



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance professionals at Marsh McLennan Agency



WOMEN'S HEALTH: PREVENTIVE SCREENINGS – PART TWO

Meeting with your doctor regularly and establishing a relationship will not only make you feel more comfortable, but it will also help your doctor get to know you and your body, making it easier to detect changes. You should talk to your doctor about preventive care and stay on track with the following preventive screenings.

Mammograms

Early detection is an important factor in the success of treating breast cancer. Screenings can lead to finding and treating lumps in your breasts one to three years before you would have felt or noticed them.

The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends that women start having mammogram screenings every year starting at age 45. Regardless of age, however, high-risk women should talk to their doctors about whether to have mammograms before age 45 and how often.

Pap Smears

A Pap smear looks for changes in the cells within the cervix. These changes can predict cervical cancer or conditions that could eventually develop into cancer. It's generally recommended that women have their first Pap smear at age 21, and, after age 21, the following screening schedule is suggested:

- Age 21 to 29—every three years.
- Age 30 to 65—every five years if combined with an HPV test, or every three years if done alone.

- Age 65 and older—you may stop having Pap tests if you've had adequate prior screening and do not have a high risk for cervical cancer.

Pelvic Exams

A pelvic exam allows doctors to look for signs of illness within the organs including the uterus, cervix, fallopian tubes, ovaries, bladder and rectum. Current guidelines recommend that pelvic exams be done at the same time as Pap smears, and also recommend that pelvic exams do not begin until age 21.

Cholesterol Screenings

Undesirable levels of cholesterol raise your risk of heart attack and stroke. Women aged 20 or older should have their cholesterol tested every 5 years, though some women may need more frequent testing if doctor recommended. A simple blood test can evaluate total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol and triglycerides.

Colorectal Cancer Screening

Colorectal cancer screening tests detect cancerous cells and growths (polyps) that may become cancerous on the inside wall of your colon. Not everyone needs

to be tested for colon cancer; your need for screening depends on your risk level. Three major factors influence your risk for colon cancer:

- You are age 50 or older.
- You have a family or personal history of colorectal cancer or adenomatous polyps.
- You have a personal history of inflammatory bowel disease.