



Preventive Health Guidelines

Follow your path to better health

The power of prevention

Put these preventive health guidelines into practice. Your family's health could depend on it.

You've probably heard the old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Your doctors know what preventive and integral services, screenings, and tests are available to you, which often are the best first steps in preventing illness. They also allow for rapid response during the early onset of health problems, when treatments can be most effective.

To take advantage of the power of prevention, you and your family should discuss with your physician the recommended preventive services, screenings, and tests appropriate for your age, gender, medical history, current health, and family history.

We have compiled the following preventive guidelines to help you keep track of what's needed and when. Your provider will evaluate your risk factors and determine which preventive services you should receive. Preventive health services are covered at no cost.

For children ages 0 to 2

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Safety

- Use a checklist to “baby-proof” your home.
- Check your home for the presence of lead paint.

Nutrition

- Breastfeeding and iron-enriched formula and food for infants.

Dental health

- Do not put your baby or toddler to bed with a bottle containing juice, milk, or other sugary liquid. Do not prop a bottle in a baby’s or toddler’s mouth. Clean your baby’s gums and teeth daily.
- Use a clean, moist washcloth to wipe gums. Use a soft toothbrush with water only, beginning with eruption of first tooth.
- Age 6 months to preschool: Discuss with your dentist about taking an oral fluoride supplement if water is deficient in fluoride.
- Age 2: Begin brushing child’s teeth with pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Immunizations				
Shot number in a series	1	2	3	4
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older. ²⁹			
DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis)	2	4	6	15–18 months
Flu, annual	For children 6 months and older. ^{2,18}			
Hepatitis A	12–23 months (second dose at least 6 months after first).			
Hepatitis B	0 (birth)	1–2	6–18 months	
Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	2	4	6	12–15 months
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	2	4	6–18 months	
Meningococcal Age 2–18 months	For children with risk factors.			
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	First dose at 12–15 months, second dose at ages 4–6.			
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	2	4	6	12–15 months
Rotarix (rotavirus), or	2	4 months		
RotaTeq (rotavirus)	2	4	6 months	
Varicella (chicken pox)	12–15 months, second dose at ages 4–6.			

Screenings/counseling/services	
Annual exam	Includes head circumference, length/height, weight, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, age appropriate exam and history and coordination of preventive services.
Dental care	Discuss use or prescribe oral supplement for ages 6 months and older. Apply fluoride varnish to primary teeth every 3 to 6 months for infants and children 6 months to 5 years old. ²⁴
Developmental/behavioral	Screening to include developmental, behavioral, social, and Autism.
Gonococcal ophthalmia	Topical eye medication administered during initial newborn care.
Newborn screening panel	Screening recommended for all disorders listed on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP). ²³

For children ages 0 to 2

Screenings/counseling/services

Skin cancer

Behavioral counseling to minimize exposure to ultraviolet radiation for persons ages 6 months to 24 years old at high risk.

Vision and hearing

Recommends screening to detect amblyopia or its risk factors.¹

Injury prevention for infants and young children

Decrease the risk of SIDS

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is a leading cause of death for infants. Put infants to sleep on their backs to decrease the risk of SIDS.

Protect your children with car seats

Use the right car seat for your vehicle and for your child's weight. Read the car seat and vehicle manufacturer's instructions about installation and use. Use a rear-facing car seat until your child is at least 1 year old and weighs at least 20 pounds.

Baby-proof your home

Take these steps to give your child a safe home environment:

- Keep medicines, cleaning solutions, and other dangerous substances in child-proof containers, locked up and out of reach of children.
- Use safety gates across stairways (top and bottom) and guards on windows above the first floor.
- Keep hot-water heater temperatures below 120° F.
- Keep unused electrical outlets covered with plastic guards.
- Consider not placing your baby in a baby walker. If you do, provide constant supervision. Block the access to stairways and to objects that can fall (such as lamps) or cause burns (such as stoves or electric heaters).
- Keep objects and foods that can cause choking away from your child. This includes things like coins, balloons, small toy parts, hot dogs (whole or small bites), peanuts, and hard candy.
- Use fences that go all the way around pools, and keep gates to pools locked.

For children ages 3 to 10

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Safety

- Use a checklist to “child-proof” your home.
- Check your home for the presence of lead paint.

Exercise

- Participate in physical activity as a family, such as taking walks or playing at the playground.
- Limit screen time (such as mobile devices, computers, and television) to less than two hours a day.

Nutrition

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.

Dental health

- Ask your dentist when and how to floss child’s teeth.
- Age 5: Talk to your dentist about dental sealants.

Other topics for discussion

- Well-child visits are a good time to talk to your doctor about any concerns you have with your child’s health, growth, or behavior.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older. ²⁹
Dengue	Three-dose series for children ages 9-16 living in dengue endemic areas and have laboratory confirmation of previous dengue infection. ⁶
DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis)	Fifth dose at ages 4-6 (Tdap for age 7 and above).
Flu, annual	Recommended. ^{2,18}
Hepatitis A	For children not previously vaccinated and risk factors are present.
Hepatitis B	For children who did not complete the immunization series between 0 and 18 months.
Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	For children not previously vaccinated and risk factors are present.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	Fourth dose at ages 4–6.
Meningococcal	For children with risk factors.
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Second dose at ages 4–6.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For children with risk factors ⁶ or an incomplete schedule (ages 2–5).
Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)	For children not previously vaccinated with DTaP.
Varicella (chicken pox)	Second dose at ages 4–6.

Screenings/counseling/services	
Annual exam	Includes height, weight, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, age appropriate exam and history and coordination of preventive services.
Anxiety	Recommended screening for anxiety disorders in children and adolescents aged 8-18 years old.
Dental care	Discuss use or prescribe oral supplement for ages 6 months and older. Apply fluoride varnish to primary teeth every 3 to 6 months for infants and children 6 months to 5 years old. ²⁴
Developmental/behavioral	Screening to include developmental, behavioral, social, and Autism.

For children ages 3 to 10

Screenings/counseling/services	
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions for children age 6 and older and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
Skin cancer	Behavioral counseling for minimizing exposure to ultraviolet radiation for persons ages 6 months to 24 years old at high risk.
Tobacco use and cessation	Provide education or brief counseling to prevent initiation of tobacco use amongst school-aged children and adolescents.
Vision and hearing	Recommends screening to detect amblyopia or its risk factors. ¹

Be aware of your child's recommended weight: Use our online tools to calculate your child's body mass index (BMI) by logging in to [blueshieldca.com](https://www.blueshieldca.com) and searching for BMI.

Injury prevention

For older children

- Children should use a booster seat in the car's back seat until they are at least 8 years old or weigh at least 80 pounds.
- Older children should use car seat belts and sit in the back seat at all times.
- Teach your child traffic safety. Children under 9 years old need supervision when crossing streets.
- Make sure your child wears a helmet while rollerblading or riding a bicycle. Make sure your child uses protective equipment for rollerblading and skateboarding (helmet, wrist, and knee pads).
- Warn your child about the risk of using alcohol and drugs. Many driving and sports-related injuries are caused by the use of alcohol and drugs.

For all ages

- Use smoke and carbon monoxide alarms/detectors in your home. Change the batteries every year, and check once a month to see that they work.
- If you have a gun in your home, make sure that the gun and ammunition are locked up separately and kept out of children's reach.
- Never drive after drinking alcohol or after marijuana use.
- Use car seat belts at all times.
- Post the number for the Poison Control Center – (800) 222-1222 – near your phone. Also, add the Poison Control Center number to your home "Important Information" list. The number is the same in every U.S. location. Do not try to treat poisoning until you have called the Poison Control Center.

For children ages 11 to 19

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Exercise

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes per day starting at age 11) can reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes.

Nutrition

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.
- Optimal calcium intake for adolescents and young adults is estimated to be 1,200 to 1,500 mg/day.

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention,⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Avoid unintended pregnancy; use contraception.
- Prior to beginning PrEP, the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, periodic pregnancy testing, periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections.
- Ongoing follow-up counseling and monitoring every 3 months is covered without cost-sharing.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older. ²⁹
Dengue	Three-dose series for children ages 9-16 living in dengue endemic areas and have laboratory confirmation of previous dengue infection. ⁶
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	Two-dose series for individuals not previously vaccinated and risk factors are present.
Hepatitis B	Two-dose series for individuals not previously vaccinated; for individuals with risk factors seeking protection. ⁴
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Two- or three-dose series depending on age at initial vaccination. Recommended for all adolescents 11-12 years and through 18 years of age.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	For individuals not previously vaccinated. Not recommended for individuals 18 years or older.
Meningococcal	Routine vaccination two-dose series. First dose at ages 11-12, second dose at age 16.
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Two-dose series for children under 12 previously unvaccinated.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For children with risk factors. ⁶
Tdap booster (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)	For children ages 11-12 who have completed the recommended DTaP immunization series. ¹⁷
Varicella (chicken pox)	Two-dose series for children previously unvaccinated.

Screenings/counseling/services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed for individuals 12 years and older.
Annual exam	Includes height, weight, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, age appropriate exam and history and coordination of preventive services.
Chlamydia and Gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection.
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ³²

For children ages 11 to 19

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental health and substance use disorder

- Use of alcohol, tobacco (cigarettes, vaping, or chewing), inhalants, and other drugs among adolescents is a major concern for parents. Let the doctor know if you have any concerns about your child.
- Mental health and substance use disorders is defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Other topics for discussion

- It is a good idea to let your teenager have private time with the doctor to ask any questions he or she may not feel comfortable asking you.

Screenings/counseling/services	
Depression/anxiety	Screening for all adolescents for major depressive disorder (MDD) and anxiety.
Domestic violence and abuse	Screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) in women of reproductive age and provide or refer women to ongoing support services. ³⁴
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use for individuals 12 years and older. ²⁵
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for individuals 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²⁷
Hepatitis C	Screening for HCV infection in persons at high risk of infection. ³⁰
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15 to 65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommend preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to persons at high risk of HIV acquisition. ¹⁶
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for individuals at increased risk of infection. ³³
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
Sexually transmitted infections	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adolescents and for adults who are at increased risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). ⁶
Skin cancer	Behavioral counseling for minimizing exposure to ultraviolet radiation for adolescents at high risk.
Syphilis	Screening for individuals at increased risk for infection. ¹²
Tobacco use and cessation	Provide education or brief counseling to prevent initiation of tobacco use among school-aged children and adolescents.

For children ages 11 to 19

Promoting your preteen's and adolescent's social and emotional development

Parents need to offer open, positive communication while providing clear and fair rules and consistent guidance. Let your child find his or her own path while staying within the boundaries you have set.

- Be a good role model for handling disagreements – for example, talk calmly when disagreeing.
- Praise him or her for successfully avoiding a confrontation – for example, say, "I'm proud of you for staying calm."

- Supervise the websites and computer games that your child uses.
- Set limits on the use of computers, telephones, texting, and TV after a set evening hour to help your child get regular sleep.
- Talk to your child about healthy relationships. Dating abuse does occur among preteens and teens.
- Be a role model for healthy eating and regular physical exercise.

For women ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Exercise

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes per day) can reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes.
- Over 40: Consult physician before starting new vigorous physical activity.

Nutrition

- Know your body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, and cholesterol level. Modify your diet accordingly.
- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.
- Optimal calcium intake for women between ages 25 and 50 is estimated to be 1,000 mg/day.
- Vitamin D is important for bone and muscle development, function, and preservation.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older. ²⁹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	For individuals with risk factors; for individuals seeking protection. ³
Hepatitis B	Recommended 2, 3, or 4 dose series depending on vaccine or condition for ages 19 to 59. ⁴
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Recommended for all adults through 26 years of age. 2 or 3-dose series depending on age at initial vaccination.
Meningococcal	For individuals with risk factors present. ⁸
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Once, without proof of immunity or if no previous second dose. ⁵
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For individuals with risk factors.
Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria)	Recommended once every 10 years. ¹⁵
Varicella (chicken pox)	Recommended for adults without evidence of immunity; 2-dose series 4-8 weeks apart. ¹⁰

Screenings/counseling/services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed for individuals 12 years and older.
Blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, vision, and hearing	At well visit, annually. This includes coordination of preventive services.
BRCA risk assessment and genetic counseling/testing	Women with a positive result on the risk assessment tool or have a family history of breast, ovarian, tubal, or peritoneal cancer are recommended to receive genetic counseling and/or genetic testing. ²⁰
Breast cancer	Recommended biennial screening mammography for women aged 40 years and older.
Breast cancer medication use	Recommends prescription or risk-reducing medications to women age 35 and older who are at increased risk for breast cancer and at low risk for adverse medication effects.
Cardiovascular disease	Statin use for primary prevention in adults aged 40 to 75 years who have one or more risk factors. ³⁵

For women ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention,¹⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Avoid unintended pregnancy; use contraception.
- Prior to beginning PrEP, the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, periodic pregnancy testing, and periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections
- Ongoing follow-up counseling and monitoring every 3 months is covered without cost-sharing.

Screenings/counseling/services	
Cervical cancer	Recommended screening every 3 years with cervical cytology by Pap tests for women 21 to 29 years of age. For women ages 30–65 years, recommended screening every 3 years with cervical cytology alone, every 5 years with high-risk HPV testing alone, or every 5 years with high risk HPV testing in combination with cytology.
Chlamydia and Gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹¹
Colorectal cancer	Screening for adults ages 45–75. ⁹
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ³²
Depression/ anxiety	Screening for depression and anxiety in all adults.
Diabetes/ prediabetes	Screening for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes in adults ages 35 to 70 years who are overweight or obese. ²²
Domestic violence and abuse	Screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) in women of reproductive age and provide or refer women to ongoing support services. ³⁴
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use for individuals 12 years and older. ²⁵
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for individuals 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²⁷
Hepatitis C	Screening for HCV infection in persons at high risk of infection. ³⁰
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15 to 65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommended preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to persons at high risk of HIV acquisition. ¹⁶
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for individuals at increased risk for infection. ³³
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
Osteoporosis	Screening for women at increased risk. ¹³

For women ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental Health and Substance Use disorder

- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol consumption. Avoid alcohol or drug use while driving.
- Mental health and substance use disorders is defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Screenings/counseling/services

Sexually transmitted infections	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adolescents and for adults who are at increased risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). ²⁶
Skin cancer	Behavioral counseling for minimizing exposure to ultraviolet radiation for young adults to age 24 at high risk.
Syphilis	Screening for pregnant women and individuals at increased risk for infection. ¹²
Tobacco use and cessation	Screening all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, provide behavioral interventions, FDA approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.
Urinary incontinence	Annual screening.

If you are pregnant, please refer to the "For pregnant women" page for pregnancy-related recommendations.

For men ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Exercise

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes per day) can reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes.
- Men over 40: Consult physician before starting new vigorous physical activity.

Nutrition

- Know your body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, and cholesterol level. Modify your diet accordingly.
- Vitamin D is important for bone and muscle development, function, and preservation.

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention;⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Prior to beginning PrEP the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, and periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections.
- Ongoing follow-up counseling, and monitoring every 3 months is covered without cost sharing.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older. ²⁹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	For individuals with risk factors; for individuals seeking protection. ³
Hepatitis B	Recommended 2, 3, or 4 dose series depending on vaccine or condition for ages 19 to 59. ⁴
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Recommended for all adults through 26 years of age. 2 or 3-dose series depending on age of initial vaccination.
Meningococcal	For individuals with risk factors present. ⁸
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Once, without proof of immunity or if no previous second dose. ⁵
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For individuals with risk factors. ⁷
Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria)	Recommended once every 10 years. ¹⁵
Varicella (chicken pox)	Recommended for adults without evidence of immunity; 2-dose series 4-8 weeks apart. ¹⁰

Screenings/counseling/services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed for individuals 12 years and older.
Blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, vision, and hearing	At annual exam. This includes coordination of preventive services.
Cardiovascular disease	Statin use for primary prevention in adults aged 40 to 75 years who have one or more risk factors. ³⁵
Colorectal cancer	Screening for adults ages 45-75. ⁹
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ³²
Depression/anxiety	Screening for depression and anxiety in all adults.
Diabetes/prediabetes	Screening for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes in adults ages 35 to 70 years who are overweight or obese. ²²
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use for individuals 12 years and older. ²⁵
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for individuals 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²⁷

For men ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental Health and Substance Use disorder

- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol consumption. Avoid alcohol or drug use while driving.
- Mental health and substance use disorders is defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Screenings/counseling/services	
Hepatitis C	Screening for HCV infection in persons at high risk of infection. ³⁰
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15 or 65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommended preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to persons at high risk of HIV acquisition. ¹⁶
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for individuals at increased risk for infection. ³³
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
Sexually transmitted infections	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adolescents and for adults who are at increased risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). ²⁶
Skin cancer	Behavioral counseling for minimizing exposure to ultraviolet radiation for young adults to age 24 at high risk.
Syphilis	Routine screening for individuals at increased risk for infection. ¹²
Tobacco use and cessation	Screening all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, provide behavioral interventions, FDA approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.

“Know your numbers.” We encourage you to learn your “numbers” at your doctor visit and work toward the optimal goals through exercise and a healthy diet.

Heart health factors	Optimal goals
Total cholesterol	Less than 200 mg/dL
LDL “bad” cholesterol	Less than 100 mg/dL
HDL “good” cholesterol	60 mg/dL or higher
Triglycerides	Less than 150 mg/dL
Blood pressure	Less than 120/80 mmHg
Fasting glucose	Less than 100 mg/dL
Body mass index (BMI)	Less than 25 kg/m ²
Exercise	Minimum of 30 minutes most days of the week

For men and women age 50 and older

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Nutrition

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.
- Optimal calcium intake is estimated to be 1,500 mg/day for postmenopausal women not on estrogen therapy.
- Vitamin D is important for bone and muscle development, function, and preservation.

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention,¹⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Prior to beginning PrEP, the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, and periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections.
- Ongoing follow-up, counseling, and monitoring every 3 months is covered without cost-sharing.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 6 months and older. ²⁹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	For individuals with risk factors; for individuals seeking protection. ³
Hepatitis B	Recommended 2, 3, or 4 dose series depending on vaccine or condition for ages 19 to 59. ⁴
Meningococcal	For individuals with risk factors present. ⁸
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Once, without proof of immunity or if no previous second dose. ⁵
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	Recommended for individuals age 65 and older; and individuals under age 65 with risk factors. ⁷
Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria)	Recommended once every 10 years. ¹⁵
Varicella (chickenpox)	Recommended for adults without evidence of immunity; 2-dose series 4–8 weeks apart. ¹⁰
Zoster (shingles)	Two-dose series of RZV 2-6 months apart.

Screenings/counseling/services	
AAA (abdominal aortic aneurysm)	For ages 65–75 who have ever smoked, one-time screening for AAA by ultrasonography. ¹⁹
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed for individuals 12 years and older.
Blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, vision, and hearing	At annual exam. This includes coordination of preventive services.
BRCA risk assessment and genetic counseling/testing	Women with a positive result on the risk assessment tool or have a family history of breast, ovarian, tubal, or peritoneal cancer are recommended to receive genetic counseling and/or genetic testing. ²⁰
Breast cancer	Recommended biennial screening mammography for women aged 40 years and older.
Breast cancer medication use	Recommended prescription or risk-reducing medications to women age 35 and older who are at increased risk for breast cancer and at low risk for adverse medication effects.
Cardiovascular disease	Statin use for primary prevention in adults aged 40 to 75 years who have one or more risk factors. ³⁵
Cervical cancer	Recommended screening every 3 years with cervical cytology alone, every 5 years with high risk HPV testing alone, or every 5 years with high risk HPV testing in combination with cytology.

For men and women age 50 and older

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental Health and Substance Use disorder

- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol consumption. Avoid alcohol or drug use while driving.
- Mental health and substance use disorders is defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Other topics for discussion

- Fall prevention.
- Possible risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for post-menopausal women.
- The dangers of drug interactions.
- Physical activity.
- Glaucoma eye exam by an eye care professional (i.e., an ophthalmologist, optometrist) for those age 65 and older.

Screenings/counseling/services	
Chlamydia and Gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹¹
Colorectal cancer	Screening for adults ages 45-75. ^{9,21}
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ³²
Depression/anxiety	Screening for depression and anxiety in all adults.
Diabetes/prediabetes	Screening for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes in adults ages 35 to 70 years who are overweight or obese. ²²
Domestic violence and abuse	Screening for intimate partner violence (IPV) in women of reproductive age and provide or refer women to ongoing support services. ³⁴
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use for individuals 12 years and older. ²⁵
Fall prevention	Recommended exercise interventions for adults ages 65 or older at increased risk. ²⁸
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for individuals 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²⁷
Hepatitis C	Screening for HCV infection in persons at high risk of infection. ³⁰
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15 to 65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommend preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to persons at high risk of HIV acquisition. ¹⁶
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for individuals at increased risk for infection. ³³
Lung cancer	Screening for lung cancer annually for individuals ages 50 to 80 years of age with a smoking history of 20 years or more or who have quit within 15 years using low-dose computed tomography. ³¹

For men and women age 50 and older

Screenings/counseling/services	
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
Osteoporosis	Recommended routine screening for osteoporosis with bone measurement testing for women 65 years and older and women younger than 65 who are at increased risk. ¹³
Sexually transmitted infections	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adolescents and for adults who are at increased risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). ²⁶
Syphilis	Screening for individuals at increased risk for infection. ¹²
Tobacco use and cessation	Screening all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, provide behavioral interventions, FDA approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.
Urinary incontinence	Annual screening for women.

For heart health, adults should exercise regularly (at least 30 minutes a day on most days), which can help reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes. Consult your physician before starting a new vigorous physical activity.

For pregnant women

Screenings/counseling/services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed.
Anxiety	Screening during pregnancy or postpartum.
Aspirin	Low-dose aspirin (81 mg/day) as preventive medication after 12 weeks of gestation in persons who are at high risk for preeclampsia. ¹⁴
Asymptomatic bacteriuria	Recommended screening using urine culture in pregnant women.
Breast-feeding primary care interventions	Counseling, education, and breastfeeding equipment and supplies to ensure the successful initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding.
Chlamydia and Gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹¹
Depression	Refer pregnant and postpartum persons who are at increased risk of depression to counseling interventions.
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use for individuals 12 years and older. ²⁵
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Folic acid	Discuss use of 0.4 to 0.8 mg daily.
Gestational diabetes	Recommended screening for gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) in asymptomatic pregnant women after 24 weeks of gestation.
Healthy weight gain	Recommended behavioral counseling and interventions to promote healthy weight gain and prevent excess gestational weight gain.
Hepatitis A	For individuals with risk factors; for individuals seeking protection. ³
Hepatitis B	First prenatal visit. ²⁹
HIV	Screening for HIV infection in all pregnant persons, including those who are present in labor or at delivery whose HIV status is unknown.
Maternal mental health	Covered services for individuals who present written documentation of being diagnosed with a maternal mental health condition. Completion of covered services may extend up to 12 months from date of diagnosis or from the end of the pregnancy, whichever occurs later.
Preeclampsia	Screening with blood pressure measurements.
Rh(D) incompatibility	Recommends Rh(D) blood typing and antibody testing for all pregnant women during their first visit for pregnancy related care and repeated Rh(D) antibody testing for all unsensitized Rh(D)-negative women at 24 to 28 weeks gestation, unless the biological father is known to be Rh(D)-negative.
Syphilis	Recommend early screening for infection in all pregnant women. ¹²
Tdap	One dose of Tdap is recommended during each pregnancy, preferably in the early part of the gestational weeks 27–36.
Tobacco use and cessation	Screening all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, provide behavioral interventions, FDA approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.
Urinary incontinence	Annual screening.

For pregnant women

Having a baby? Be aware that while almost all women get the “baby blues” after childbirth, as many as 10% will get postpartum depression. For more information, visit our website, [blueshieldca.com](https://www.blueshieldca.com), or see your healthcare provider.

Recommendations for a healthy pregnancy

Prenatal care

Begin within 14 days of confirming pregnancy.

Dietary supplements

Women of childbearing age should take 0.4 to 0.8 mg of folic acid daily to decrease the risk of fetal brain and spinal cord birth defects. The recommended calcium intake for pregnant or nursing women is 1,000 milligrams daily.

Screenings and diagnostics

Blood pressure and weight check at all visits; urine test; obstetrical history and physical; screenings for asymptomatic bacteriuria; chlamydia; gestational diabetes; Group B streptococcal bacteria; hepatitis B; syphilis; gonorrhea; hematocrit; rubella; varicella; Rh(D) incompatibility; HIV counseling and screening; ultrasonography; screening for alpha fetoprotein; chorionic villus screening (CVS) or amniocentesis (for women age 35 and older); blood tests for certain birth defects; fundal height; fetal heart tones.

Discussion topics at prenatal care visits

Prior vaccinations (including flu shots), history of genital herpes, nutrition, smoking cessation, preterm labor risk, domestic abuse, mental health as an initial intervention service after screening for interpersonal and domestic violence, and other medication and drug use.

Postpartum care

To be performed within three to seven weeks following delivery. Postpartum exam to include weight, blood pressure, breast and abdomen exam, or pelvic exam.

Endnotes

1. All children 3 to 5 years old are at risk of vision abnormalities and should be screened; specific risk factors include strabismus, refractive errors, and media opacity.
2. Annual vaccination against influenza is recommended for all persons age 6 months and older, including all adults.
3. Risk factors for hepatitis A should be discussed with your provider.
4. Risk factors for hepatitis B should be discussed with your provider.
5. For individuals born before 1957 with no evidence of immunity to measles, mumps, or rubella, consider 2-dose series at least 4 weeks apart for measles and mumps or at least 1 dose for rubella. Check with your doctor for details regarding pregnancy.
6. Routine vaccination for individuals ages 9-16 years living in dengue endemic areas and have laboratory confirmation of previous dengue infection. Endemic areas include Puerto Rico, American Samoa, US Virgin Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau.
7. Brief behavioral counseling interventions were found to reduce unhealthy alcohol use in adults 18 years or older, including pregnant women. Effective behavioral counseling interventions vary in their specific components, administration, length, and number of interventions.
8. Individuals at risk for meningococcal disease include international travelers and college-bound students. These individuals should discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with their doctor.
9. Colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. It is the most frequently diagnosed among persons aged 65 to 74 years. It is estimated that 10.5% of new colorectal cancer cases occur in persons younger than 50 years.
10. Individuals at risk for varicella infection include those who have close contact with persons at high risk for severe disease (healthcare workers and family contacts of immunocompromised persons) or are at high risk for exposure or transmission (e.g., teachers of young children; childcare employees; residents and staff members of institutional settings, including correctional institutions; college students; military personnel; adolescents and adults living in households with children; nonpregnant women of childbearing age; and international travelers).
11. Risk factors for chlamydia and gonorrhea infection include history of chlamydial or other sexually transmitted infections, new or multiple sexual partners, inconsistent condom use, commercial sex work, and drug use.
12. Risk factors for syphilis infection include all adolescents and adults who receive health care in a high-prevalence or high-risk clinical setting, men who have had sex with men, commercial sex workers, and those in adult correctional facilities. Individuals being treated for sexually transmitted diseases may be more likely than others to engage in high-risk behavior.
13. Osteoporotic fractures, particularly hip fractures, are associated with limitation of ambulation, chronic pain and disability, loss of independence, and quality of life. Women have higher rates of osteoporosis than men at any given age.
14. Pregnant women who are at high risk for preeclampsia should use low-dose aspirin (81 mg/d) as preventive medication after 12 weeks of gestation.
15. People in contact with infants under 12 months of age and healthcare personnel can be given the Td vaccine as soon as feasible. It is recommended that Tdap should replace a single dose of Td for adults under age 65 if they have not previously received a dose of Tdap.
16. Sexually transmitted infections, also known as sexually transmitted diseases, include chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, HIV, HPV, syphilis, and others.
17. The Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) booster is recommended in children

- ages 11 to 12 who have completed the childhood DTaP immunization series and have not yet received a tetanus and diphtheria (Td) booster dose.
18. Children through age 9 getting the flu vaccine for the first time – or who received flu vaccine – should get two doses, at least four weeks apart.
 19. Perform screening of abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) with ultrasonography in men who have a history of smoking.
 20. Your doctor will assess your personal or family history of breast, ovarian, tubal, or peritoneal cancer or family history of breast cancer susceptibility 1 and 2 (BRCA1/2) gene mutations. Women with a positive result on the risk assessment tool are recommended to receive genetic counseling and, if indicated after counseling, genetic testing.
 21. There are several recommended screening tests for Colorectal cancer. Your physician will consider a variety of factors to decide which test is best. Screenings include:
 - High sensitivity guaiac fecal occult blood test (HSgFOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT) every year;
 - Stool DNA-FIT every 1 to 3 years;
 - Computed tomography colonography every 5 years;
 - Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years;
 - Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 10 years with annual FIT; and
 - Colonoscopy screening every 10 years.
 22. Diabetes/prediabetes screening should be performed for adults ages 35 to 70 who are overweight and obese. Intensive behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthful diet and physical activity for patients with abnormal blood glucose. Individuals with prediabetes may be referred for preventive interventions.
 23. Selection of conditions based on “Newborn Screening: Toward a Uniform Screening Panel and System” as authored by the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG) and commissioned by the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA).
 24. Fluoride oral supplements should be discussed at preventive care visits if the primary water source is deficient in fluoride.
 25. Unhealthy drug use screening should be implemented when services for accurate diagnosis, effective treatment, and appropriate care can be offered or referred.
 26. Behavioral counseling to prevent sexually transmitted infections is for sexually active adolescents and adults at increased risk for sexually transmitted infections.
 27. Intensive behavioral counseling to promote a healthy diet and physical activity is recommended for all adults who have hyperlipidemia or have any known risk factors for cardiovascular and diet-related chronic disease. Diabetes Prevention Program – part of Wellvolution® - is Blue Shield’s lifestyle medicine program focused on diabetes prevention.
 28. Falls prevention counseling for older adults to exercise or physical therapy to prevent falls in community-dwelling adults 65 and older who are at increased risk for falls.
 29. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends use of COVID-19 vaccines for everyone ages 6 months and older. COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines may be administered on the same day.
 30. Hepatitis C screening for adults 18-79.
 31. Lung cancer screening for adults ages 50 to 80 who have a 20 pack per year smoking history and currently smoke or quit within the last 15 years.
 32. Coverage includes:
 - prescribed FDA-approved contraceptive drugs, devices, and products;
 - device insertion and removal;
 - sterilization procedures;
 - contraceptive education and counseling including for continued adherence;
 - related follow-up services; and management of side effects. For self-administered hormonal contraceptives, you may receive up to a 12-month supply.

33. Tuberculosis and latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI) for asymptomatic adults at increased risk for infection.
34. All women of reproductive age are at potential risk for IPV and should be screened. There are a variety of factors that increase the risk of IPV, such as exposure to violence as a child, young age, unemployment, substance abuse, marital difficulties, and economic hardships.
35. Statin use for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease in adults – The USPSTF recommends that adults without a history of cardiovascular disease (CVD) (i.e., symptomatic

coronary artery disease or ischemic stroke) use a low- to moderate-dose statin for the prevention of CVD events and mortality when all of the following criteria are met: 1) they are ages 40 to 75; 2) they have one or more CVD risk factors (i.e., dyslipidemia, diabetes, hypertension, or smoking); and 3) they have a calculated 10-year risk of a cardiovascular event of 10% or greater. Identification of dyslipidemia and calculation of 10-year CVD event risk requires universal lipids screening in adults ages 40 to 75. Statin medications are a pharmacy benefit.

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These are Blue Shield of California's Preventive Health Guidelines, which are based on nationally recognized guidelines. Members must refer to their *Evidence of Coverage* or *Certificate of Insurance* or Policy for plan/policy coverage of preventive health benefits.

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