

Recommended Screenings: Women Ages 50 and Above

Breast Self-Exam

Women should perform a breast self-exam monthly. Instructions are available at: www.cancer.org.

Blood Pressure

Check at each doctor visit, or at least every 2 years. More often if blood pressure is high.

Colon Cancer

Screening [colonoscopy](#) recommended: lab screening to test for blood in the stool yearly [with](#), or a sigmoidoscopy every 5 years.

Cholesterol

Screening recommended every 5 years for all women or more often if at high risk. Risk factors that will be considered by your doctor include diabetes, a family history of cardiovascular disease, family history of high cholesterol, and multiple coronary heart disease risk factors (e.g., tobacco use, hypertension.)

Depression

Women more prone to depression than men, but the causes of female depression and even the pattern of symptoms are often different. Many factors contribute to depression in women from reproductive hormones to social pressures to the female response to stress. Learning about these factors can help you minimize your risk of depression and treat it more effectively.

Diabetes

Recommended for women at high risk. Risk factors that will be considered by your doctor include obesity, family history, history of gestational diabetes, hypertension, and high cholesterol. African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans are also at higher risk of developing diabetes.

Mammogram

Mammograms are recommended every 1-2 years.

Osteoporosis

A bone density screening, recommended at age 65. Women at high risk for low bone density including those with a low weight are recommended to have the screening at age 60.

Pap Smear

Women should have a pap smear once a year for two years. If both pap smears are normal, women may then have a pap smear every three years or as recommended by their physician. At age 65, women may discontinue pap smears if their previous pap smears have been normal

Immunizations

Tdap/ TD Shot

Women should have the Tdap vaccine for diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough) once as an adult, and continue tetanus/ diphtheria (TD) shots every 10 years.

Flu Shot

A flu shot is recommended every year.

Pneumonia Shot

Women should have a pneumonia shot at least once starting at age 65, or earlier if at high risk.

Other Immunizations

Pneumonia, hepatitis, chicken pox, or meningitis vaccinations are recommended.

Recommendations

Always wear sun protection outside including sun screen and protective clothing. Skin exams may be necessary.

Women should make sure their calcium intake is sufficient.

Discuss safety and any of the following: smoking cessation, AIDS, family planning and alcohol/drug abuse.

Discuss any hearing loss and/or noise exposure with your physician.

Discuss your heart disease risk factors with your physician.

Women beginning menopause should discuss Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) with their physician.