

MEN'S HEALTH CHECKLIST



This checklist highlights basic elements of an annual physical exam for men with prostate cancer (and aging men in general) to avoid preventable problems with your health. Prostate cancer usually acts more like a chronic condition than a terminal illness. So it is important not to overlook your general health by being too narrowly focused on prostate cancer. This checklist is intended to give you an overview of what to check during an annual physical.

Blood Tests

Many people believe that there is a standardized routine for annual screening blood tests. But physician policies vary widely. Here is a basic list of blood tests to consider ordering at your annual physical:

- PSA
- CBC (anemia)
- Metabolic panel (kidney function)
- Hepatic panel (liver function)
- Lipid panel (good and bad cholesterol)
- Urine analysis (check for blood)
- Hormone panel: (Thyroid, B12 & Vitamin D, Testosterone)

Screening for Heart Disease and Lung Cancer

Consider a CT scan of the heart to check for coronary artery calcium score every 10 years to detect arterial wall cholesterol plaque. Plaque can be stabilized or reversed with diet and statins drugs which will reduce your risk of heart attack. Anyone who smokes should be getting a CT scan of the chest on an annual basis. These scans should be administered up to 15 years after someone has quit smoking. Lung cancer is incurable once it metastasizes, but can be cured if it is found early.

Screening for Colon Cancer

Historically, people have undergone colonoscopy to check for colon cancer; however, for most individuals, this screening process can now be supplemented with a new stool test called Cologuard. There are some exceptions, so talk with your physician about whether you are a good candidate.

Screening for Skin Cancer

Checking the skin for any new or growing pigmented spots is an important element of a good physical. If suspicious lesions are detected they may need a biopsy to rule out skin cancer.

Detecting Osteoporosis

Men who are undergoing hormone therapy for prostate cancer are at risk of developing osteoporosis. Men with low testosterone may also have osteopenia or osteoporosis. If left untreated, osteoporosis can lead to fractures. Osteoporosis can be treated with a variety of medications. Screening is performed with a DEXA or QCT scan.

Vaccines

One out of three individuals will get shingles in their lifetime. This is preventable with a new vaccine for shingles called Shingrix. You can get it at a pharmacy without even needing a prescription. Influenza can be a life-threatening disease, getting a flu vaccine can help tremendously.

Eyes

A yearly visit with the eye doctor is important, even if you do not wear glasses or contacts, because glaucoma can develop silently and cause permanent vision loss.