



NOVEMBER AWARENESS

Men's health

There is a Spanish proverb that goes, "a man too busy to take care of his health is like a mechanic too busy to take care of his tools." With November being 'Men's Health Month', why not make time to take pro-active care of your health by going for some screening tests before the end of the year? Going for regular disease screening tests will probably reduce, rather than increase, your visits to the doctor. Simply ignoring a problem won't make it go away, but it will mean frequent medical attention once the situation has reached crisis proportions.

SCREENING TESTS RECOMMENDED FOR MEN

TEST	WHEN
 PROSTATE (Blood sample for the PSA count, and/or a digital rectum examination or a urine test.)	If you are in your 40s, once a year if you have a family history of prostate cancer or breast cancer. Once a year if you are 50 years or older, as one in eight men in this group will develop prostate cancer. Typical signs may include difficulty in passing urine, enlarged lymph glands or blood in the urine.
 TESTICULAR SELF-EXAM (Speaks for itself)	Monthly, especially if you have undescended testes, previous history of a testicular tumour, brother, or father with testicular tumours or if you are infertile. Look out for a painless lump or swelling of the testis, or a dull ache or heaviness in the scrotum or lower abdomen.
 HIV TEST (Blood sample)	Every six months if you're practising unsafe sex.
 BLOOD PRESSURE (No needles)	Every two years when you are in your 20s and 30s, and once a year after that.
 TYPE 2 DIABETES (Blood sample)	Everybody, no matter their age, should be tested every three years if they are at risk. People who are most at risk include those with a family history of diabetes, people who are overweight, or people who have high cholesterol levels or high blood pressure.
 CHOLESTEROL (Blood sample)	Every two years if you are in your 20s or 30s and there is a family history of heart disease. If you are in your 40s or older: every time you go for a check-up.
 COLON CHECK (A faecal occult blood test of a stool sample, or a colonoscopy - an internal investigation of the colon with a flexible instrument after sedation.)	If there is no family history of colon cancer, you should have your first colonoscopy at age 50. If there is a family history, make that age 40. Then a colonoscopy every 5 - 10 years, depending on your degree of risk. If more than one first-degree relative has developed colon cancer, you should go every 3 - 5 years. Take note of sudden changes in regular bowel habit, blood in stools; or colic, bloating or fullness.
 SKIN CHECK (Checking the appearance of a lesion or a small sample of the lesion.)	Every year from the age of 40. Golfers, cricketers, farmers, fishermen and others spending a lot of time in the sun, are at high risk.
 EYE TEST	If in your 20s or 30s, every five years. Once every two years when you are in your 40s, and annually from 50 onwards. Watch out for blurry vision, obstructed vision, or pain in the eye.