

Healthy Steps to Prevention

From your friends at Blue Care Network

Prevention starts with you

Own a car, and you know that routine maintenance will make it last longer. Own a house, and you know you need to do annual checks of the heating and cooling system. In fact, any machinery you own needs regular checkups.

How about your body?

It may not look like the equipment underneath the hood of a car or in your furnace room, but the parts need regular attention and tune-ups. A yearly physical examination is the time to see what's right and what's not.

Don't base your decision to get an annual physical exam and common preventive procedures on how you feel or whether you have the time. Base it on how you want to feel in the future and how much time you want that future to have.

To make the most of your appointment, follow these tips:

- Mention all medications you are taking and even those you are supposed to take, but don't. Make a list, or better yet, eliminate any doubt by bringing all your pill bottles, including over-the-counter pills and supplements.
- Tell the doctor about what you used to do, but can no longer do. For example, if you used to run but your knee bothers you, or if you used to garden or knit, but your hands and fingers ache, tell your doctor. If you don't share these problems with your doctor, you may miss out on treatments.
- Tell the doctor about your concerns — or fears. It may be difficult to talk about being depressed or if you're having incontinence problems, but your doctor can help.
- Mention if a family member has recently been diagnosed with a serious disease or condition. Many patients provide a family history when they make an initial visit, but it's also important to keep this information current.
- Before you leave, make sure you know what you're supposed to do next. When are you due back? Are you supposed to call, or will someone from the office call with your lab results? What routine screenings are coming up next? How should you prepare for them?

Remember, your relationship with your doctor is a partnership. Effective communication will help you and your doctor make the best decisions for your health.

When is it an emergency?

Even if you practice prevention, accidents and illnesses happen. So when should you seek emergency treatment?

- For accidental injuries that are not life threatening and do not need immediate care, call your primary care physician for a same-day appointment.
- Use an urgent care center for nonemergency conditions such as earaches, colds, flu, minor burns, sprains, sore throats and headaches. You can find an urgent care center near you by visiting MiBCN.com/urgentcare.
- For an immediate emergency that may mean permanent damage to your health, go to the nearest emergency room or call 911. Some emergency conditions may include:
 - Severe pain
 - Unusual chest pain
 - Problems breathing
 - Puncture wounds
 - Nonstop bleeding
 - Broken bones
 - Severe burns or bites
 - Blows to the head
 - Sudden loss of strength or feeling in the legs
 - Loss of vision

Puzzle

Wellness Scramble

Unscramble the words in the list on the left. Transfer each letter into the boxes on the right. When finished, place the letters in each circle in the row of boxes beneath the puzzle to spell out message.

(Answers on this page)

1. D L O B O E R P U S R E S
2. A I D I T O N S M E C
3. T I V E P R E O N N
4. O D O R C T
5. T H A L Y E H
6. B L A T R U S S L E

It's a fact...

According to the Michigan Department for Community Health:

- An estimated 31.3 percent of Michigan adults didn't have a routine checkup in the last year.
- Those aged 24-35 were least likely to visit their doctor (47 percent).
- Of those over 75, almost 90 percent visited their doctor.
- Men were more likely not to have had a routine checkup when compared with women (37.9 percent vs. 21.5 percent).
- Among those who didn't have a routine checkup, the majority (74.3 percent) have health care coverage.

Resources

Did you know that BCN covers annual exams and screenings?

The diagnostic and screening tests we recommend are all based on the latest clinical research. To find out what's recommended for you, visit MiBCN.com/guidelines.

Prevention counts*

An estimated 5.9 million heart disease-related sick days could be prevented each year in the United States if everyone had access to high-quality care.

Every dollar of prenatal care results in expected savings of \$3.33 for postnatal care and \$4.63 for long-term morbidity costs.

The cost of treating an influenza-like illness is estimated at \$145 per case. The estimated cost of an influenza vaccine is \$16.70 per person.

*The State of Health Care Quality 2007 National Committee for Quality Assurance

Diagnostic information

Your health maintenance exam should include:

- Height, weight and body mass index
- Risk evaluation and counseling (nutrition, overweight/obesity, physical activity, dental health, tobacco use, immunizations, sexual health, preconception counseling for women of reproductive ages, medicines and supplements)
- Safe habits assessment (domestic violence, seat belts, helmets, firearms, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors)
- Behavioral health assessment (depression, suicide thoughts, alcohol and drug abuse, anxiety, stress reduction and coping skills)

Answers to Wellness Scramble: 1. Blood pressure, 2. Medications, 3. Prevention, 4. Doctor, 5. Healthy, 6. Lab results
Answer to puzzle message: BCN Cares