

CMS guidelines: office of disease prevention and health promotion

Preventive care benefits for adults

All Marketplace health plans and many other plans must cover the following list of preventive services without charging you a [copayment](#) or [coinsurance](#). This is true even if you haven't met your yearly [deductible](#).

IMPORTANT These services are free only when delivered by a doctor or other provider in your plan's network.

1. [Abdominal aortic aneurysm one-time screening](#) for men of specified ages who have ever smoked
2. [Alcohol misuse screening and counseling](#)
3. [Aspirin use](#) to prevent cardiovascular disease for men and women of certain ages
4. [Blood pressure screening](#)
5. [Cholesterol screening](#) for adults of certain ages or at higher risk
6. [Colorectal cancer screening](#) for adults over 50
7. [Depression screening](#)
8. [Diabetes \(Type 2\) screening](#) for adults with high blood pressure
9. [Diet counseling](#) for adults at higher risk for chronic disease
10. [Hepatitis C screening](#) for adults at increased risk, and one time for everyone born 1945 – 1965
11. [HIV screening](#) for everyone ages 15 to 65, and other ages at increased risk

12. [Immunization vaccines](#) for adults — doses, recommended ages, and recommended populations vary:

- [Diphtheria](#)
- [Hepatitis A](#)
- [Hepatitis B](#)
- [Herpes Zoster](#)
- [Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\)](#)
- [Influenza \(flu shot\)](#)
- [Measles](#)
- [Meningococcal](#)
- [Mumps](#)
- [Pertussis](#)
- [Pneumococcal](#)
- [Rubella](#)
- [Tetanus](#)
- [Varicella \(Chickenpox\)](#)

13. [Lung cancer screening](#)  for adults 55 - 80 at high risk for lung cancer because they're heavy smokers or have quit in the past 15 years

14. [Obesity screening and counseling](#)

15. [Sexually transmitted infection \(STI\) prevention counseling](#) for adults at higher risk

16. [Syphilis screening](#) for adults at higher risk

17. [Tobacco Use screening](#) for all adults and cessation interventions for tobacco users

[Learn more about preventive care from the CDC.](#)

Talk to Your Doctor about Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm



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- The Basics
- [Overview](#)
- [Am I at Risk?](#)
- [Symptoms](#)
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- [Talk to Your Doctor](#)
- [Lower Your Risk](#)

The Basics

If you are a man age 65 to 75 and have ever smoked, talk with your doctor about your risk for abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA). If AAA isn't found and treated early, it can be deadly.

What is AAA?

The aorta (“ay-OAR-tah”) is your body’s main artery. An artery is a blood vessel (or tube) that carries blood from your heart. The aorta carries blood from your heart to your abdomen (belly), pelvis, and legs.

If the wall of your aorta is weak, it can swell like a balloon. This balloon-like swelling is called an aneurysm (“AN-yoor-izm”). AAA is an aneurysm that occurs in the part of the aorta running through the abdomen.

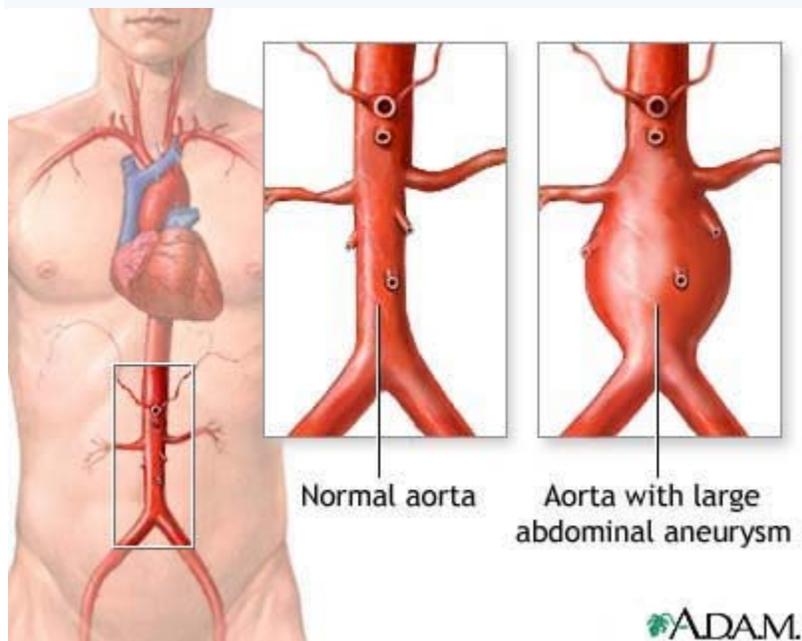
Why do I need to talk to the doctor?

Aneurysms usually grow slowly without any symptoms. When aneurysms grow large enough to burst (break open), they can cause dangerous bleeding inside the body that can lead to death.

If AAA is found early, it can be treated before it bursts. That's why it's so important to ask the doctor about your risk.

Am I at Risk? 1 of 5 sections What does AAA look like?

Here's an example of what AAA looks like inside the body:



Am I at risk for AAA?

Men over age 65 who have ever smoked are at the greatest risk for AAA.

Other risk factors for AAA include:

- Family history of aortic aneurysm or heart disease
- High blood pressure
- High cholesterol

If you think you may be at risk for AAA, talk to your doctor.

Symptoms Overview 2 of 5 sections How do I know if I have AAA?

To check for AAA, your doctor may order an ultrasound test. An ultrasound uses sound waves to look inside the body. It can help your doctor see if there is any swelling of the aorta. Most types of ultrasounds are painless.

What are the symptoms of AAA?

There are usually no symptoms of AAA. Blood vessels like the aorta can swell up slowly over time. That's why it's important to talk with your doctor about AAA to see if you are at risk.

A torn or bleeding aneurysm is a medical emergency. If this happens, you may suddenly have:

- Pain in your lower back, abdomen, or legs
- Nausea (feeling like you are going to throw up) and vomiting (throwing up)
- Clammy (sweaty) skin

You will need surgery right away.

Talk to Your Doctor Am I at Risk? 3 of 5 sections Take Action!

Take these steps to lower your risk for AAA.

Talk with your doctor about your risk for AAA.

Here are some questions you might want to ask your doctor or nurse:

- Do I need to get screened (tested) for AAA?
- How can I get help to quit smoking?
- What are my blood pressure numbers and cholesterol levels?
- What other steps can I take to [keep my heart and blood vessels healthy?](#)

What about the cost of screening?

Thanks to the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, insurance plans must

cover AAA screening for men ages 65 to 75 who have ever smoked. This means you may be able to get screened at no cost to you.

- If you have Medicare, [find out about Medicare coverage for AAA screening](#).
- If you have private insurance, talk to your insurance provider about what's included in your plan. Ask about the Affordable Care Act.

For information about other services covered under the Affordable Care Act, [visit HealthCare.gov](#).

Lower Your RiskSymptoms 4 of 5 sections **Make changes to lower your risk for AAA.**

It's never too late to take steps to lower your risk for AAA.

Quit smoking.

[Quitting smoking](#) is the most important thing you can do to lower your risk for AAA.

If you smoke, now is the time to quit. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free support and help setting up your quit plan.

Check your blood pressure.

[Get your blood pressure checked](#). If your blood pressure is high, getting active, watching your weight, and eating less sodium (salt) can help you lower it.

- [Use this list to help you shop for low sodium foods](#).
- [Get more tips on how to lower your blood pressure \[PDF - 268 KB\]](#).

Get your cholesterol checked.

[Find out what your cholesterol levels are](#). If your cholesterol is high, start a heart-healthy eating plan. This means eating foods low in saturated fat, *trans* fat, and cholesterol. [Find out more about eating healthy](#).

Get active.

Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of activity every week. [Check out these ways to add more physical activity to your day](#).

Drink Alcohol Only in Moderation



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- [Get Help](#)

The Basics

If you choose to drink, have only a moderate (limited) amount. This means:

- No more than 1 drink a day for women
- No more than 2 drinks a day for men

One drink is a:

- Bottle of beer (12 ounces)
- Glass of wine (5 ounces)
- Shot of liquor (1.5 ounces)

For most adults, moderate drinking doesn't cause any serious health problems.

Health Effects

1

1 of 6 sections **How can I tell if I'm at risk for a drinking problem?**

Drinking is a problem if it causes trouble with:

- Your relationships
- School or work
- How you think and feel

If you have a drinking problem, it's important to see a doctor right away. You can improve your health by drinking less or quitting. [Use this tool to see if your drinking habits put you at risk.](#)

How will drinking less or quitting help me?

Drinking in moderation or not drinking at all can help you:

- [Lower your blood pressure](#)
- Lower your risk of injury, heart disease, stroke, some types of cancer, and liver problems
- Lose weight
- Save money
- Get along better with your family

Don't Drink If...Overview

2

2 of 6 sections **Who needs to avoid drinking completely?**

Don't drink at all if you:

- Are pregnant or trying to get pregnant
- Are under age 21
- [Take certain over-the-counter or prescription medicines \(check the medicine label\)](#)
- Are recovering from alcoholism
- Have a health condition that can be made worse by drinking (like liver disease)

It's also very important to avoid drinking if you plan to drive a car or use a machine (like a lawn mower).

Here are some strategies to help you cut back or stop drinking.

Keep track of your drinking.

- **Step 1:** Set a drinking limit. For example, you may decide to have no more than 3 drinks per week.
- **Step 2:** Write your drinking limit on a piece of paper.
- **Step 2:** Write down every time you have a drink for 1 week. [This drinking tracker card can help.](#)

Take a day off from drinking.

Choose a day each week (for example, Tuesday) when you will not drink.

Don't drink when you are upset.

If you have a bad day or are feeling angry, don't reach for a drink. Try taking a walk, calling a friend, or seeing a movie. [Find healthy ways to manage stress.](#)

Avoid places where people drink a lot.

Stay away from bars and other places that may make you want to drink.

Planning ahead can help you manage situations when you might be tempted to drink too much. Plan ahead of time how to say "no" if someone offers you a drink. [Practice these strategies to handle an urge to drink.](#)

Limit the amount of alcohol you keep at home.

This way you won't be tempted to go over the drinking limit you set for yourself.

Make a list of reasons not to drink.

[Make a list of reasons to drink less or quit.](#) Keep this list in your wallet, bag, or on your fridge. Refer to it when you have an urge to drink.

If you want to lose weight or save money, use these calculators to:

- [See how many calories are in your drinks.](#)
- [Find out how much money you are spending on alcohol.](#)

Ask your friends and family to support you. Talk to a doctor or nurse if you are having a hard time cutting down on your drinking. Don't give up!

- [Find a doctor or treatment program near you.](#)
- Call 1-800-662-HELP (1-800-662-4357) for information about treatment.

What about cost?

Screening and counseling for alcohol misuse are covered under the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010. Depending on your insurance plan, you may be able to get these services at no cost to you.

Check with your insurance provider to find out what's included in your plan. [For information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit HealthCare.gov.](#)

Are you worried about a loved one's drinking?

Use these tips to [talk with someone about cutting back or quitting drinking.](#)

Talk with Your Doctor about Taking Aspirin Every Day



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- [Healthy Habits](#)

The Basics

Taking aspirin every day can lower your risk of heart attack or stroke. If you are a man age 45 to 79 or a woman age 55 to 79, ask your doctor about taking aspirin.

You may be at higher risk of having a heart attack or stroke if you:

- Smoke
- Have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes
- Have a family history of heart disease
- Have already had a heart attack or stroke

Talk with your doctor about your risk of heart attack or stroke, and ask if daily aspirin is right for you. For most people, aspirin is safe. But it's not right for everyone.

Be sure to talk with your doctor before you start taking aspirin every day.

- [For Men: Talk with Your Doctor about Taking Aspirin \[PDF - 850 KB\]](#)
- [For Women: Talk with Your Doctor about Taking Aspirin \[PDF - 1 MB\]](#)

Aspirin can reduce your risk of heart attack or stroke by preventing blood clots.

A blood clot is a clump of thickened blood. It can block blood flow to parts of the body and cause serious health problems or even death.

A blood clot can:

- Block blood flow to your heart and cause a heart attack
- Prevent blood from getting to your brain and cause a stroke

Taking daily aspirin can prevent blood clots and lower your risk of heart attack or stroke. If you've already had a heart attack or stroke, daily aspirin can lower your risk of having another one.

Can taking aspirin every day cause any side effects?

Taking aspirin daily isn't right for everyone. For some people, it may be unsafe.

Talk to your doctor **before** you start taking aspirin every day. Be sure to tell your doctor about any health conditions you have (like asthma or bleeding problems).

To learn more, read these [benefits and risks of taking aspirin every day](#). 

Take these steps to lower your risk of heart attack or stroke.

Find out if daily aspirin is right for you.

Your doctor can help you decide if daily aspirin is the right choice for you. Talk with your doctor about:

- Your risk of heart attack or stroke
- What kind of aspirin to take
- How much to take
- How often to take it
- Side effects aspirin can cause

Be sure to tell your doctor about all the other medicines you take, including vitamins, herbs, and over-the-counter medicines (medicines you can get without a prescription). Aspirin may mix dangerously with other medicines and cause serious side effects.

What about cost?

For some adults, aspirin use is covered under the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010. Check with your insurance provider to find out what's included in your plan.

For information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, [visit HealthCare.gov](#).

Know your family's health history.

Your family history affects your risk for heart attack or stroke. [Use this family health history tool](#) to keep track of your family's health. Share the information with your doctor.

If you and your doctor decide that aspirin is right for you, follow these safety tips:

- Make sure you understand how much aspirin to take and how often to take it.
- Talk with your doctor before you start taking a new medicine or vitamin. Ask if it's safe to take with aspirin.
- If you drink alcohol, [drink only in moderation](#). This means no more than 1 drink a day for women and no more than 2 drinks a day for men. Alcohol can increase some risks of taking daily aspirin.
- Check with your doctor first if you want to stop taking daily aspirin.

Get more tips about [using medicines safely](#).

Make it easy to remember.

Here are a few things that may help you remember to take aspirin every day:

- Take it at the same time every day. For example, take it after you brush your teeth or when you eat breakfast.
- Put a reminder note on your bathroom mirror where you will see it each day.
- Use a weekly pill box to keep track of the medicines you take each day.

Taking aspirin is just one part of making heart-healthy changes.

- Find out how you can [eat healthy](#) and [get active](#) to prevent heart disease and stroke.
- If you smoke, the best way to protect your heart is to [quit smoking](#) today.

Get more tips on [keeping your heart healthy](#) and [reducing your risk of stroke](#).

Get Your Blood Pressure Checked



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The Basics

Check your blood pressure at least every 2 years starting at age 18. It's important to check your blood pressure often, especially if you are over age 40.

What is blood pressure?

Blood pressure is how hard your blood pushes against the walls of your arteries when your heart pumps blood.

Arteries are the tubes that carry blood away from your heart. Every time your heart beats, it pumps blood through your arteries to the rest of your body.

What is hypertension?

Hypertension (“hy-puhr-TEHN-shun”) is the medical term for high blood pressure. High blood pressure has no signs or symptoms. The only way to know if you have high blood pressure is to get tested.

By taking steps to lower your blood pressure, you can reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, and kidney

To test your blood pressure, a nurse or doctor will put a cuff around your upper arm and pump up the cuff with air until it feels tight. Then the nurse or doctor will slowly let the air out.

This usually takes less than a minute. The nurse or doctor can tell you what your blood pressure numbers are right after the test is over.

You can also check your own blood pressure with a blood pressure machine. You can find blood pressure machines in shopping malls, pharmacies, and grocery stores.

A blood pressure test measures how hard your heart is working to pump blood through your body.

Blood pressure is measured with 2 numbers. The first number is the pressure in your arteries when your heart beats. The second number is the pressure in your arteries between each beat, when your heart relaxes.

Compare your blood pressure to these numbers:

- Normal blood pressure is lower than 120/80 (said “120 over 80”).
- High blood pressure is 140/90 or higher.

- Blood pressure that's between normal and high (for example, 130/85) is called prehypertension ("PREE-hy-puhr-tehn-shun"), or high normal blood pressure.

One in 3 Americans has high blood pressure. As you get older, your risk of high blood pressure increases. You are also at higher risk for high blood pressure if you:

- Are overweight or obese
- Are African American
- Have a family history of high blood pressure
- Eat foods high in sodium (salt)
- Get less than 30 minutes of physical activity on most days

These things may also increase your risk of high blood pressure:

- Drinking too much alcohol
- Having chronic (ongoing) stress
- Smoking

Learn more about [your risk for high blood pressure](#).

High blood pressure can be dangerous for a pregnant woman and her unborn baby. If you have high blood pressure and you want to get pregnant, it's important to take steps to lower your blood pressure first.

Sometimes, women get high blood pressure for the first time during pregnancy. This is called gestational ("jes-TAY-shon-al") hypertension. Usually, this type of high blood pressure goes away after the baby is born.

If you have high blood pressure while you are pregnant, be sure to visit your doctor regularly.

- [Find out more about high blood pressure during pregnancy](#).

- [Get more tips on how to have a healthy pregnancy.](#)

If you have high blood pressure, talk to a doctor. You may need medicine to control your blood pressure.

Print out this list of [questions to ask your doctor about blood pressure](#) .

Take these steps to lower your blood pressure:

- [Eat healthy foods](#) that are low in saturated fat and sodium (salt).
- [Get active](#). Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity.
- [Watch your weight](#) by eating healthy and getting active.
- [Remember to take medicines](#) as prescribed (ordered) by your doctor.

Small changes can add up. For example, losing just 10 pounds can help lower your blood pressure.

To learn more, [check out this guide to lowering high blood pressure \[PDF - 269 KB\]](#).

Take steps to prevent or lower high blood pressure. To start, get your blood pressure checked as soon as possible.

Check your blood pressure regularly.

Ask a doctor or nurse to check your blood pressure at your next visit.

You can also find blood pressure machines at many shopping malls, pharmacies, and grocery stores. Most of these machines are free to use.

- [Get tips on checking your blood pressure at home.](#) 
- [Print this tool to keep track of your blood pressure \[PDF - 679 KB\]](#).

What about the cost of testing?

Blood pressure testing is covered under the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed

in 2010. Depending on your insurance, you may be able to get your blood pressure checked by a doctor or nurse at no cost to you.

Check with your insurance provider to find out what's included in your plan. [Visit HealthCare.gov](#) for information about other services covered under the Affordable Care Act.

Eating less sodium (salt) can lower your blood pressure. Look for foods that say “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”

When you go food shopping, [check the Nutrition Facts label for the Daily Value \(DV\) of sodium \[PDF - 410 KB\]](#). Choose foods with 5% or less of the Daily Value of sodium. Foods with a DV of 20% or more are high in sodium.

Eating more potassium can also help lower your blood pressure. Good sources of potassium include potatoes, cantaloupe, bananas, beans, and yogurt.

Get more tips to:

- [Reduce the sodium \(salt\) in your diet](#)
- [Shop for low sodium foods](#)
- [Make healthier meals with the DASH eating plan](#) (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension)

[Getting regular physical activity](#) can reduce your risk of high blood pressure. Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate activity, like:

- Walking fast
- Dancing
- Riding bikes
- Swimming
- Aerobics

If you choose to drink alcohol, [limit your drinking](#) to no more than 1 drink a day for women and no more than 2 drinks a day for men.

Manage your stress.

[Managing stress](#) can help prevent and control high blood pressure. Deep breathing and meditation are good ways to relax and manage stress.

Quit smoking.

Smoking damages your heart and blood vessels. [Quit smoking](#) to help lower your risk of high blood pressure and heart disease.

[Get tips to quit](#) – for good.

Get Your Cholesterol Checked



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The Basics

Too much cholesterol (“koh-LEHS-tuh-rah!”) in your blood can cause a heart attack or a stroke. You could have high cholesterol and not know it.

The good news is that it’s easy to get your cholesterol checked – and if your cholesterol is high, you can take steps to control it.

Who needs to get their cholesterol checked?

- All men age 35 and older
- Men ages 20 to 35 who have heart disease or risk factors for heart disease
- Women age 20 and older who have heart disease or risk factors for heart disease

Talk to your doctor or nurse about your risk factors for heart disease. Ask if you need to get your cholesterol checked.

What are the risk factors for heart disease?

Risk factors for heart disease include:

- High blood pressure
- A family history of heart disease
- Hardening of the arteries (called atherosclerosis)
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- Being overweight or obese
- Not getting enough physical activity

[Read more about heart disease.](#)

Definition 1 of 9 sections **What is cholesterol?**

Cholesterol is a waxy substance (material) that's found naturally in your blood. Your body makes cholesterol and uses it to do important things, like making hormones and digesting fatty foods.

You also get cholesterol by eating foods like egg yolks, fatty meats, and regular cheese.

If you have too much cholesterol in your body, it can build up inside your blood vessels and make it hard for blood to flow through them. Over time, this can lead to a heart attack or a stroke.

What are the symptoms of high cholesterol?

There are no signs or symptoms of high cholesterol. That's why it's so important to get your cholesterol checked.

Cholesterol Test Overview 2 of 9 sections **How often do I need to get my cholesterol checked?**

The general recommendation is to get your cholesterol checked every 5 years. Some people need to get their cholesterol checked more or less often. Talk to your doctor about what's best for you.

How can I get my cholesterol checked?

Cholesterol is checked with a blood test called a lipid profile. During the test, a nurse will take a small sample of blood from your finger or arm.

Be sure to find out how to get ready for the test. For example, you may need to fast (not eat or drink anything except water) for 9 to 12 hours before the test.

There are other blood tests that can check cholesterol, but a lipid profile gives the most information.

[Find out more about cholesterol tests.](#)

Types of Cholesterol Definition 3 of 9 sections **What do the test results mean?**

If you get a lipid profile test, the results will show 4 numbers. A lipid profile measures:

- Total cholesterol
- HDL (good) cholesterol
- LDL (bad) cholesterol
- Triglycerides (“try-GLIH-suh-rydz”)

Total cholesterol is a measure of all the cholesterol in your blood. It's based on the HDL, LDL, and triglycerides numbers.

HDL cholesterol is the good type of cholesterol – so a higher level is better for you. Having a low HDL cholesterol level can increase your risk for heart disease.

LDL cholesterol is the bad type of cholesterol that can block your arteries – so a lower level is better for you.

Triglycerides are a type of fat in your blood that can increase your risk for heart attack and stroke.

[Am I at Risk?Cholesterol Test](#)

4 of 9 sections **What can cause unhealthy cholesterol levels?**

Causes of unhealthy HDL cholesterol levels include:

- Genetic (inherited) factors
- Type 2 diabetes
- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Not getting enough physical activity
- Taking certain medicines

Causes of unhealthy LDL cholesterol levels include:

- Having a family history of high LDL cholesterol
- Eating too much saturated fat, *trans fat*, and cholesterol

Lower Your RiskTypes of Cholesterol

5 of 9 sections

What if my cholesterol levels aren't healthy?

As your LDL cholesterol gets higher, so does your risk of heart disease. Take these steps to lower your cholesterol and reduce your risk of heart disease:

- Eat heart-healthy foods.
- Get active.
- If you smoke, quit.

Ask your doctor if you also need to take medicine to help lower your cholesterol.

Get TestedAm I at Risk?

6 of 9 sections

Take Action!

Find out what your cholesterol levels are. If your cholesterol is high, take steps to control it.

Make an appointment to get your cholesterol checked.

Call your doctor's office or health center to schedule the test. Be sure to ask for a complete lipid profile – and find out what instructions you'll need to follow before the test. For example, you may need to fast (not eat or drink anything except water) for 9 to 12 hours before the test.

You may also want to print these [questions to ask your doctor about cholesterol \[PDF - 121 KB\]](#) and take them to your appointment.

What about cost?

Cholesterol testing is covered under the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010. Depending on your insurance plan, you may be able to get your cholesterol checked at no cost to you.

- Check with your insurance provider to find out what's included in your plan. Ask about the Affordable Care Act.
- You can still get your cholesterol checked even if you don't have insurance. To learn more, [find a health center near you](#).

For more information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, [visit HealthCare.gov](#).

Keep track of your cholesterol levels.

Remember to ask the doctor or nurse for your cholesterol levels each time you get your cholesterol checked. Write the levels down to keep track of your progress.

Eat Healthy Lower Your Risk 7 of 9 sections **Eat heart-healthy foods.**

Making healthy changes to your diet can help lower your cholesterol. Try to:

- Eat less saturated fat, which comes from animal products (like regular cheese, fatty meats, and dairy desserts) and tropical oils (like palm, palm kernel, and coconut oil).
- Stay away from *trans* fats, which may be in baked goods (like cookies and cake), snack foods (like microwave popcorn), fried foods, and margarines.
- Limit foods that are high in cholesterol, including fatty meats and organ meat (like liver and kidney).
- Limit foods that are high in salt or added sugar.
- Choose low-fat or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt.
- Eat more foods that are high in fiber, like oatmeal, oat bran, beans, and lentils.
- Eat more vegetables and fruits.

You can also:

- [Use this shopping list to find heart-healthy foods.](#)
- [Get heart-healthy recipes and meal plans](#) to keep your cholesterol levels under control.

Healthy Habits Get Tested 8 of 9 sections **Get active.**

Getting active can help you lose weight, lower your LDL (bad) cholesterol, and raise your HDL (good) cholesterol. Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate activity, such as:

- Walking fast
- Swimming
- Aerobics

Get more tips on [protecting your heart with physical activity \[PDF - 426 KB\]](#).

Quit smoking.

[Quitting smoking](#) will help lower your cholesterol. If you smoke, make a plan to quit today. Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free support and to set up your quit plan.

And if you don't smoke, don't start!

Get Tested for Colorectal Cancer



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The Basics

If you are age 50 to 75, get tested regularly for colorectal (“koh-loh-REK-tuhl”) cancer. All it takes is a visit to the doctor to have a special exam (called a screening).

You may need to get tested before age 50 if colorectal cancer runs in your family. Talk with your doctor and ask about your risk for colorectal cancer.

How often should I get screened?

How often you get screened will depend on your risk for colorectal cancer. It will also depend on which screening test is used.

There are different ways to test for colorectal cancer. Some tests are done every 1 to 2 years. Other tests are done every 5 to 10 years. Your doctor can help you decide which test is right for you and how often to get screened.

Most people can stop getting screened after age 75. Talk with your doctor about what's right for you.

What to Expect 1 of 8 sections **What happens during the test?**

There are different kinds of tests used to screen for colorectal cancer. Some tests you can do at home, such as a fecal occult blood test. Other tests, such as a colonoscopy, must be done in a clinic or hospital.

You may need to drink only clear liquids (like water or plain tea) the day before your test and use laxatives to clean out your colon. Your doctor will tell you how to get ready for your test.

[Learn more about colorectal cancer screening tests.](#)

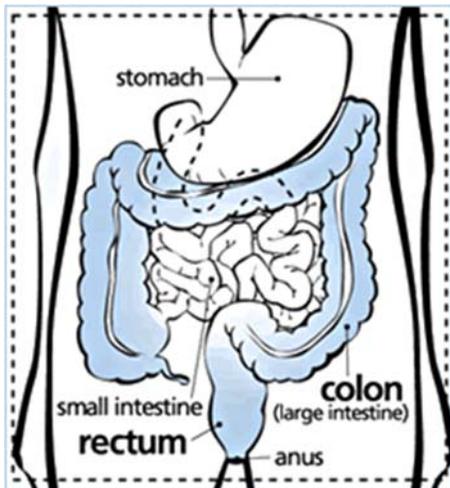
Does it hurt to get tested?

Some people find the tests for colorectal cancer to be uncomfortable. Most people agree that the benefits to their health outweigh the discomfort.

[Read real people's stories about colorectal cancer screening.](#)

Colorectal Cancer Overview 2 of 8 sections **What is colorectal cancer?**

Cancer of the colon or rectum is called colorectal cancer. Like other types of cancer, colorectal cancer can spread to other parts of your body.



The colon is the longest part of the large intestine. The rectum is the bottom part of the large intestine.

To learn more about colorectal cancer, visit these websites:

- [Colon and Rectal Cancer](#)
- [Colorectal Cancer](#) (information for older adults)

Am I at Risk?What to Expect 3 of 8 sections**Am I at risk for colorectal cancer?**

People over age 50 are at higher risk of developing colorectal cancer. Other risk factors are:

- Polyps (growths) inside the colon
- Family history of colorectal cancer
- Smoking
- Obesity
- Not getting enough physical activity
- Drinking too much alcohol
- Health conditions, such as Crohn's disease, which cause chronic inflammation (ongoing irritation) of the intestines

[Use this calculator to find out your risk of colorectal cancer.](#)

Act Early Colorectal Cancer 4 of 8 sections **Take control – act early.**

If you act early, you have a good chance of preventing colorectal cancer or finding it when it can be treated more easily.

- If your doctor finds polyps inside your colon during testing, these growths can be removed before they become cancer.
- If you find out you have cancer after you get tested, you can take steps to treat it right away.

Get Tested Am I at Risk? 5 of 8 sections **Take Action!**

The best way to prevent colorectal cancer is to get tested starting at age 50.

Talk with your doctor about getting screened.

[Print these questions to ask your doctor about colorectal cancer screening.](#) Take them to your next checkup.

What about cost?

Thanks to the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, most insurance plans must cover screening for colorectal cancer. Depending on your insurance plan, you may be able to get screened at no cost to you.

- If you have Medicare, [find out about Medicare coverage for different colorectal cancer tests.](#)
- If you have private insurance, talk to your insurance company to find out what's included in your plan. Ask about the Affordable Care Act.
- If you don't have insurance, you can still get important screening tests. To learn more, [find a health center near you.](#)

To learn more about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit HealthCare.gov.

Get Support Act Early 6 of 8 sections **Get support.**

If you are nervous about getting a colorectal cancer test, get support.

- Ask a family member or friend to go with you.

- Talk with people you know who have been screened to learn what to expect.

Give support.

Do you know someone age 50 or older who hasn't been tested for colorectal cancer yet? [Use these tips to start a conversation about the importance of screening.](#)

Lower Your Risk **Get Tested** 7 of 8 sections **Get active.**

Regular exercise may help reduce your risk of colorectal cancer. [Take these steps to get moving today.](#)

Drink alcohol only in moderation.

Drinking too much alcohol may increase your risk of colorectal cancer. If you choose to drink, [have only a moderate \(limited\) amount.](#) This means:

- No more than 1 drink a day for women
- No more than 2 drinks a day for men

Eat healthy.

[Eating healthy foods](#) that are low in fat and high in calcium and fiber may help prevent colorectal cancer.

- You can get calcium from foods like yogurt, cheese, and spinach. [Use this calcium shopping list to find good sources of calcium.](#)
- Fiber is in foods like beans, barley, and nuts. [Find out which foods are good sources of fiber.](#)

Talk with Your Doctor about Depression



Browse Sections

- The Basics

- [Overview](#)
- [Signs](#)
- [Treatment](#)
- [Take Action!](#)
- [See a Doctor](#)
- [Get Support](#)
- [Help a Loved One](#)
- [Get Active](#)

The Basics

If you think you might be depressed, talk with a doctor about how you are feeling.

What is depression?

Depression is an illness that involves the brain. It can affect your thoughts, mood, and daily activities. Depression is more than feeling sad for a few days.

Depression can be mild or severe. Mild depression can become more serious if it's not treated.

If you are diagnosed with depression, you aren't alone. Depression is a common illness that affects millions of adults in the United States every year.

The good news is that depression can be treated. Getting help is the best thing you can do for yourself and your loved ones. You can feel better.

Signs

1 of 7 sections **What are the signs of depression?**

It's normal to feel sad sometimes, but if you feel sad or "down" on most days for more than 2 weeks at a time, you may be depressed.

Depression affects people differently. Some signs of depression are:

- Losing interest in activities you used to enjoy

- Feeling hopeless or empty
- Forgetting things or having trouble making decisions
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Gaining or losing weight without meaning to
- Thinking about suicide or death

To learn more, take this [quiz to see if you might be depressed](#) .

Treatment Overview 2 of 7 sections **How is depression treated?**

Depression can be treated with talk therapy, medicines (called antidepressants), or both. Your doctor may refer you to a mental health professional for talk therapy or medicine.

Check out these websites to learn more about depression:

- [General information about depression](#)
- [Information for older adults](#)
- [Information for women](#)
- [Information for pregnant women and new moms](#)
- [Resources for veterans](#)

See a Doctor Signs 3 of 7 sections **Take Action!**

Depression is a real illness. If you think you might be depressed, see your doctor.

Talk to a doctor about how you are feeling.

Get a medical checkup. Ask to see a doctor or nurse who can screen you for depression.

The doctor or nurse may also check to see if you have another health condition (like thyroid disease) that can cause depression or make it worse. If you have one of these health conditions, it's important to get treatment right away.

What about cost?

Thanks to the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, insurance plans must cover screening for depression. This means you may be able to get screened at no cost to you.

If you don't have insurance, you can still get health care. [Find a health center near you](#) and make an appointment.

Get SupportTreatment 4 of 7 sections**Get help and support.**

When you have depression, seeking help is the best thing you can do.

Ask your doctor for a referral to a mental health professional or [use this treatment locator to find mental health services near you](#). Some programs offer free or low-cost treatment if you don't have insurance.

Here are some places you can go to for help with depression:

- Doctor's office or health clinic
- Family service or social service agency
- Church or clergy person
- Psychologist ("sy-KAH-lah-jist")
- Counselor or social worker
- Psychotherapist ("sy-koh-THAYR-uh-pist")

Remember, even if asking for help seems scary, it's an important step toward feeling better.

- Check out this guide to [finding a mental health professional \[PDF - 442 KB\]](#) .
- Get more [ideas for building your support system](#).

Help a Loved OneSee a Doctor 5 of 7 sections**If someone you care about is depressed, get help.**

If you think a friend or family member may be depressed, check out these tips on [how to talk to a loved one about depression](#).

Find more [resources for people living with a mental illness](#) .

Get help right away if you or someone you know is thinking about suicide.

- To get help for yourself or someone else, visit the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#)  or call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).
- If someone is in immediate danger, call 911.

Get Active**Get Support** 6 of 7 sections**Get active.**

[Getting active](#) can lower your stress level and help your treatment work better. It can also help keep you from getting depressed again. But it's important to know that physical activity isn't a treatment for depression.

Take Steps to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes



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 - [Food and Physical Activity](#)

- o [Healthy Weight](#)
- o [Know Your Numbers](#)

The Basics

You can do a lot to prevent or delay getting type 2 diabetes (“dy-ah-BEE-teez”), including:

- Watching your weight
- Eating healthy
- Staying active

Diabetes is one of the leading causes of disability and death in the United States. If it’s not controlled, diabetes can cause serious health problems.

The good news is that the small steps you take to prevent diabetes can lead to big rewards.

To get started, [make your game plan to prevent type 2 diabetes \[PDF - 7 MB\]](#).

Definition 1 of 9 sections **What is diabetes?**

Diabetes is a disease. People with diabetes have too much glucose (sugar) in their blood.

Your body depends on glucose for energy. When you eat, the food turns into glucose. Your blood carries the glucose to other parts of your body.

When you have diabetes, your body has trouble turning glucose into energy. Instead of being used by your body, the glucose builds up in your blood. The rest of your body is starved of energy.

Diabetes can't be cured, but it can be controlled. If it’s not controlled, diabetes can lead to:

- Blindness
- Nerve damage
- Kidney disease

- Heart disease
- Stroke

What is type 2 diabetes?

There is more than one type of diabetes. Type 2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes. People who are overweight are more likely to get type 2 diabetes.

Am I at Risk? **Overview** 2 of 9 sections **Am I at risk for diabetes?**

You may be at risk for type 2 diabetes if you:

- Are age 45 or older
- Are overweight
- Have a parent or sibling with diabetes
- Are African American, Hispanic or Latino American, American Indian, Asian American, or Pacific Islander
- Have had diabetes during pregnancy (gestational diabetes) or have had a baby with a birth weight of more than 9 pounds
- Have high blood pressure or cholesterol
- Exercise less than 3 times a week
- Have pre-diabetes

What is pre-diabetes?

Pre-diabetes means the amount of glucose in your blood is higher than normal. If you have pre-diabetes, you are at risk for type 2 diabetes and other serious health problems, like heart disease and stroke. [Find out more about pre-diabetes.](#)

Signs **Definition** 3 of 9 sections **What are the signs of diabetes?**

Many people with diabetes don't know they have the disease. Some signs of diabetes include:

- Being very thirsty or very hungry
- Feeling tired for no reason

- Urinating (going to the bathroom) more than usual
- Losing weight for no reason
- Having cuts or bruises that are slow to heal
- Having trouble seeing (blurry vision)
- Losing feeling or having tingling in your hands or feet

Not everyone who has diabetes has these signs. If you have any of these signs or think you may be at risk, talk with your doctor about getting tested for diabetes.

Talk to Your Doctor Am I at Risk? 4 of 9 sections **Take Action!**

Take these steps to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Talk to a doctor about your diabetes risk.

Use [this tool to find out if you are at risk for diabetes](#).  Print out the results and take them to your next checkup.

- Ask your doctor or nurse these [questions about how to prevent type 2 diabetes](#).
- If you are pregnant or planning to get pregnant, [talk to your doctor or midwife about gestational](#) (“jes-TAY-shon-al”) [diabetes](#). Gestational diabetes is a type of diabetes you can get during pregnancy.
- Ask about [diabetes prevention programs near you](#).

Cost and Insurance Signs 5 of 9 sections **What about cost?**

Thanks to the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, insurance plans cover these services related to diabetes risk:

- Diabetes screening for adults with high blood pressure
- Diet counseling for adults at higher risk for chronic disease

Depending on your insurance plan, you may be able to get these services at no cost to you. Check with your insurance provider to find out what’s included in your plan.

For information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, [visit HealthCare.gov](#).

Food and Physical Activity **Talk to Your Doctor** 6 of 9 sections **Eat healthy.**

[Eating healthy foods](#) can help you control your weight – and prevent or delay type 2 diabetes.

Choose foods low in fat, cholesterol, and salt. [Try these tips to cut down on fat and calories.](#)

Get active.

[Getting active](#) can lower your risk of type 2 diabetes. Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity, like walking fast or biking.

- [See what counts as aerobic activity.](#)
- [Try this sample walking program.](#)

If you have a health condition or disability, be as active as you can be. [Use these tips to stay active with a disability.](#) Your doctor can help you choose the best activities for you.

Healthy Weight **Cost and Insurance** 7 of 9 sections **Watch your weight.**

Studies show that losing 5 to 7 percent of your body weight can lower your risk of getting type 2 diabetes. If you weigh 200 pounds, 7 percent of your body weight is 14 pounds.

Try using a notebook or journal to write down:

- Your weight
- All the meals and snacks you eat each day
- [The number of calories and grams of fat in your food](#)
- How many minutes of physical activity you do each day

To get started, [use this food and activity tracking tool for a week.](#)

Check out these other [tips to help you reach a healthy weight.](#)

Know Your Numbers **Food and Physical Activity** 8 of 9 sections **Get your blood pressure and cholesterol checked.**

- Starting at age 18, [get your blood pressure checked](#) at least once every 2 years. It's important to get your blood pressure checked often, especially if you are over 40 years old.
- [Talk to a doctor about getting your cholesterol checked](#). Most men need their cholesterol checked at least once every 5 years. Women at risk for heart disease need their cholesterol checked every 5 years.

Eat Healthy



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 - [Shop Smart](#)
 - [Check Labels](#)
 - [Healthy Families](#)
 - [Eating Out](#)
 - [See Your Doctor](#)

The Basics

To be healthy, your body needs to get enough vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. Eating healthy means getting plenty of:

- Vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk products

- Seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, beans, peas, seeds, and nuts

Eating healthy also means limiting:

- Cholesterol, sodium (salt), and added sugars
- *Trans* fats, which may be in foods like cakes, cookies, stick margarines, and fried foods
- Saturated fats, which come from animal products like cheese, fatty meats, whole milk, and butter
- Foods made with refined grains, like white bread, noodles, white rice, and flour tortillas

[Get a personalized Daily Food Plan to help you choose healthy foods.](#)

Health Benefits 1 of 8 sections **A healthy diet can help you be strong and active.**

Eating healthy is good for your overall health. Making smart food choices can also help you manage your weight and lower your risk for certain diseases.

When you eat healthy foods (and limit unhealthy foods), you can reduce your risk for:

- Heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Some types of cancer
- Osteoporosis (bone loss)

[Learn more about why eating healthy is important.](#)

Track Meals **Overview** 2 of 8 sections **Take Action!**

Making small changes to your eating habits can make a big difference for your health. Here are some tips and tools you can use to get started.

Keep a food diary.

Knowing what you eat now will help you figure out what you want to change. [Print this food diary \[PDF - 36 KB\]](#) and write down:

- When you eat
- What and how much you eat
- Where you are and who you are with when you eat
- How you are feeling when you eat

For example, you might write something like:

"Tuesday 3:30 pm, 2 chocolate chip cookies, at work with Mary, feeling stressed."

[Try this SuperTracker tool to plan and track your diet and physical activity.](#)

Shop Smart[Health Benefits](#) 3 of 8 sections **Shop smart at the grocery store.**

Try these tips the next time you go food shopping:

- Eat a snack at home before you go to the store.
- Make a shopping list ahead of time.
- Buy a variety of vegetables and fruits in different colors. [These shopping tips can help.](#)
- [Look for low sodium foods from this list.](#)
- Choose fat-free or low-fat milk products.
- [Replace old favorites with the healthy, lower fat choices on this list.](#)
- Choose 100% whole-wheat or whole-grain bread and crackers.
- To save money, buy fruits and vegetables that are in season or on sale.

[Use this healthy foods checklist to make your shopping list.](#)

Check Labels[Track Meals](#) 4 of 8 sections **Read the Nutrition Facts label.**

Understanding the Nutrition Facts label on food packages can help you make healthy choices.

- Look at the serving size and the number of servings per package.
- Check out the percent Daily Value (% DV) column.
- Try to keep saturated fat, *trans* fat, cholesterol, and sodium at 5% or less.
- Look for foods that have 20% or more of fiber, calcium, potassium, and vitamin D.

Click the picture below for more about how to read a Nutrition Facts label.

1 Start Here →

2 Check Calories

3 Limit these Nutrients

4 Get Enough of these Nutrients

5 Footnote

6 Quick Guide to % DV

• 5% or less is Low
• 20% or more is High

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1 cup (228g) Servings Per Container 2	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 12g	18%
Saturated Fat 3g	15%
<i>Trans</i> Fat 3g	
Cholesterol 30mg	10%
Sodium 470mg	20%
Total Carbohydrate 31g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 5g	
Protein 5g	
Vitamin A	4%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	20%
Iron	4%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your Daily Values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

Use this interactive tool to practice using food labels to make healthy choices.

[Healthy FamiliesShop Smart](#) 5 of 8 sections **Be a healthy family.**

Parents and caregivers are important role models for healthy eating. You can teach kids how to choose and prepare healthy foods.

- [Use this chart to help your family shop for healthy foods \[PDF - 136 KB\]](#). Take your child with you to the store and explain the choices you make.
- Turn cooking into a fun activity for the whole family. [Let your young child help with these kitchen tasks \[PDF - 12 KB\]](#).
- [Check out these quick tips for making healthy snacks.](#)
- [Get more ideas on how to be a healthy role model for your kids.](#)

If you have a family member who has a hard time eating healthy, [use these tips to start a conversation about how you can help.](#)

Eating Out **Check Labels** 6 of 8 sections **Eat healthy away from home.**

You can make smart food choices wherever you are – at work, in your favorite restaurant, or out running errands. Try these tips for eating healthy even when you are away from home:

- At lunch, have a sandwich on whole-grain bread.
- Drink fat-free or low-fat milk, water, or 100% fruit juice.
- In a restaurant, choose dishes that are steamed, broiled, or grilled instead of fried.
- On a long drive or shopping trip, pack fresh fruit, unsalted nuts, or low-fat string cheese sticks to snack on.

[Get more tips for eating healthy when dining out.](#)

See Your Doctor **Healthy Families** 7 of 8 sections **If you are worried about your eating habits, talk to a doctor.**

If you need help making healthier food choices, your doctor or nurse can help. Be sure to take a food diary with you to help start the conversation.

What about cost?

Because of the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, health plans must cover diet counseling for people at higher risk for chronic diseases like type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.

Depending on your insurance, you may be able to get diet counseling at no cost to you. Check with your insurance company to find out what's included in your plan.

For information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov).

Manage your high blood pressure or diabetes.

If you or a loved one has high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, or heart disease, talk with your doctor about how to stay healthy. If you need to follow a special diet, check out these websites:

- [Eating Healthy to Lower Your Blood Pressure \(DASH\)](#)
- [Tasty Recipes for People with Diabetes and Their Families \[PDF - 1 MB\]](#)
- [Keep the Beat™ Deliciously Healthy Dinners \[PDF - 56 MB\]](#)

Hepatitis C Screening: Questions for the doctor



Hepatitis C is a serious liver disease caused by the hepatitis C virus (HCV). The most common way to get hepatitis C is by coming into contact with the blood of someone who has it.

It's important for certain people to get tested for the hepatitis C virus. If you answer yes to any of these questions, talk to your doctor about getting tested:

- Were you born between 1945 and 1965?
- Did you have a blood transfusion or organ transplant (get blood or organs from someone else) before 1992?
- Have you ever injected drugs?
- Do you have chronic liver disease, HIV, or AIDS?

Many people who have hepatitis C live for years without feeling sick. But the virus can still damage the liver – even when there aren't any symptoms.

The only way to know for sure if you have hepatitis C is to get a blood test. If you have hepatitis C, treatments may be able to help you live a longer, healthier life.

What about cost?

Thanks to the health care reform law, insurance plans must cover hepatitis C testing for adults at higher risk and everyone born between 1945 and 1965. You may be able to get tested at no cost to you. Talk to your insurance company to find out more.

What do I ask the doctor?

Visiting the doctor can be stressful. It helps to have questions for the doctor or nurse written down ahead of time. Print this list of questions, and take it to your appointment.

- Do I need to get tested for the hepatitis C virus (HCV)?
- What puts me at risk for hepatitis C?
- How will you test me for hepatitis C?
- How long will it take to get my test results?
- How will I find out my test results?
- If I have hepatitis C, what will happen next?
- Can you give me some information about hepatitis C to take home with me?

Get Tested for HIV



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- The Basics
 - Overview
 - Why Get Tested?
 - Testing Options
 - What Is HIV?
- Take Action!
 - Get Tested
 - Protect Yourself
 - Talk about It

The Basics

The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested. You could have HIV and still feel healthy.

How often do I need to get tested for HIV?

Everyone ages 15 to 65 needs to get tested for HIV at least once. All pregnant women also need to get tested.

How often you need to get tested depends on your risk for HIV infection. Talk to your doctor or nurse about your risk for HIV. Ask how often you need to get tested.

Get tested for HIV at least once a year if you:

- Have sex without a condom with someone who may have HIV
- Have sex with men who have sex with men
- Use drugs with needles
- Have a sex partner who has HIV
- Have had a sexually transmitted disease (STD)
- Have sex with more than one partner

- Have sex with people you don't know
- Have sex for drugs or money

If you are a man who has sex with men, you may need to get tested more often – like every 3 to 6 months.

Why Get Tested? 1 of 7 sections Why do I need to get tested for HIV?

The only way to know if you have HIV is to get tested. Many people with HIV don't have any symptoms.

Even if you don't feel sick, getting early treatment for HIV is important.

- If you don't have HIV (you are HIV-negative), you can take steps to make sure you stay HIV-free.
- If you have HIV (you are HIV-positive), you can take steps to have a healthier future. You can also take steps to protect other people.

Live longer with HIV.

If you have HIV, early treatment can help you live a longer, healthier life. The sooner you get care for HIV, the better.

- [Find out about treatment options for HIV.](#)
- [Get information about staying healthy with HIV.](#)
- [Use this tool to find services for people with HIV or AIDS](#), like housing assistance, health centers, and counseling.

Protect yourself and others.

If you have HIV, you can [take steps to protect your partner](#) from the virus. If you are pregnant or thinking about getting pregnant, you can get treatment to [prevent passing HIV to your baby](#).

Testing Options Overview 2 of 7 sections How can I get tested for HIV?

There are different types of HIV tests. The most common are:

- Lab tests – It can take from a few days to 2 weeks to get the results.

- Rapid tests – Results are ready in 10 to 20 minutes.

When you get tested, the nurse will take a sample of your blood or collect fluid from your mouth with a swab (a stick with a soft tip).

If you test positive, the doctor or nurse will give you a second HIV test to be sure.

[Find out more about the different types of HIV tests.](#)

What's the difference between confidential and anonymous testing?

When you get tested at a doctor's office or clinic, your test results are **confidential**. This means they can only be shared with people allowed to see your medical records.

If you are worried about giving your name, you can get an **anonymous** HIV test at some clinics. This means that you don't have to give your name.

What Is HIV?Why Get Tested? 3 of 7 sections**What is HIV?**

HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. This is the virus that causes AIDS. There is no cure yet for HIV/AIDS, but there are treatments that can help people live longer, healthier lives.

How do people get HIV?

HIV is spread through some of the body's fluids, like blood, semen (cum), vaginal fluids, and breast milk. HIV is passed from one person to another by:

- Having sex (vaginal, anal, or oral) without a condom or dental dam with a person who has HIV
- Sharing needles with someone who has HIV
- Breastfeeding, pregnancy, or childbirth if the mother has HIV
- Getting a transfusion of blood that's infected with HIV (very rare in the United States)

Learn more about HIV/AIDS:

- [What is HIV/AIDS?](#)
- [Women and HIV/AIDS](#)

Take these steps to protect yourself and others from HIV.

Find a place to get tested.

Ask your doctor or nurse for an HIV test. Or visit an HIV testing center or health clinic. You also can get tested at a hospital or health department.

To find an HIV testing center near you:

- [Enter your ZIP code to find local testing sites.](#)
- Call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636).

If you want to know more about HIV testing and prevention, [take this list of questions to your appointment.](#)

What about cost?

Free HIV testing is available at some testing centers and health clinics.

Thanks to the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, insurance plans must cover HIV testing. HIV counseling is covered for women who are sexually active. Talk to your insurance company to find out more.

[To learn about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit HealthCare.gov.](#)

The best way to protect yourself from HIV is to not have sex until you are in a relationship with only one person **and** you have both tested negative.

Here are other steps you can take to help prevent HIV:

- Use a latex condom with water-based lubricant every time you have vaginal or anal sex.

- When you have oral sex, use a condom or dental dam (rectangular sheet of latex placed over the vagina).
- Limit your number of sexual partners.
- Don't inject drugs or share needles.
- If you have more than one sexual partner, get tested for HIV regularly.

[Check out these condom do's and dont's.](#)

Talk about ItGet Tested 6 of 7 sections **Talk with your partner about getting tested.**

It's important to make time to talk before having sex. Ask your partner to get tested for HIV and other STDs. Offer to get tested together.

These ideas can help you start the conversation:

- [STD Testing: Conversation starters](#)
- [Tips for teens: Talking to your partner about STDs](#) 📄

Get counseling about HIV prevention.

If you want more information about preventing HIV, ask your local testing center if they offer prevention counseling. You may want counseling if:

- You are worried about getting HIV
- You have HIV and are worried about giving it to someone else

Watch Your Weight



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- [Set Goals](#)
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- [Portion Sizes](#)
- [Get Help](#)

The Basics

To stay at a healthy weight, balance the calories you eat with the calories you burn (use up). Calories are a measure of the energy in the foods you eat. To lose weight, you need to burn more calories than you eat.

A healthy diet and physical activity can help you control your weight. You burn more calories when you are physically active.

How do I know if I'm at a healthy weight?

Finding out your Body Mass Index (BMI) is the best way to learn if you are at a healthy weight. [Use this Body Mass Index \(BMI\) calculator](#) to find out your BMI and what it means for you.

- If you are overweight or obese, you can lose weight by getting more physical activity and eating fewer calories.
- If you are already at a healthy weight, keep getting regular physical activity and eating the right number of calories.

How do I know if I'm eating the right number of calories?

[Use this Daily Food Plan tool](#) to find out how many calories you need to maintain your current weight.

Health Benefits 1 of 7 sections **What can losing weight do for me?**

If you are overweight or obese, losing weight can lower your risk for serious health conditions like:

- Type 2 diabetes
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Early death

When you move more and eat healthy foods, you can:

- Lower your blood pressure
- Lower your blood sugar
- Raise your “good” cholesterol
- Lower your “bad” cholesterol
- Have more energy during the day

You may start to see these health benefits by losing just 5 to 10 percent of your body weight. For example, if you weigh 200 pounds, this would mean losing 10 to 20 pounds.

[Set Goals](#) [Overview](#) 2 of 7 sections **Take Action!**

Start by making a promise to eat well, move more, and get support from family and friends.

Set realistic goals.

If you need to lose weight, do it slowly over time. Start out by setting small goals, like:

- I want to lose 1 to 2 pounds a week.
- I will add 10 minutes of physical activity to my daily routine.
- I will avoid second helpings of meals this week.

Keep a food and activity diary.

When you know your habits, it's easier to make changes. Write down:

- When you eat
- What you eat

- How much you eat
- Your physical activity

[Print this food and activity diary](#) or make your own.

Get Active **Health Benefits** 3 of 7 sections **Get more physical activity.**

Remember that to lose weight, you need to burn more calories than you eat. [Get active](#) to balance the calories you take in with the calories you use.

- Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes of activity a week.
- Try to be active for 30 minutes 5 times a week.

Even some physical activity is better than none. If you don't have time for 30 minutes of activity, get moving for shorter 10-minute periods throughout the day.

Check out these resources for more information:

- [Get tips on how to be active at any size.](#)
- [Find out how many calories your activity can burn.](#) 

Eat Healthy **Set Goals** 4 of 7 sections **Eat healthy.**

[Eating healthy](#) can help you manage your weight – and it's good for your overall health.

Here are a few healthy eating tips:

- Choose fat-free or low-fat versions of your favorite foods.
- Drink water or fat-free milk instead of soda or other sugary drinks.
- Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit.
- When you eat out, ask for sauces or dressings “on the side” so you can control how much you use.

Check out these links to learn more:

- [Try these menu planners for healthy meal ideas.](#)

- Use this interactive tool to [practice using the Nutrition Facts label](#) to make smart food choices.

Portion Sizes **Get Active** 5 of 7 sections **Eat smaller portions.**

Eating healthy food is important, but you also need to pay attention to **how much** food you eat. [Take the Portion Distortion Quiz to test your knowledge.](#) 

Here are some ideas for watching your portions:

- Start the day with a healthy breakfast.
- Eat small, healthy snacks during the day. This will keep you from overeating at mealtimes.
- Read the label to find out how many servings are in a package. There may be more than one!
- Put a serving of food in a bowl instead of eating out of the package or container.
- Serve food on plates and leave the main dish on the stove. You will be less tempted to go back for seconds.
- If you are eating out, only eat half of your meal. Take the other half home.
- Eat slowly – this will give you time to feel full.
- Don't eat in front of the TV. It's harder to keep track of how much you are eating.

[Get tips to help you enjoy your food while eating less.](#)

Get Help **Eat Healthy** 6 of 7 sections **Ask your doctor for help.**

You may also want to talk to a doctor or nurse about different ways to lose weight. Your doctor can tell you about your options, like joining a weight-loss program. [Check out these questions to ask your doctor about losing weight.](#)

What about cost?

Thanks to the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010, insurance plans must cover screening and counseling for obesity. Depending on your insurance, you may be able to get these services at no cost to you. Talk to your insurance company to find out more.

[To learn about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit HealthCare.gov.](#)

Quit Smoking



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The Basics

Quitting smoking is one of the most important things you can do for your health. The sooner you quit, the sooner your body can start to heal. You will feel better and have more energy to be active with your family and friends.

Smoking hurts almost every part of the body.

Smoking is the most preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. Smoking causes:

- [Lung cancer](#) and many other types of cancer
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and other lung diseases
- Pregnancy problems
- Gum disease
- Vision loss
- Type 2 diabetes
- Rheumatoid arthritis

[Learn more about how smoking affects different parts of the body.](#)

Secondhand Smoke 1 of 11 sections **Smoking also hurts the people around you.**

Secondhand smoke can cause health problems for other people, too – and even pets.

In babies and children, breathing in secondhand smoke can cause:

- Severe asthma attacks
- Pneumonia
- Bronchitis
- Ear infections
- Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS)

In adults, breathing in secondhand smoke can cause heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer.

How Can I Quit?Overview 2 of 11 sections **How can I quit smoking?**

[Start by thinking about why you want to quit.](#) If you've tried to quit before, think about what worked and what didn't. This will help you find the right quitting strategies.

Quitting smoking is hard, but millions of people have done it successfully. In fact, more than half of Americans who have ever smoked have quit. You could be one of them!

Try these tips to help you quit.

- Set a quit date and make a quit plan.
- Get support from family, friends, and coworkers.
- Find out about counseling and medicines that can help you quit.
- Change your routine. For example, take a different route to work.
- Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or visit [Smokefree.gov](https://www.smokefree.gov) for free help.
- Remind yourself why you decided to quit.

Nicotine – the drug found in tobacco – is just as addictive as heroin or cocaine. It’s the nicotine in cigarettes that causes the strong feeling that you want to smoke (craving). Remember – quitting isn’t easy, but it is possible!

[Find out more about steps you can take as you prepare to quit smoking.](#)

Health Benefits **Secondhand Smoke** 3 of 11 sections **You will feel better after you quit.**

Your body begins to heal as soon as you quit smoking. Here are some ways you will feel better:

- You will breathe more easily.
- Your senses of taste and smell will improve.
- You will have more energy.
- Your lungs will become stronger, making it easier for you to be active.
- You will cough and wheeze (struggle to breathe) less.

[Find out more about how quitting smoking will help your health.](#)

What else will quitting do for me?

Quitting smoking will help you live a longer, healthier life. After you quit smoking:

- Your risk of having a heart attack or stroke goes down.
- Your lungs can fight off infection better.
- Your risk of dying from cancer goes down.
- Your blood pressure goes down.
- Your pulse and blood oxygen level return to normal.
- If you have children, they will be healthier. Children whose parents smoke around them are at higher risk for lung and ear infections.

[Read these real stories of people who have been hurt by smoking.](#)

Weight Control **How Can I Quit?** 4 of 11 sections **Will quitting make me gain weight?**

Some people worry about gaining weight when they quit smoking. The average weight gain after quitting smoking is small – about 6 to 10 pounds.

To help control your weight as you quit smoking:

- **Get active.** Aim for 2 hours and 30 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity, like walking fast or dancing.
- Eat healthy snacks, like vegetables or fruit.
- Talk with your doctor about ways to control your weight.

[For more information, check out this booklet on smoking and weight \[PDF – 410 KB\].](#)

Make a List **Health Benefits** 5 of 11 sections **Take Action!**

Take these steps to quit smoking.

Write down your reasons to quit.

Make a list of all the reasons **you** want to quit. For example, your reasons to quit might be to set a healthy example for your children and to save money.

Keep the list with you to remind yourself why quitting is worth it.

- Think about situations that might “trigger” you to smoke. Plan how you will handle them without smoking.
- Right before your quit date, go through your house, car, and workplace to get rid of anything that has to do with smoking. Throw away any ashtrays, lighters, and matches.
- Clean your clothes so they don’t smell like smoke. Throw away all your cigarettes.

Set a quit date.

- Pick a date that gives you enough time to get ready to quit. But make sure it’s soon enough that you don’t lose your motivation.
- Tell your family, friends, and coworkers about your quit date so they can support you.
- Call the tobacco quitline at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) for free support and help setting up your quit plan.

Changing your routine on and after your quit date can help you break habits related to smoking.

- Try taking a different route to work.
- For the first few weeks, avoid activities and places you connect with smoking.
- Do things and go places where smoking isn’t allowed.
- Make [getting active](#) and [eating healthy](#) part of your quit plan. Eat healthy snacks instead of smoking. Go for walks. Drink lots of water.

Break the connection between eating and smoking.

Many people like to smoke when they finish a meal. Here are some ways to break the connection:

- Get up from the table as soon as you are done eating.
- Brush your teeth and think about the fresh, clean feeling in your mouth.
- Try going for a walk after meals.

Stress and Cravings **Make a Plan** 8 of 11 sections **Deal with stress.**

Manage stress by creating peaceful times in your daily schedule. Try relaxation methods like deep breathing or lighting candles.

You can also check out these [tips for dealing with stress as you quit](#).

Manage cravings.

When you quit smoking, the urge to smoke will come and go. But most cravings only last 5 to 10 minutes.

Here are some ways to manage cravings:

- Do something else with your hands, like washing them, taking a shower, or washing the dishes. Try doing crosswords or other puzzles.
- Have healthy snacks ready, like carrots, apples, or sugar-free gum.
- Distract yourself with a new activity.
- If you used to smoke while driving, try something new. Take public transportation or ride with a friend.
- Take several deep breaths to help you relax.

Remember, quitting may be hard – so prepare yourself. [Take this withdrawal quiz every day to see your progress](#).

Get Help **Change Routines** 9 of 11 sections **If you want help, talk with a doctor or pharmacist.**

- A doctor or nurse can help you choose strategies for quitting smoking that are likely to work best for you.
- A doctor or a pharmacist can tell you about medicines that can improve your chances of quitting – and how to use these medicines correctly.

When you stop smoking, your body goes through withdrawal from nicotine. This means you may feel irritable, anxious, restless, or hungry. You may even have trouble sleeping. [Find out about medicines that can help with withdrawal](#).

What about cost?

You can get free help with quitting by calling 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669) or by visiting Smokefree.gov.

Also, some services to help people quit smoking are covered under the [Affordable Care Act](#), the health care reform law passed in 2010. Depending on your insurance plan, you may be able to get these services at no cost to you.

Check with your insurance provider to find out what kind of counseling and medicines are included in your plan. For information about other services covered by the Affordable Care Act, visit HealthCare.gov.

Remember, it takes time to overcome addiction. [Check out these tips on staying smokefree.](#)

Learn from the past.

Many people try to quit more than once before they succeed. Most people who start smoking again do so within the first 3 months after quitting. If you've tried to quit before, think about what worked for you and what didn't.

Depression, drinking alcohol, and being around other smokers can make it harder to quit. If you are finding it hard to stay quit, talk with your doctor about what medicines might help you. Remember, quitting will make you healthier.