



Blue Cross  
Blue Shield  
Blue Care Network  
of Michigan

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## Cancer screenings can save your life

This year, an estimated 1.8 million Americans will be diagnosed with cancer. Preventive care, including cancer screenings, can help doctors find and treat cancer early. The earlier the detection, the easier it may be to treat. That's why Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan encourages members to keep the American Cancer Society cancer screening guidelines in mind and schedule screenings regularly.

### Breast cancer

- Beginning at **age 40**, women have the choice to start annual breast cancer screenings with mammograms, or X-rays of the breast.
- Women **ages 45 to 54** should get mammograms every year.
- Women **55 and older** should switch to mammograms every two years, or can continue yearly with screening.
- Women should know how their breasts normally look and feel, and report any changes to a health care provider immediately.

### Cervical cancer

- Cervical cancer screening should start at **age 25**.
- From **ages 25 to 65**, women should get a primary HPV, or human papillomavirus, test every five years, or a Pap test every three years. Talk with your health care provider about your screening options.
- Women **over age 65** who've had regular cervical cancer testing in the last 10 years with normal results can stop getting tested.

### Prostate cancer

- Men **ages 50 to 64** should ask their health care provider about being tested for prostate cancer. You shouldn't be tested until you've spoken with your provider about the potential risks and benefits of testing and treatment.
- If you're African American or have a father or brother who had prostate cancer before age 65, talk with your provider about testing starting at **age 45**.

### Colon and rectal cancer

- If you're at average risk for colorectal cancer, you should start getting regular screenings at **age 45**. This can be done with a stool-based test or colonoscopy, the latter of which is a visual exam that looks at the colon and rectum. Talk with your health care provider about which option is good for you.
- If you're in good health, you should continue regular screenings through **age 75**.

If you have a family history of cancer, you may need to schedule screenings outside of the normal age recommendations. As always, talk with your health care provider about any concerns.

To help reduce your cancer risk:

- Get annual check-ups and regular cancer screening tests.
- Know yourself, your family history and your risks.
- Get to and stay at a healthy weight, and incorporate regular physical activity.
- Eat healthy with plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- Avoid tobacco and keep alcohol to a minimum.
- Protect your skin.

For more information about cancer and screenings, visit [mibluesperspectives.com](https://www.mibluesperspectives.com) and [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org).

