Partners in Health

Our practice is dedicated to improving the health and well-being of our patients. We strive not only to treat your illnesses, but also to prevent them. The recommendations listed below have been scientifically shown to benefit your health and we monitor our performance providing them to you. Take charge of your health by checking on us and making sure these goals are met!

**For adolescents, young and middle-aged adults:**

- Have your **blood pressure** checked at least every 2 years.
- If you are aged 40-75 you should have your **cholesterol** checked at least every 5 years. Ask about your individualized risk for heart disease or stroke.
- If, over the past 2 weeks, you have frequently felt down, depressed, or hopeless or you have felt little interest or pleasure in doing things, you may be **depressed** and should tell your doctor.
- If you smoke, tell us. We may be able to help you **stop smoking**.
- If you sometimes consume **beer, wine or other alcoholic beverages**, tell us. Your doctor can help assess if drinking is affecting your health and provide treatment if necessary.
- Be sure to tell us **all medications** you are taking, even ones without a prescription or prescribed by other doctors.
- If you are aged 40-70 and overweight, you should have a blood test to **check for diabetes**.
- If you are over age 50, you should be checked for **colon cancer**. Your nurse or doctor may recommend checking your stool with a test at home or recommend a colonoscopy.
- Be sure you have been tested for **HIV disease**.
- If you were born between 1945 and 1965, be sure you have been tested for **Hepatitis C**.

**For people over age 65:**

- Make sure your doctor is aware of **all medications** that you are taking. There are some medications that should be used with caution, at lower doses or not at all, in older patients.
- If you are a man between 65 and 75 and have ever smoked, you should have an **ultrasound** to check your aorta for an aneurysm.

**For Women:**

- If you are sexually active and have not had a hysterectomy, you should have a **pap smear** to check for cervical cancer **every 3 years**. Women older than 30 years should have **pap smears** every 5 years if their **HPV testing** is negative.
- If you are between the ages of 16 and 25 and have ever been sexually active, you should be checked for **chlamydia and gonorrhea**, sexually transmitted infections, every year.
- If you are over age 50, you should start having **mammograms every 1-2 years**.
- If you are a woman over age 65, you should have a **bone scan** to check for osteoporosis.

**Vaccines:**

- Everyone older than 6 months should get a **flu shot** **every year**.
- Adolescents should get a at least one **meningitis shot**; some people including those with illnesses that affect the immune system, need more than one.
- Everyone 26 and younger should receive a three dose **HPV Shot series**, which can be started as early as age 9.
- Everyone should be up to date with their **tetanus shot** which often comes with a **pertussis (whooping cough) shot**.
- Everyone older than 65 or anyone who smokes, lives in a residential care facility, or has chronic liver disease, chronic kidney disease, asthma, COPD, alcohol abuse, HIV disease, certain cancers, or other illnesses that affect the immune system should get a **pneumococcal shot**. Many people need repeat doses, so check with your nurse or doctor.)
- Everyone with chronic liver disease or those traveling to many foreign countries should get Hepatitis A **vaccine** (two shot series).
- If you are over age 60, you should get a shot to prevent you from getting the **shingles**.
For people with diabetes:

- Have an *A1C* test every 3-6 months. An A1C is a measure of your average blood sugar over the past three months. It is more accurate than a single blood sugar reading. Most people with diabetes should have an **A1C less than 7%, though less than 8% may be appropriate for some.** Talk with your doctor about the A1C goal that is right for you.
- Have your *blood pressure* checked at least twice a year. Your *blood pressure* should be **less than 140/90 or maybe lower.**
- If you have high blood pressure and diabetes, make sure you are taking either an *ACE Inhibitor* or an *Angiotensin Receptor Blocker (ARB)* unless you are allergic to them. These medications help lower your blood pressure and protect your kidneys.
- Have a *urine test* every year to make sure your kidneys are working properly. If you have too much protein in your urine, you should be taking an *ACE Inhibitor or ARB.*

For people with ischemic heart and/or blood vessel disease:

- Make sure you are taking a *cholesterol lowering medication* and discuss with your doctor if you should been taking a daily dose of *aspirin* or similar medication.

For people with hypertension (high blood pressure):

- If your blood pressure has been **over 140/90** at least three times in the past year, you have high blood pressure and should be treated. Your blood pressure should be **less than 140/90.**
- Have your blood pressure checked at least **twice a year.**
- You should also talk with your doctor about taking an *aspirin* a day to prevent heart problems.
- Have a *urine test* every year to make sure your kidneys are working properly.

For people with heart failure:

- Know what type of heart failure you have. Most people with *systolic heart failure* should be on an *ACE-Inhibitor or ARB* and a *Beta-Blocker.*

For people with atrial fibrillation:

- You should be taking an *anticoagulant* (e.g., warfarin, rivaroxaban, apixaban, dabagatran or an anti-platelet agent) to keep you from having a stroke. Make sure you are up-to-date with lab monitoring of these medications.

For people with asthma (older than age 5):

- You may benefit from taking an *anti-inflammatory or other controller* medication.

A word about antibiotics:

Viruses cause most colds (including chest colds), coughs, and sore throats. If you have a cold, cough, or sore throat, taking antibiotics will usually not help you. Taking antibiotics for these kinds of illness also increases your chance of being infected with resistant bacteria that cannot be killed by antibiotics. If your illness gets worse or lasts a long time, tell your doctor.