



HEALTH AWARENESS

June 2023

Men's Health Month

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in the United States, men are expected to live nearly six years less than women. They also die at higher rates from the three leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, and COVID-19. Men are less likely to visit a doctor than women and often delay routine medical care. June has been designated Men's Health Month to encourage men to know their health risks and be proactive about their health.

PUT DOWN THE ALCOHOL

Drinking too much can harm your health and men are more likely than women to drink excessively. More than three-quarters of deaths from drinking are among males, totaling more than 97,000 deaths each year in the U.S. The CDC reports that alcohol use is one of the most important preventable risk factors for cancer. Alcohol use increases the risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, and colon, which are more common among men. Drinking alcohol also increases the risk of prostate cancer. Excessive alcohol use can also interfere with testicular function and male hormone production resulting in erectile dysfunction and infertility.

CHECK YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

High blood pressure is often called a silent killer because the symptoms are often invisible. Normal blood pressure is less than 120/80, and medicines are prescribed for

pressures of 140/90 and higher. Why care? High blood pressure causes or worsens a list of health problems: heart attacks, strokes, erectile dysfunction, and kidney disease, to name a few. Most cases can be prevented, and controlling blood pressure is an easy place to start. Most pharmacies have blood pressure cuffs customers can use or at-home cuffs they can purchase. Monitoring your blood pressure can prevent long-term problems.

KNOW YOUR CHOLESTEROL LEVELS

The No. 1 killer of men today is cardiovascular disease, mostly heart attacks, and strokes. Although the last few decades have seen the death rate from cardiovascular disease fall, it's still men's top health threat. And high cholesterol is a major preventable risk factor. The American Heart Association recommends men check their cholesterol at age 20, then every five years. Everyone with high cholesterol needs treatment, although, for many, that will mean diet and exercise.



GET SCREENED FOR PROSTATE CANCER

Prostate cancer is the leading cancer diagnosis among men. The American Cancer Society's estimates for prostate cancer for 2023 are 288,300 new cases and 35,000 deaths. By using a digital rectal exam, a blood test (prostate-specific antigen or PSA), and biopsies, if necessary, doctors can detect abnormal growths in the prostate gland early in many men. Sometimes, screening catches prostate cancers, saving men's lives. Because prostate cancer is often slow-moving for some men, the side effects of treatment (i.e., incontinence, erectile dysfunction, etc.) outweigh the benefits. Regular screenings can identify and monitor cancer growth so patients can discuss the best options with their doctors.

DON'T WAIT TO SEE YOUR DOCTOR

According to a [National Health Interview Survey](#), men are twice as likely to wait more than two years between doctor visits. And 40% don't see a doctor unless they have a serious health issue. The most common reason men give for not making appointments is that they cannot take time away from work to go to the doctor, but it is important to understand that delaying health care can have serious consequences because early detection is vital to improved chances of survival. Treatment may also be considerably easier to tolerate when problems are detected at an earlier stage.

Generally, men under 50 with no health conditions should see their primary care physician every three years for a physical exam. Men over 50 should have annual exams. Men with a chronic illness or other risk factors (e.g., family history of cancer, smoking, obesity, etc.) should see their doctor on a schedule determined by their physician.



BENEFITS CORNER

RESOURCE ADVISOR & LIVE HEALTH ONLINE

A member assistance program, Resource Advisor, is included with your life benefit. The program can connect you and your household family members with a licensed counselor live 24/7. Members and their family members are eligible for up to three free visits with a counselor for each issue or concern. Counselors can help with finding childcare, dealing with family issues, anxiety, stress, or any issue that affects your well-being. Sessions are available by phone at 1-888-209-7840, in-person by appointment, and via video chat using LiveHealth Online. You may log in with the program name AnthemResourceAdvisor. Check out Resource Advisor for more information. LiveHealth Online is a convenient way to visit with a doctor live via video. Members can visit with a U.S. board-certified doctor online, anytime, without waiting for an appointment.

LiveHealth Online doctors are trained for online visits and can prescribe basic medications if needed. In addition to physician's visits, LiveHealth Online Psychology allows you to schedule a live visit with a licensed psychologist or therapist. Most appointments can be made within four days and tend to last around 45 minutes. Patients need to be at least 18 years old. Note that LiveHealth Online psychologists and therapists do not prescribe medications. LiveHealth Online doctors are available 24/7.

As always, CTSI staff is here to assist you with your health, dental, vision, or life insurance coverage. You can reach us at (303) 861-0507.