

# Personal Health Guide



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**PUT PREVENTION**

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**INTO PRACTICE**



# PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

In an Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Allergies: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Important Medical Problems: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Health Care Provider's Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Medical Insurance Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## HOW TO USE THE PERSONAL HEALTH GUIDE

**W**orking with your health care provider to stay well is as important as getting treatment when you are sick. This *Personal Health Guide* will help you and your health care provider make sure that you get the tests, immunizations (shots), and guidance you need to stay healthy. Read the important information at the top of each page. If you don't understand something, be sure to ask your health care provider about it. Wherever the guide suggests you talk to your health care provider, be sure you do. This will help you get the answers you need to take care of your health.

After talking with your health care provider, fill in the blanks provided on certain pages. This will help you to know which services you need and how often you need them.

Use the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide* to keep track of your preventive care. Take this *Health Guide* home and keep it in a safe place. Look at it often to make sure that you get the preventive care you need. Bring it with you every time you see a health care provider.

## BLOOD PRESSURE

**M**aintaining a good blood pressure will help protect you from heart disease, stroke and kidney problems. Have your blood pressure checked regularly. Eating a healthy diet and getting regular physical activity are two ways you can help to keep your blood pressure under control. (See pages 19 and 20). Some people will need to take medicine to help keep a healthy blood pressure. If you have high blood pressure, talk with your health care provider about how to lower it by changing your diet, losing excess weight, exercising or (if necessary) taking medicine. If you need to take medicine, be sure to take it every day, as prescribed.

Ask your provider how often you need your blood pressure checked and what a healthy blood pressure for you is.

I need my blood pressure checked

every \_\_\_\_\_ months/years.

My blood pressure should be

below \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ .

Keep track of your blood pressure using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## IMMUNIZATIONS

**A**dults need immunizations (shots) to prevent serious diseases. The following are common shots that most people need:

- ❑ **Tetanus-diphtheria shot**—Everyone needs this every ten years.
- ❑ **Rubella (German measles) shot**—If you are a woman who is considering pregnancy and you have not had a shot for German measles, you should talk to your provider.
- ❑ **Pneumococcal (pneumonia) shot**—Everyone needs this one time at about age 65.
- ❑ **Influenza (flu) shots**—Everyone over age 65 needs this every year.

If you have lung, heart or kidney disease, diabetes, HIV, or cancer you may need pneumococcal and flu shots before age 65. Health care workers may also benefit from annual flu shots.

❑ **Hepatitis B**—If you have contact with human blood or body fluids (such as: semen or vaginal fluid) you may be at risk for hepatitis B. You may also be at risk if you have unprotected sex (vaginal, oral or anal) or share needles during intravenous drug use. Hepatitis B shots will protect you. Health care workers should also consider getting hepatitis B shots. Discuss this with your provider.

Keep track of the immunizations you receive using the *Personal Preventive Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## CHOLESTEROL

**H**aving your cholesterol checked is important, especially if you are a man age 35-65 or a woman age 45-65. Too much cholesterol can clog your blood vessels and cause heart disease and other serious problems. Your health care provider may check your levels of “bad” (LDL) and “good” (HDL) cholesterol.

You can lower your cholesterol level and keep a healthy level by changing your diet, losing excess weight and getting regular exercise. If necessary, your provider may prescribe medication for you.

Ask your provider what a healthy cholesterol level is for you and how often you need it checked.

My cholesterol should be less than \_\_\_\_\_ mg/dL.

My cholesterol should be checked every \_\_\_\_\_ year(s).

If you have high cholesterol, talk with your provider about a plan for lowering it.

Keep track of your cholesterol using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## WEIGHT

**W**eighing too much or too little can lead to health problems. You should have your weight checked regularly by your health care provider. You can control/maintain your weight by eating a healthy diet and getting regular physical activity. Pages 19-20 of this booklet provide more information on physical activity and nutrition.

Talk with your provider about what a healthy weight for you is and ways you can control your weight.

I weigh \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.

A healthy weight for me is between \_\_\_\_\_  
and \_\_\_\_\_ pounds.

Keep track of your weight using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## COLORECTAL CANCER

**C**olorectal cancer is the third leading cause of deaths from cancer. If it is caught early, it can be treated. If you are 50 years of age or older, you should have tests regularly to detect it. The tests you may have are:

- ❑ **Fecal Occult Blood Test**—to look for small amounts of blood in your stool. This test should be done yearly.
  
- ❑ **Sigmoidoscopy**—to look inside the rectum and colon using a small, lighted tube. Your health care provider will do this in the office or clinic. This test should be done every five to ten years.

Tell your health care provider if you have had polyps or if you have a family member(s) with cancer of the intestine, breast, ovaries, or uterus, you may need testing before age 50 or more often.

Ask your health care provider at what age you need to start and how often you need these tests:  
I need fecal occult blood tests every \_\_\_\_\_  
year(s) starting at age \_\_\_\_\_ .

I need sigmoidoscopy every \_\_\_\_\_ years  
starting at age \_\_\_\_\_ .

Keep track of these tests using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## ORAL HEALTH CARE

**G**ood oral health care is important for your teeth and general health. With proper care, your teeth will last you for life.

- Visit your dentist regularly for checkups. Brush after meals with a soft or medium bristled toothbrush, using a toothpaste with fluoride.
- Use dental floss daily.
- Limit the amount of sweets you eat, especially between meals.
- Do not smoke or chew tobacco products.
- Ask your provider how often you should get dental check-ups.

I need to visit my dentist every \_\_\_\_\_ month(s).

Keep track of your dental visits using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## MAMMOGRAM

For Women

**W**omen ages 40-50 should discuss when to begin getting mammograms with their health care provider. All women should begin having mammograms regularly by age 50. Some women may need mammograms earlier. A mammogram is an x-ray test that can detect a breast cancer when it is so small that it cannot be felt, and when it can be most easily cured.

Talk with your health care provider about when to begin and how often to have mammograms. Make sure to tell your provider if your mother or a sister has had breast cancer. You may need to have mammograms more often than other women.

My mother or sister has had breast cancer (yes / no).

I need a mammogram every \_\_\_\_\_ year(s), starting at age \_\_\_\_.

Keep track of your mammograms using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

## PAP SMEAR

### For Women

You need to have Pap smears regularly. This simple test has saved the lives of many women by detecting cancer of the cervix early—when it is most easily cured.

Talk to your health care provider about how often you need Pap smears.

Tell your health care provider if you have had genital warts, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs/VD), multiple sexual partners or abnormal Pap smears. You may need Pap smears more often than other women.

I need a Pap smear every \_\_\_\_\_ year(s).

Keep track of your Pap smears using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.

**PREVENTIVE  
CARE FOR WOMEN**

Type of Preventive Care

Enter Dates, Results and Other Information Below

Type of Preventive Care	Date				
Mammogram	Date				
Every ____ Year(s)					
Pap Smear	Date				
Every ____ Year(s)					

**ADDITIONAL  
PREVENTIVE CARE**

Type of Preventive Care

Enter Dates, Results and Other Information Below

	Date				
Every ____ months / years					
	Date				
Every ____ months / years					
	Date				
Every ____ months / years					
	Date				
Every ____ months / years					

## ADDITIONAL PREVENTIVE CARE

**B**elow is a list of other preventive care. If you answer yes to any of the statements, discuss whether you need screening with your health care provider.

If you

- have diabetes; or if you are over age 40 and African American; or if you are over age 60: You should have routine eye examinations.
- have had sexual intercourse without condoms, have had multiple sexual partners or have had a sexually transmitted disease: You may need AIDS (HIV), syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia or hepatitis tests.
- have injected illegal drugs or had a blood transfusion between 1978 and 1985: You may need an AIDS (HIV) and/or hepatitis test.
- have had a family member with diabetes, are overweight or have had diabetes during pregnancy: You may need a diabetes (glucose) test.
- are over age 65: You may need a hearing test.

now or in the past, have ever consumed a lot of alcohol or have smoked or chewed tobacco: You may need a mouth examination.

are a man 50 years of age or older: You may need a prostate examination.

are a man aged 15-35 years, particularly if you have a testicle that is abnormally small or not in the normal position: You may need a testicular examination.

have had skin cancer in your family or if you have had a lot of sun exposure: You may need a skin examination.

have had radiation treatments of your upper body: You may need a thyroid examination.

have been exposed to tuberculosis (TB); or if you have recently moved from Asia, Africa, Central or South America, or the Pacific Islands; or if you have kidney failure, diabetes, HIV, alcoholism or use illegal drugs: You may need a tuberculosis test (PPD).

Keep track of this additional preventive care using the *Personal Prevention Record* in the center of this *Health Guide*.



## TOBACCO USE

**D**on't start smoking or using smokeless tobacco.

If you do smoke, quit. It is the best thing you can do to stay healthy. Ask your health care provider to help you pick a date to quit and for advice on how to keep from starting again. Before trying to quit, stop smoking in places that you spend a lot of time (like at home or in the car). Once you have quit, avoid smoking even one puff and try to keep yourself away from all cigarettes. Talk with your provider about things to do when you want a cigarette. If you fail the first time, don't give up. Keep trying and learn from your experience. Ask yourself what helped or did not help you in trying to quit. You can succeed and live a healthier and longer life.

If you have young children, your smoking may harm their health; if you quit, you will be helping them stay healthy, too.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

**B**eing physically active will help you feel better and maintain a healthy weight. Regular physical activity helps to control your blood pressure and cholesterol, and strengthens your heart, muscles and bones. Even daily activities such as housework, walking, or raking leaves will help. Pick activities that you enjoy, that fit into your daily routine, and that you can do with a friend or family member. Make time to exercise, start slow, and keep at it. Start with regular walking before choosing a more difficult activity. Try for a total of 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week.

If you do not have a regular exercise program, talk with your health care provider about ways you can start one.

## NUTRITION

**E**ating the right foods will help you live a longer, healthier life. Many illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure can be prevented or controlled through a healthy diet. It is never too late to start eating right. Follow the simple guidelines below.

### Dietary Guidelines for Americans

- Eat a variety of foods.
- Balance the food you eat with physical activity — maintain or improve your weight.
- Choose a diet with plenty of grain products, vegetables, and fruits.
- Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol.
- Choose a diet moderate in sugars.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt and sodium.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.

(Moderation is no more than one drink daily for women and no more than two drinks daily for men.)

## DEPRESSION

We all feel “down” or “blue” at times. However, if these feelings are very strong or last for a long time, they may be due to medical illness—depression.

This illness can be treated, but is often not recognized by patients and health care providers.

Some of the warning signs of depression are listed below. If you have four or more of these warning signs, be sure to talk to your provider about depression.

### Warning Signs of Depression:

- Feeling sad, hopeless or guilty most of the time.
- Loss of interest and pleasure in daily activities.
- Sleep problems (either too much or too little).
- Fatigue, low energy, or feeling “slowed down”.
- Problems making decisions or thinking clearly.
- Crying a lot.
- Changes in appetite or weight (up or down).
- Thoughts of suicide or death.

## SAFETY

**M**any serious injuries can be prevented by following basic safety rules.

- Always wear safety belts while in the car.
- Never drive after drinking alcohol.
- Always wear a safety helmet while riding on a motorcycle or bicycle.
- Use smoke detectors in your home. Change the batteries every year and check to see that they work every month.
- If you choose to keep a gun in your home, make sure that the gun and the ammunition are locked up separately and are out of children's reach.
- Keep the temperature of hot water less than 120° F. This is especially important if there are children or older adults living in your home.
- Prevent falls by older adults. Repair slippery or uneven walking surfaces, improve poor lighting and install secure railings on all stairways.
- Be alert for hazards in your workplace and follow all safety rules.

## HIV AND AIDS

**A**IDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome) is a fatal disease that breaks down the body's ability to fight infection and illness. AIDS is caused by the HIV virus. By preventing HIV infection, you can prevent AIDS. There is currently no cure for AIDS and no vaccine to prevent HIV infection.

### How Do You Get HIV?

People get HIV by coming into contact with the blood or body fluids (semen or vaginal fluid) of a person with HIV. This includes unprotected sexual intercourse and sharing needles. You cannot get infected with HIV from casual contact such as shaking hands or hugging.

### How To Reduce Your Risk of Getting HIV

Do not have sex. Have sex with only one, mutually faithful, uninfected partner. Use a latex condom correctly every time you have sex. If you use drugs, do not share needles and syringes.

## FAMILY PLANNING

The birth of a child is a joyful event. However, having a child requires time and planning. If you are a sexually active man or woman and are not ready to have a child, you and your partner should use a reliable form of contraception.

Some of the different methods of contraception are listed below. Talk with your health care provider about the best method of contraception for you and how to use it properly.

### Methods Of Contraception And Percent Effectiveness With Proper Use

#### Reversible Methods

<b>Medications</b> Implants (99%+) Shots (99%+) Birth Control Pills (97%)	<b>Barrier Methods</b> Condoms (88%) Diaphragms (82%) Cervical Caps (64%-82%)		<b>Natural Family Planning</b> “The Rhythm Method” (80%)	<b>Sterilization</b> Vasectomy (99% +) Tubal Ligation (99%+)
<b>Spermicides</b> (without condom)— Foams/Suppositories (79%)			<b>Intrauterine Devices (IUDS)</b> (98%)	

#### Permanent Methods

## ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE

- Don't use illegal (street) drugs of any kind, at any time.
- Use prescription drugs only as directed by a health care provider.
- Use non-prescription drugs only as instructed on the label.
- Tell your health care provider all of the medications you are currently taking.
- If you drink alcohol, do so only in moderation- no more than 1 drink daily for women and 2 drinks daily for men.
- Do not drink alcohol before or while driving a motor vehicle.

If you have concerns about your alcohol or drug use, talk to your health care provider.

Read the questions below. A “Yes” answer to any of the questions may be a warning sign that you have a drinking problem. Talk to your health care provider.

Have you ever felt that you should cut down on your drinking?

Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?

Have you ever felt bad or guilty about drinking?

Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or to get rid of a hangover?

## **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

If you would like to learn more about how to stay healthy and prevent disease, the organizations listed below provide helpful information.

### **AGING**

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING  
(202)479-1200

### **AIDS**

CDC NATIONAL AIDS HOTLINE  
(800)342-AIDS  
CDC AIDS HOTLINE IN SPANISH  
(800)344-7432  
CDC TTY HOTLINE FOR THE DEAF  
(800)243-7889

### **ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE**

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR ALCOHOL  
AND DRUG INFORMATION  
(800)729-6686

### **CANCER**

CANCER INFORMATION SERVICE  
(800)4-CANCER

**CHILD ABUSE**

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE  
(800)422-4453

**FOOD AND DRUG SAFETY**

FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION,  
OFFICE OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS  
(301)827-4420

**HEART, LUNG  
AND BLOOD DISEASES**

NATIONAL HEART, LUNG AND BLOOD  
INSTITUTE,  
INFORMATION CENTER  
(301)251-1222

**MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH**

NATIONAL MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH  
CLEARINGHOUSE  
(703)356-1964

**MENTAL HEALTH**

NATIONAL MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION  
(800)969-6642

**OCCUPATIONAL  
SAFETY AND HEALTH**

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR OCCUPATIONAL  
SAFETY AND HEALTH  
(800)356-4674

**PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND FITNESS**

AEROBIC AND FITNESS FOUNDATION  
(800)BE FIT 86

**SAFETY AND INJURY PREVENTION**

CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION  
(800)638-CPSC  
NATIONAL HIGHWAY TRAFFIC SAFETY  
ADMINISTRATION,  
AUTO SAFETY HOTLINE  
(800)424-9393

**SEXUALLY**

**TRANSMITTED DISEASES**

CDC NATIONAL STD HOTLINE  
(800)227-8922





## PUT PREVENTION INTO PRACTICE

**Put Prevention Into Practice** is a national initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Public Health Service in partnership with public and private health care organizations.\* The goal of **Put Prevention Into Practice** is to preserve the health of all Americans by improving the preventive care they receive.

You can help put prevention into practice by working with your health care providers to make sure that you get all the preventive care you need.

You can also do your part by following the health advice in this *Personal Health Guide*. Take charge of your health and live a longer and healthier life!

\* Neither the U.S. Public Service nor the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services endorses any particular product, service or organization.





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