

Men's Health

September's focus is on Men's Health—bringing awareness to preventable health problems and promoting early detection and treatment of diseases like heart disease, cancer and depression.

The facts:

- The [average lifespan](#) for men is about 5 years less than for women.
- The top three [causes of death in men](#) are heart disease, cancer and unintentional injuries.
- Men have [higher rates of getting and dying from cancer](#) than women.
- Men are less likely to seek mental health treatment, resulting in [a nearly 4x increased likelihood of committing suicide](#) than women.

You can help by encouraging the men in your life (and yourself) to make healthy choices such as eating right, being active, and getting recommended screenings to catch disease early. Self-care activities and preventive health visits are essential to improving and maintaining health, regardless of age or gender. Men should talk with their primary care providers about what types of preventive medical care they need and at what frequency they are recommended to stay healthy.



Participate in this month's activities to learn more:

Activity 1:
[Is it Time for Your Tune Up?](#)

Activity 2:
[Practice Self-care](#)

Activity 3:
[Get Fit in 7 Minutes or Less](#)

For questions or more information, email dhp.health@deancare.com.

Activity 1: Is it time for your tune up?

Just as you would take your vehicle in for regular tune-ups and maintenance, regular medical checkups and age-appropriate screenings can improve your health and reduce premature death and disability. Use this checklist as a maintenance guideline for taking care of yourself first, so you can take care of those who mean the most to you.

Checkups, Screenings and Vaccinations	When/Recommended Frequency	Age 18-39	Age 40-59	Age 60 & up
Physical Exam	Annually, to review overall health.	✓	✓	✓
Eye Exam	Refer to page 2 of the Healthy Vision toolkit .	✓	✓	✓
Blood Pressure Screening	At least every 2 years, or more often if recommended by your PCP. Note: High BP has no symptoms and can cause stroke, heart attack, kidney and eye problems, and heart failure.	✓	✓	✓
Cholesterol Screening	Starting at age 35, then every 5 years. If you have certain health conditions such as diabetes or heart disease you may need to be checked more often.	Age 35	✓	✓
Diabetes Screening	For ages 35 to 70 who are overweight or obese and no symptoms of diabetes. *Discuss frequency interval with your provider.	✓*	✓*	✓*
Colorectal Cancer Screening	Starting at age 45 and continue through age 75. *Discuss frequency and screening test options with your provider.		Age 45✓*	✓*
Prostate Cancer Screening	*Discuss with your provider before having a test to talk about your personal risk profile for prostate cancer. People who have a family history of prostate cancer or are African American or of African descent might be at higher risk. This is an individualized decision for ages 55-69. Do not routinely screen before 55 or after 69.		✓* Discuss if age 55-69	✓* Do not screen after age 69
Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening	One time ultrasound for men 65-75 who are current or former smokers.			✓
STD Screening	Discuss with your provider.	✓		
Hepatitis C Screening	Once between age 18-79	✓	✓	✓
HIV Screening	Once between age 15-65	✓	✓	✓

Checkups, Screenings and Vaccinations	When/Recommended Frequency	Age 18-39	Age 40-59	Age 60 & up
HPV Vaccine	*Discuss with your provider, vaccination approved to age 27 and in some cases may be approved to age 45.	✓*	✓*	
Flu Shot	Annually	✓	✓	✓
Tetanus-diphtheria Booster	Every 10 years (or sooner if puncture wound occurs)	✓	✓	✓
Zoster (Shingles) Vaccine	At 50* and over, given in 2 doses, 2-6 months apart.		✓*	✓
Pneumococcal Vaccine	At 65 (<65 if have chronic condition that makes more susceptible to pneumococcal pneumonia).			✓

Sources: [US Preventive Services Task Force](#); [Health Screenings for men ages 18-39](#); [Health screenings for men ages 40-64](#)

These are general preventive guidelines for healthy adults at low risk for disease. Talk with your provider about these checkups, screenings and vaccinations, and set an appropriate maintenance schedule specific to you, based on any risk factors such as a family history.

[Learn more](#) about men's health at different ages, urology services, disease prevention, and prostate health. Plus, Health Plan members can [log in to our member portal](#) to access their Living Healthy account and complete the health assessment.

Activity 2: Practice self-care

Self-care is the act of taking time to focus on yourself and has been thought of (and marketed) as something practiced mainly by women. But men should also take the time to practice self-care to take improve their mental, emotional and physical health. Self-care is a personal practice, and there is no “one size fits all” formula. It can be anything you want so long as it helps you stay physically, mentally and emotionally well. Self-care is best pursued one step at a time. Pick one area where you can build a new habit. As you start to notice the benefits in this area, you’ll find the motivation to try other self-care activities. If you’re not sure where to start, try these suggestions:

- 1. Make time for yourself.** Set aside a small amount of time to relax or do something you enjoy. Just 15-20 minutes can make a big difference. It might be taking a walk, reading a book, or journaling. Only have 5 minutes? Check-in with yourself using guided visualization practices. (e.g., [A Walk in the Woods](#), [Gone Fishin’](#), [The Hunt](#))
- 2. See your Primary Care Provider regularly for checkups and preventive care.** Preventive care is one of the most important self-care activities you can do for yourself. [The CDC reports](#) that women are 33% more likely to visit the doctor than men, and women are 100% better at maintaining screening and preventive care. During these visits, your doctor can help you identify potential health risks, advise on how to stay healthy, and give regular screenings for things such as blood pressure, cholesterol and colon cancer. These types of screenings can catch problems early when they’re most treatable. Don’t wait—take an active role in your health and make an appointment today!
- 3. Eat a healthy diet focused on fruits, vegetables and lean protein.** Eating right is good for both your physical and mental health. It doesn’t have to mean giving up all your favorite foods but instead making smarter choices most of the time. Also, drink lots of water!
- 4. Interact with others and talk with other men about health issues and how to manage them.** Social interaction is important for good mental health and can offer a sense of belonging, strengthen relationships, and improve mood and well-being. You can learn from each other and develop a plan to manage health issues that might come up. Talking about your health also helps to reduce stress and anxiety levels.
- 5. Get enough sleep (at least 7-8 hours each night).** If you find that you’re not getting this, here are some things you can do to help improve:
 - Cut down on caffeine and alcohol consumption, as both can interfere with sleep.
 - Create a relaxing bedtime routine to help you wind down before sleep (e.g., reading or stretching) and turn off all electronic devices.
 - Make sure that your sleeping environment is dark, quiet and cool.
- 6. Get Physical.** Physical activity can provide many benefits for overall health—higher self-esteem, better sleep, and reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer and diabetes. It can also help improve mental health by reducing stress and decreasing feelings of depression and anxiety. A gym isn’t the only way to incorporate exercise into your life; it can be as simple as taking a walk around the neighborhood. Plus, spending time in nature offers mental and physical health benefits too! (e.g., improved mental function and physical health, increased happiness and vitamin D, reduced stress). Try our [Real Goal](#) to spend more time in nature.

Activity 3: Get fit in seven minutes or less

The CDC recommends 30 minutes of aerobic exercise per day, five days a week and two days per week of strength training for older adults. Can't fit in a 30-minute session all at once? That's ok; three 10-minute sessions will work. Or try this seven-minute workout. If you have any concerns about your health, check with your doctor before doing challenging or strenuous activities.



- Perform exercises for 30 seconds each in rapid succession.
- Break for 10 seconds in between each exercise.
- Intensity should be about an eight on a discomfort scale of 1-10. If something causes discomfort (not in a challenging way), try to modify the exercise (sidestep instead of jump) or avoid it altogether.
- Learn more about [Kick Starting Your Cardio](#).