

# PREVENTION IS KEY

Protect your future self with preventive care services. Most health plans are required to cover a set of preventive services — think screening tests and routine checkups — at no cost to you! Studies show that preventive health screenings and consultations with primary care physicians significantly increase life expectancy. **So don't just visit your doctor when something's wrong — regular healthcare can help you stay well and prevent disease before it starts.**

## Adults

Below are some common recommendations for preventive health. Review your plan documents or talk with your provider ahead of your visit to confirm the service will be covered as preventive care under your medical plan.

- **Blood pressure reading:** Annual blood pressure checks can help reduce your risk of stroke and heart attack.
- **Cholesterol test:** Get your cholesterol checked at least every 4 to 6 years. High cholesterol can lead to a stroke or heart attack.
- **Gynecologist:** Persons with a uterus should see a gynecologist annually, according to the Women's Preventive Services Initiative. Starting at age 21, you should get a pap smear to test for cervical cancer at least every three years (assuming your results are negative) until you turn 65.
- **Mammograms:** Mammogram frequency can depend on family history, but the Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends they begin between age 40 and 50 and continue annually or every other year through at least age 74.
- **Diabetes screening:** Type 2 diabetes and prediabetes screening is recommended for adults 35 to 70 who are overweight or obese.
- **Prostate exam:** Persons with a prostate should be screened for prostate cancer (PSA blood test and/or rectal exam) beginning at age 50, or sooner depending on family history.
- **Colonoscopy:** This exam screens for colon cancer and is recommended for adults beginning at age 45. Frequency depends on test results and family history.
- **Bone density screening:** This osteoporosis test is crucial for persons who have gone through menopause.

## Children

Kids need preventive care, too! Talk to your child's pediatrician to make sure they're getting all the screenings and vaccines they need. Common care for children includes:

- **Wellness visits and physicals**
- **Standard immunizations**
- **Routine measuring of height and weight**
- **Developmental screenings**
- **Dental cleaning and exams**
- **Vision checks**