



## PREVENT HEALTH PROBLEMS

In recent years, the world of medicine has put greater emphasis on illness prevention. Prevention measures reduce the incidence of chronic illness, increase lifespans and improve quality of life. You can get in step with this trend by following a few simple guidelines. Here are five that can make a difference.

**Get screened.** Health screenings can detect everything from cancers and heart disease to HIV and hepatitis. [Click here](#) to find out what screenings you and your family should consider based on age and gender.

**Get moving.** Even a small increase in physical activity can have a big impact on your health, lowering your risk of early death by a number of measures. Experts recommend about two and a half hours of exercise in the course of a week.

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**Eat well.** Americans consume too much fatty protein, too much sugar and too many processed foods. Replace most of that with fresh food, low-fat proteins and fruit and vegetables and your health will improve.

**Take your medicine.** Too many of us skip medications due to cost, laziness or other issues. However, medications prevent or cure illnesses or help you contend with symptoms, all of which can add years to your life.

**Don't smoke.** If you smoke, try reducing it or quitting. It will prevent a lengthy list of ailments, for you and those around you.

## Smart Facts

**8%**

of Americans undergo routine preventive health screenings.

**33.4%**

of all healthcare visits in 2020 were for preventive care.

**\$55 billion**

is the cost of missed prevention opportunities in the U.S. every year.



## WHAT IS PREVENTIVE CARE?

While insurance coverage for preventive care has become a bit of a political football (in June, an agreement regarding a Texas court ruling affirmed the Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirement that preventive care be covered without any co-pays or deductibles), one thing seems clear: More of us are aware of preventive care and the impact it can have on our health. And that impact is considerable: According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, in 2019 preventable health risk factors played a role in more than 60% of deaths in the U.S. But what is preventive care? Broadly, it's the tests, examinations and screenings that can prevent or detect health problems before they become serious and more costly. Following are some of the basic items that fall under the "preventive care" definition.

**Annual physical or exam.** This is exactly what it sounds like, an annual assessment of your health. The ACA ensures you can get an annual wellness exam each year, even if you have no symptoms of illness. Often this exam will include some screenings and immunizations.

**Cancer screenings.** This includes things like mammograms and colonoscopies as frequently as your age and health factors dictate. People with a history of smoking can get lung cancer screenings after age 50.

**Blood tests.** These are the routine blood tests – such as cholesterol and diabetes screenings – that your caregiver will order as part of your annual exam.

**Counseling and education.** People who have severe weight-management issues, poor diet, mental health concerns and more might have access to certain counseling and education services without out-of-pocket charges.

**Vaccinations.** These include the flu shots you get once a year and a number of other vaccinations and immunizations over various periods based on your age and gender.

**Chronic disease care.** If you have a chronic condition or special risk factors, you might be eligible for additional or more frequent screenings and examinations.

**Prenatal care.** This includes the care required to ensure a healthy pregnancy and childbirth.

**Smoking cessation.** You can get full coverage for programs, medications, counseling and more that will help you stop smoking.

**Well-baby visits.** Children are eligible for regular check-ups that will assess their health, progress, growth, and more.

**Women's health.** Certain screenings, medications and treatments related to breast cancer, cervical cancer and more must be covered as preventive.

While these types of services are required to be covered, it is common for errors to occur and costs such as co-pays and deductibles to be charged. For this reason, it's important to check your medical bills to make sure you are not being charged for preventive services.



*"Preventable risk factors contributed to an estimated 61% of U.S. deaths in 2019."*

# IMMUNIZATIONS: ARE YOU ON SCHEDULE?

As a result of vaccination resistance and life disruptions brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, many people stopped getting routine vaccinations. That's unfortunate because overwhelming medical evidence demonstrates that a regular schedule of vaccinations will prevent a wide range of illnesses for adults and children. So, the time has come to get back into the routine. The following table can help you know what vaccinations you should have. The good news? All of these typically are covered by health insurance. But check with your benefits provider to confirm coverage.

Immunization	Who Should Get it?	Additional Information
COVID-19	Everyone	Should have 2- or 3-dose primary series and booster.
Flu/Influenza	Everyone	You need a flu immunization every year because it wears off and the flu changes.
Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)	Everyone	Most people get this vaccine as a child. Adults should get a booster every 10 years.
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Everyone born in or after 1957 who has not gotten the vaccine or had measles.	You should have gotten this vaccine as a child but confirm because measles outbreaks are occurring around the world.
Chickenpox (Varicella)	Anyone who hasn't gotten the vaccine and has never had chickenpox or shingles	Most people get this vaccine as a child but confirm with your provider whether you've received the vaccine or had chicken pox.
Shingles (Herpes Zoster)	Anyone over age 50	Get this immunization even if you've already had chicken pox and/or shingles.
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Men and women in their teens and early 20s who did not get the vaccine when younger	About 25% of all Americans are infected with HPV, which can cause cancer.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	Anyone over age 65 or with a complicated condition	Talk to your caregiver.
Hepatitis A and B	Everyone	Most people get this as a child, but certain conditions could require you to get this vaccine as an adult. Consult your caregiver.
Meningococcal (meningitis)	People with certain health risks or conditions	Talk to your caregiver.

**NOTE:** This schedule focuses on adults only. Immunization schedules for children are different and precise. Talk to your care provider to ensure your child's immunizations are up to date.

## National Immunization Awareness Month

National Immunization Awareness Month has been around since 2013, but it has picked up extra relevance in recent years as the COVID pandemic disrupted many families' vaccination schedules. The push is on to make sure everyone gets "back on track" with vaccinations to head off preventable disease outbreaks. This [handy guide](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention can help you find out what vaccines you and your family might need to catch up on.



# HARVEST OF THE MONTH: CORN

Corn is one of the most versatile plants humans cultivate. Not only does it provide the foundation for oils, breads, beverages, medications and other consumables, but it's also a key component in non-consumables including engine fuel, paint, plastics and cosmetics.

Still, most of us think of corn as being a key contributor to our diets. Evidence would suggest that has been the case for thousands of years. While corn has always been a multipurpose product, it seems to have been domesticated as a food staple in South America more than 7,000 years ago, and we've found countless ways since then to give it a central role in our dining habits.

These days, it fattens up livestock, sweetens our sodas, anchors our snacks and so much more. And yet what most of us truly savor about corn is the simple joy of eating it fresh from the garden. If that's the joy you're seeking, when you go to the market, seek out bright green ears of corn with snug husks and golden-brown



silks that might seem a little damp (and certainly not overly dry). To check freshness, pull down some silk to peek at a few kernels. They should be plump and juicy.

To enjoy truly fresh corn, eat it soon after bringing it home – the same day, if you can. Of course, if you do plan to wait more than a day to cook the corn, store the untucked ears in the refrigerator, but only for a day or two.



## Recipe: Summer Corn Salad

### Ingredients:

5 ears corn, boiled or grilled  
1 tomato, seeded and diced  
1 red onion, chopped  
1 green bell pepper, diced  
1 lime, juiced  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
Fresh cilantro, to taste  
Salt and pepper

### Directions:

Remove kernels from corn with a paring knife and place them in a large bowl. Add tomato, onion and green pepper. Toss to combine. Add lime juice and olive oil, and then snip in cilantro. Season with salt and pepper and serve.

### Nutrition Information:

CALORIES: 226; SUGARS: 11G; FAT: 12G; CARBOHYDRATES: 30G;  
FIBER: 4G; PROTEIN 5G; SODIUM: 201MG

Sources: Accessed June 19, 2023

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