

Men's Health Awareness

Tips to Help Keep Your Health On Track!

Why Men's Health Awareness is Important

The month of June is Men's Health Awareness Month. Throughout the month of June, you'll be seeing and hearing about the need for greater awareness of and attention to common preventable health problems in men, and a call to action for managing your health through early detection and treatment of diseases. The average life expectancy for males has increased dramatically over the last 50 years; the life expectancy of a man born in the U.S. in 2007 is 75 years and 5 months. Investing time and effort into health maintenance and disease prevention can show immediate results and extend your lifetime. The benefits of proactively living a healthy lifestyle are so dramatic that a person who was 65 years old in 2007 could expect to live to age 82 by taking care of themselves through preventive health care, and by learning to listen to the warning signs and symptoms of your body. ⁽¹⁾

Top Ten Diseases That Typically Affect Men

It is important to know which diseases to watch the most because the presence of one disease may increase the likelihood that another disease will occur. For instance, heart disease, stroke, peripheral vascular disease, and dementia all share the same risk factors; that is, all may be related to smoking, obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and family history. Here are the top ten diseases typically found in men: ⁽¹⁾

1. Heart Disease —the number one killer of men in the U.S.; the main risk factors are smoking, obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and family history.	6. Diabetes —more than 80% of all individuals have type 2 diabetes. ⁽¹⁾ Poorly controlled diabetes increases blood sugar levels in the blood stream which over time can cause multiple organ failure. Men with diabetes tend to overlook the importance of a well-balanced diet, healthy weight and exercise.
2. Cancer —lung cancer is the number one cancer killer in men and highly preventable; smoking is the cause 90% of the time; prostate cancer, the second cause of cancer deaths in men, has more than 186,320 new cases each year. ⁽²⁾	7. Influenza & Pneumonia —it is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle and body to promote a strong immune system; follow the public health recommendations for routine immunizations to reduce risk of contracting the flu which in turn can lead to pneumonia.
3. Injury —most injuries are caused by incorrect judgments. Examples include driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, not wearing a seatbelt or a helmet where a head injury could be sustained, or not properly using machinery such as a lawn mower or snow blower.	8. Suicide —learn the symptoms of depression; men typically function reasonably well on a day-to-day basis and are reluctant to seek help; thoughts of self-harm should not be ignored and should be considered a critical situation.
4. Stroke —the risk factors for a stroke is the same as for heart disease; never ignore symptoms like a weakness on one side of the face or vision loss or speech difficulties as these could be signs of an impending stroke. Note also that in the event of a suspected stroke, seek treatment immediately because early treatment can minimize long term impacts	9. Kidney Disease —the main reason for kidney failure is often poorly controlled high blood pressure and diabetes. Even in healthy people, aging gradually decreases the efficiency of the kidneys so it is really important to maintain your electrolyte balance in the blood to help prevent the onset of kidney disease.
5. COPD —emphysema and chronic bronchitis are the two main causes of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) and both are more commonly caused by smoking.	10. Alzheimer's —this is the gradual loss of cognitive function and intellectual ability for which there is no cure; individuals can decrease the risk of dementia by avoiding smoking and keeping blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes under control.

The Checklist to a Healthier Lifestyle

By encouraging men to stay proactive about their health and providing them with information regarding the key steps to healthy living, the possibility of a life-long commitment to developing more good habits than bad may begin. Below are some of the things men can do to help promote a healthier lifestyle which may help in living a longer, healthier life. ⁽¹⁾

~ Eat heart healthy ~ Maintain a healthy weight ~ Stop smoking ~

~ Control blood pressure, cholesterol & diabetes ~ Keep mentally active ~ Exercise ~ Seek preventive medical care ~

~ Seek recommended prostate and colon cancer screenings ~ Seek help for depression ~

Get Your Doctor Involved

Taking care of your body is like taking care of any complex machine. It requires routine maintenance to make it last and to function well throughout a person's life expectancy. Seeking scheduled preventive care and screening examinations is important in order to detect illnesses at an early stage. Learning to pay close attention to the body's warning signs and symptoms should not be overlooked. Call your doctor today and schedule a routine yearly physical if you have not already done so this year. Having an ongoing dialogue and productive relationship with your primary care physician is an important part of staying healthy. ⁽¹⁾

(1) www.medicinenet.com/mens_health/; (2) www.questdiagnostics.com

This information is intended as informational only; not as a replacement for the medical advice of your physician.