



HOT TOPIC

## HUMAN TUNE-UP BASICS

How often should adults have a medical check-up? The key to keeping your “engine” running smoothly is routine maintenance. Here is an annual health check-up and preventative maintenance checklist for men and women of every age. Regular check-ups and health screenings will help pave the way to early detection and treatment of health conditions before they become serious and more difficult to manage. They also provide peace of mind, contribute to improved quality of life, and can help you plan for your long-term health.

*In addition to your annual check-up, here are five key things that you can and should do to prevent disease and improve your overall health and well-being:*

1. *Eat a healthy diet and maintain a healthy weight.*
2. *Be physically active (at least 30 minutes each day).*
3. *Don't smoke and avoid being in places where others are smoking.*
4. *Limit alcohol intake.*
5. *Spend some quality time with your family and friends.*

**Act now! Talk to your doctor about your risk factors and screening requirements.**

Sex	Major Health Screenings that can help you live a longer, healthier life	How Often and When
Both	<p><b>Blood Sugar (Glucose)</b> - Blood tests can show high levels of glucose (sugar) in the blood. High glucose levels can lead to serious health consequences. There are a number of medical conditions that can be diagnosed when glucose levels are elevated: e.g. Gestational Diabetes, Impaired Glucose Tolerance, Type 1 Diabetes, and Type 2 Diabetes. Uncontrolled diabetes can lead to heart disease, kidney disease, eye disease, nerve damage, and problems with erection (impotence). Don't put off being tested. The earlier you are diagnosed, the sooner you can take action to stay well - now and in the future! If you already have diabetes be sure to work hard to keep it under control. Also, note that your children, brothers, and sisters are at increased risk for diabetes. Urge them to learn the early warning signs for diabetes. <a href="http://www.diabetes.ca">www.diabetes.ca</a></p>	<p>You could be one of many Canadians who have Type 2 Diabetes and don't know it. If you are aged 45 or over, you are at risk for Type 2 Diabetes and should be tested at least every three years. People should ask their doctor to be tested for diabetes if they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are aged 40 or over</li> <li>• Are carrying extra weight (especially around the middle)</li> <li>• Have a family history of diabetes</li> <li>• Have high blood pressure</li> <li>• Have high cholesterol</li> <li>• Have been told they have higher than normal blood glucose levels</li> <li>• Have given birth to a baby that weighed more than 9 lbs</li> <li>• Are of Aboriginal, Asian, South Asian, Hispanic, or African descent</li> </ul>

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Both	<p><b>Cholesterol Screening</b> - Unhealthy cholesterol levels are a significant risk factor for circulation problems, heart attack and stroke. The good news is that if you have unhealthy cholesterol levels, you can make some fairly simple lifestyle changes that can help improve your cholesterol levels and lower your risk. In some cases your physician may determine that in addition to lifestyle changes, medication is required.  <a href="http://www.heartandstroke.ca">www.heartandstroke.ca</a></p>	<p>Your family history for elevated cholesterol, and whether or not you have other coronary heart disease risk factors will determine the need for cholesterol testing. Together, you and your doctor will make the decision.</p>
Both	<p><b>Blood Pressure</b> - The higher your blood pressure, the greater your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. Those with elevated blood pressure need to be under medical care.  <a href="http://www.heartandstroke.ca">www.heartandstroke.ca</a></p>	<p>At a minimum, all Canadians over the age of 20 should have their blood pressure checked regularly, at least once every two years, and more often if recommended by their family doctor.</p>
Both	<p><b>Eye Tests</b> - It is common for people to think that if their vision is good, then their eyes must be healthy. Unfortunately, that is not always true. Some serious eye diseases have no symptoms. Early screening gives us the best chance of keeping our eyes healthy. <a href="http://www.optom.on.ca">www.optom.on.ca</a></p>	<p>Make annual eye exams a regular part of your annual health check-up routine.</p>
Female	<p><b>Pap Test</b> - The Pap test...it saves lives. This simple screening test can pick up early changes in the cervix before they develop into cancer. If pre-cancerous cells are found they can be treated early, before cancer develops. Having regular Pap tests is the single most important factor in preventing cervical cancer.  <a href="http://www.cancercare.on.ca">www.cancercare.on.ca</a></p>	<p>The Ontario Cervical Screening Program (OCSP) recommends that all women who have ever been sexually active have a Pap test every year. After three normal Pap tests in a row, screening is recommended every 2 years. It is important to continue having Pap tests after menopause. Ask your doctor how often you should be having a Pap test.</p>
Female	<p><b>Breast Self-Exam</b> - Breast self-examination (BSE) done regularly helps women learn what is normal for their breasts. By learning what is normal you will notice any change and be able to bring it to the attention of your physician.  <a href="http://www.cancer.ca">www.cancer.ca</a></p>	<p>For women age 20-39, become familiar with your breasts through regular breast self-exams and recognize monthly changes.</p>

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Female	<p><b>Clinical Breast Exam</b> - All women should have clinical breast exams. These are thorough physical examinations of the breasts by a trained medical professional. Regular examinations by trained health professionals may find a lump or tumour. <a href="http://www.cancer.ca">www.cancer.ca</a></p>	Regardless of age, have your doctor or a trained health professional examine your breasts annually or at least every other year.
Female	<p><b>Mammogram</b> - A mammogram is an x-ray of the breast. A mammogram can find breast cancer in its very early stage - two to three years before you can feel it. Studies show that regular mammograms help lower the chance of dying from breast cancer. When breast cancer is found and treated early, the five-year survival rate is more than 95%. No screening tool is 100% effective. Quality mammograms will find 85-90% of cancers. The best screening for your breasts includes regular mammograms and clinical breast exams by your doctor or specially trained health care provider. <a href="http://www.cancercare.on.ca">www.cancercare.on.ca</a></p>	Screening with mammography every one or two years is recommended for all women aged 50 to 69 years. Talk to your doctor or health care provider to see how often you should have a mammogram. Every province in Canada has a Breast Screening Program. If you are a women age 50 or older, call your Provincial Breast Screening Program to see if you are eligible for their free breast screening service.
Male	<p><b>Testicular Self-Exam</b> - Catch it early and this cancer is treatable 90% of the time. Men should check themselves regularly. <a href="http://www.cancer.ca">www.cancer.ca</a></p>	Starting at age 15, men should perform monthly testicular self-exams (TSE's).
Male	<p><b>Prostate Cancer Screening</b> - Combine a digital rectal exam with a Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test and you're set for a year. <a href="http://www.cancer.ca">www.cancer.ca</a></p>	A digital rectal exam during your annual health examination is recommended for all men over the age of 50. Educate yourself and discuss the benefits and risks of a PSA test with your physician.
Both	<p><b>Colorectal Screening</b> - Screening is the most efficient way to detect polyps and colon cancer in the earliest stage. Colorectal cancer usually has no symptoms in its early stages, when the disease is most treatable, which is why regular screening is important. Symptoms of colorectal cancer can include rectal bleeding, blood in the stool, change in bowel habits (alternating diarrhea and constipation) for no reason, feeling of abdominal bloating, fullness, and/or cramps. <a href="http://www.cancer.ca">www.cancer.ca</a></p>	Average risk men and women over the age of 50 should have a fecal occult blood test at least every two years.

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Both	<b>Thyroid Disease Screening</b> - In Canada, one in 20 people are estimated to have a thyroid disorder. <a href="http://www.thyroid.ca">www.thyroid.ca</a>	On professional advice.
Both	<b>Immunizations</b> - Adults need routine immunizations too. They can prevent you from getting sick, as well as spreading disease to others. <a href="http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca">www.phac-aspc.gc.ca</a>	Get an annual Flu vaccine and check with your doctor to ensure that immunizations for you and your entire family are up to date.
Female	<b>Osteoporosis Screening</b> - The risk for osteoporosis and fractures increase with age and some health conditions. Bone density measurements accurately predict the risk for fractures in the short-term. Treating women without noticeable symptoms with medication and or calcium reduces their risk for fractures. <a href="http://www.osteoporosis.ca">www.osteoporosis.ca</a>	Testing depends on age and health status. Talk to your doctor about your bone health.
Both	<b>Dental Check-ups and Cleaning</b>	Twice yearly.
Both	<b>Skin Exam</b> - Get a yearly skin exam to stop skin cancer in its tracks. <a href="http://www.dermatology.ca">www.dermatology.ca</a>	Every year during your annual check-up. If you notice any of your moles changing, seek medical advice immediately; don't wait for your annual check-up appointment.
Both	<b>Body Mass Index (BMI) and Waist Circumference (WC) Measures</b> These measures can provide you with objective feedback on the risk of serious health problems that can be associated with your weight and body type. Diseases such as heart disease, Type 2 Diabetes, and some forms of cancer are directly linked to overweight and obesity. <a href="http://www.ctfphc.org">www.ctfphc.org</a>	At each regular check-up starting at age 20. Recommend BMI measurement in the periodic health examination of obese adults with obesity-related disease.

Disclaimer: Health information in this article is only general information and is not intended to replace an in-person consultation with a medical professional. Nor is it intended to provide medical advice. Individual circumstances of which we are not aware may affect the information provided herein and as such, the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit assumes no liability or responsibility for your reliance thereon.