, liver, blood chemistry or immune system. Women with certain chronic conditions may need more frequent visits.

Bone Health

- ☐ **Bone density test.** Bone loss can start as early as age 30, so it is important to keep bones strong and healthy with good nutrition and exercise. Women who are 65 and older should have a bone mineral density test at least once in their lifetime to check for signs of osteoporosis. Also, women younger than 65 with a risk of osteoporosis should be screened.

Breast Health

- ☐ **Clinical breast exam.** Women aged 20-39 should have a clinical breast exam every 1 to 3 years. Women 40 and over should have an annual clinical breast exam.
- ☐ **Mammogram.** Breast imaging with mammography is recommended annually beginning at age 40, or earlier if there is a family history of breast cancer.

Cardiovascular Health

- ☐ **Blood pressure.** You should have your blood pressure checked every time you see a physician and at least once a year. A normal blood pressure reading is less than 120/80, but one in three Americans has high blood pressure, which can put you at risk for heart disease, stroke and other serious medical conditions. Women already diagnosed with high blood pressure may need to be screened more often.
- ☐ **Cholesterol.** Your cholesterol levels should be checked every four to six years, starting at age 20. Women with high cholesterol, family history, and risk factors for conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure, may need to be screened more often.

Colorectal Health

- ☐ **Colorectal cancer screening.** If you are 45 or older, you should have a colorectal cancer screening. There are various options for this screening, including a stool test or a colonoscopy. You can discuss these options with your physician. If you choose to have a colonoscopy, this exam should be repeated every 10 years, unless your physician recommends more frequent screening. Your healthcare provider may recommend this exam before age 45 if you have a family history of colorectal cancer.

Diabetes Screening

- ☐ **Blood glucose test.** The screening age for diabetes was recently lowered to 35 and is usually done again every three years. Screenings may begin earlier or you may be tested more often if you are at risk for diabetes due to obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or a history of diabetes in your family.



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Eye, Ear, and Dental Health

- ☐ **Eye exam.** Eye exams start in childhood. By age 40, when vision changes and eye disease are likely to start, all adults should receive a comprehensive eye evaluation. Beginning at age 65, your eyes should be checked every year or two for signs of cataracts, glaucoma and macular degeneration.
- ☐ **Hearing test.** If you begin to notice signs of hearing loss, talk with your healthcare provider about a hearing test. Hearing loss becomes more common as you age, but also is associated with certain health conditions like high blood pressure or diabetes.
- ☐ **Dental exams.** You should see a dentist every 6 to 12 months for regular cleaning. Your dentist also will perform x-rays and other exams to ensure your teeth and gums remain healthy.

Mental/Emotional Health

- ☐ **Mental health and emotional concerns** can be debilitating and negatively affect your life and wellbeing. Talk with your healthcare provider about any signs of anxiety, depression, alcohol or drug addiction, eating disorders or other harmful behaviors.

Reproductive Health/Sexual Health

- ☐ **Pap smear test.** A Pap test is recommended every three years for women aged 20 to 65. Or, for women who are 30 to 65, you can choose to have a combined Pap test and a human papillomavirus (HPV) test every 5 years. Women over 65 can usually stop Pap screenings after having 3 or more normal Pap tests in a row or no abnormal results in 10 years unless your doctor recommends the screening.
- ☐ **Sexually transmitted infections.** If you are between 13 and 64 years of age, you should get tested for HIV at least once as part of your routine health care. Pregnant women should also be screened for HIV and syphilis at the start of the pregnancy. Women with exposure to HIV risks should get tested at least once each year. Women who are sexually active and under 25 should be screened for gonorrhea and chlamydia until age 25. If you are over 25, talk with your healthcare provider about whether you should be screened.

Skin Health

- ☐ **Skin cancer screening.** Women should see a dermatologist once a year to check for signs of skin cancer. Make an appointment with your healthcare provider sooner if you notice any unusual moles or changes to your skin, especially because melanoma can be a fast-growing cancer.

Vaccinations

- ☐ **Routine vaccines.** Routine vaccinations include annual flu shots and a Tdap shot (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis) every 10 years.
- ☐ **Shingles vaccine.** Women aged 50 or over should get a two-dose vaccine to prevent shingles. Shingles can cause a rash and pain that can last for months.
- ☐ **Pneumonia and other later in life vaccines.** Women over 65 may need additional vaccinations to prevent pneumonia, meningitis and blood infections.
- ☐ **HPV vaccine.** Women younger than 26 should get the HPV vaccine to guard against cervical cancer if they did not receive it as a child or teenager.
- ☐ **COVID-19 vaccine.** The COVID-19 vaccine can help protect against the deadly coronavirus. If you have not been vaccinated yet, you should discuss whether to take this vaccine with your physician.