



Boston Health Notes

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& Mayor Thomas M. Menino*

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Take Your Man to the Doctor

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Men's Health Week is celebrated annually around Father's Day. This year Men's Health Week is being observed June 15 – 21. The week is designed to educate the public about what can be done to improve the state of men's health as well as provide free and convenient health services to men who couldn't otherwise receive such care.

Men's Health Week was created by Congress in 1994 to heighten awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of diseases common among boys and men.

In Boston, men are at high risk of diseases such as cancer, heart disease, hypertension, and diabetes. Black men have a lower life expectancy at birth than white males and the lowest life expectancy of any racial group in either gender. Black and Hispanic/Latino men have a higher prevalence of preventable diseases.

All of us know how important it is to see a doctor regularly, eat right, exercise, and not smoke. During Men's Health Week we encourage you to "Take Your Man to the Doctor." We mean take your husband, your partner, your father, your grandfather, your brother, your son, your uncle, and your friend to a doctor. We don't care how you do it: Nag him, drag him, cajole him, entice him – just get him to make that appointment.

Take Your Man to The Doctor Because...

Statistics show men are less likely to schedule routine check-ups than women.

Men are at high risk of diseases like cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.

Men need routine screenings, especially for prostate cancer and testicular cancer.

For more information on health inequities affecting black men, visit www.menshealthnetwork.org and www.nbmhn.net.

Men can use the health list below as a guide for regular checkups and age-appropriate screenings that can improve their health and reduce premature death and disability.

The mission of the Boston Public Health Commission is to protect, promote, and preserve the health and well-being of Boston residents, particularly the most vulnerable.

References:

Retrieved June 8, 2009 from http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Men%27s_Health_Week

Retrieved June 8, 2009 from http://www.brooklynusa.org/pdf/TakeYourManToTheDoctor_WEBfinal.pdf

MEN'S HEALTH CHECKLIST

CHECKUPS AND SCREENINGS	WHEN?	AGES		
		20-39	40-49	50+
PHYSICAL EXAM: Review overall health status, perform a thorough physical exam and discuss health related topics.	Every 3 years Every 2 years Every year	✓	✓	✓
BLOOD PRESSURE: High blood pressure (Hypertension) has no symptoms, but can cause permanent damage to body organs.	Every year	✓	✓	✓
TB SKIN TEST: Should be done on occasion of exposure or suggestive symptoms at direction of physician. Some occupations may require more frequent testing for public health indications.	Every 5 years	✓	✓	✓
BLOOD TESTS & URINALYSIS: Screens for various illnesses and diseases (such as cholesterol, diabetes, kidney or thyroid dysfunction) before symptoms occur.	Every 3 years Every 2 years Every year	✓	✓	✓
EKG: Electrocardiogram screens for heart abnormalities.	Baseline Every 4 years Every 3 years	Age 30	✓	✓
TETANUS BOOSTER: Prevents lockjaw.	Every 10 years	✓	✓	✓
RECTAL EXAM: Screens for hemorrhoids, lower rectal problems, colon and prostate cancer.	Every year	✓	✓	✓
PSA BLOOD TEST: Prostate Specific Antigen is produced by the prostate. Levels rise when there is an abnormality such as an infection, enlargement or cancer. Testing should be done in collaboration with your physician.	Every year		*	✓

CHECKUPS AND SCREENINGS	WHEN?	AGES		
		20-39	40-49	50+
HEMOCCULTE: Screens the stool for microscopic amounts of blood that can be the first indication of polyps or colon cancer.	Every year		✓	✓
COLORECTAL HEALTH: A flexible scope examines the rectum, sigmoid and descending colon for cancer at its earliest and treatable stages. It also detects polyps, which are benign growths that can progress to cancer if not found early.	Every 3-4 years			✓
CHEST X-RAY: Should be considered in smokers over the age of 45. The usefulness of this test on a yearly basis is debatable due to poor cure rates of lung cancer.	Discuss with a physician		✓	✓
SELF-EXAMS: Testicle: To find lumps in their earliest stages. Skin: To look for signs of changing moles, freckles, or early skin cancer. Oral: To look for signs of cancerous lesions in the mouth. Breast: To find abnormal lumps in their earliest stages.	Monthly by self	✓	✓	✓
BONE HEALTH: Bone mineral density test. Testing is best done under the supervision of your physician.	Discuss with a physician			Age 60
TESTOSTERONE SCREENING: Low testosterone symptoms include low sex drive, erectile dysfunction, fatigue and depression. Initial screening for symptoms with a questionnaire followed by a simple blood test.	Discuss with a physician		✓	✓
SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES (STDs): Sexually active adults who consider themselves at risk for STDs should be screened for syphilis, chlamydia and other STDs.	Under physician supervision	✓	Discuss	

*African-American men and men with a family history of prostate cancer may wish to begin prostate screening at age 40, or earlier.

MHN Men's Health Network™

BUILDING HEALTHY FAMILIES ONE MAN AT A TIME™

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