

EVERY YEAR, A HEALTHY YOU!

Protect your health each year
with preventive healthcare.

Now is a great time to launch healthy, new habits.

One of the best ways to do that is to be proactive about your health and have the medically recommended screenings, tests and immunizations appropriate to your age, gender and family history. We have created this guide of preventive health measures for every stage of life.

“These screening recommendations are supported by a high level of scientific research and have been proven to be useful,” says Neil W. Schluger, MD, director, Department of Medicine at Westchester Medical Center, the flagship of WMCH Health. “Many serious conditions can be prevented or improved with health screenings — and that’s good news.”

Below, Dr. Schluger, and two other WMCH Health physicians weigh in on this important topic.

GET SCREENED

“Rather than waiting for a disease to progress, the strategy behind screenings is to catch the disease or condition in its early stages, when it’s more amenable to treatments and a complete recovery,” says J. Keith Festa, MD, a family physician and associate director of Medical Affairs at MidHudson Regional Hospital, a member of WMCH Health.

Brian Fitzpatrick, MD, an internal medicine specialist with Hudson Valley Medical Associates, part of the Bon Secours Medical Group, a member of WMCH Health, concurs. “You may think having a screening is inconvenient,” he adds, “but it’s much more inconvenient to find you have colon cancer.”

But, if you feel healthy, are at a good weight and exercise regularly, do you still need screenings and tests? Absolutely. “It’s great to feel healthy and we want to keep you that way,” says Dr. Fitzpatrick.

“If you’re asymptomatic, we don’t want you to become symptomatic,” adds Dr. Festa. “Unfortunately, by the time you have symptoms with most diseases, they are much more advanced, and the treatments needed are usually more aggressive. And sometimes it can just be too late.”

Dr. Schluger emphasizes that it is especially important for the older population to be “meticulous about their annual vaccinations, as well as screenings for colon cancer, and lung cancer, for those with a history of smoking.” The majority of screenings are covered by Medicare, notes Dr. Schluger.



START WITH A PHYSICAL

If you’ve been a bit lax in taking control of your health and don’t know where to begin, schedule an annual exam with your physician. “Get a complete physical,” urges Dr. Festa. “Your doctor will then help you decide which tests need to be done and when.” Bring a list of questions and notes about any symptoms you may be experiencing, no matter how small, advises Dr. Fitzpatrick. “The more actively involved you are in your own care, the better the outcome.” Finally, be sure to follow through on any recommendations.

DON’T DELAY CARE

According to all three doctors, there is no reason to be hesitant about medical care during the pandemic. “The medical community is taking strict precautions to keep patients safe. It can be far more problematic to delay necessary care,” says Dr. Festa. Dr. Fitzpatrick adds, “Even during a COVID-19 outbreak, other health problems still need to be addressed.”

GUIDE TO PREVENTIVE HEALTH SCREENINGS, TESTS & IMMUNIZATIONS*

BIRTH–18 YEARS

Immunizations:

- **COVID-19 Vaccine:** As eligible
- **Birth:** Hepatitis B (HepB) – 1st dose
- **2 months old:** HepB – 2nd dose, Rotavirus (RV1 or RV5) – 1st dose, Diphtheria, tetanus, & acellular pertussis (DTaP) – 1st dose, Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) – 1st dose, Pneumococcal conjugate (PCV13), Inactivated poliovirus (IPV)
- **4 months old:** RV1 or RV5 – 2nd dose, DTaP – 2nd dose, Hib – 2nd dose, PCV13 – 2nd dose, IPV – 2nd dose
- **6 months old:** DTaP – 3rd dose, Hib – 3rd dose, PCV13 – 3rd dose, IPV – 3rd dose, Flu shot – 1st dose, 2nd dose two weeks after 1st
- **9-12 months old:** HepB – 3rd dose (if not received at 6 months), IPV – 3rd dose (if not received at 6 mos), Hib – 3rd dose (if not received at 6 mos), PCV13 – 4th dose
- **12-15 months old:** MMR – 1st dose, Varicella (VAR) – 1st dose, Hepatitis A (HepA) – 1st dose
- **18 months old:** IPV – 3rd dose, DTaP – 4th dose, HepA – 2nd dose
- **4-6 years old:** IPV – 4th dose, DTaP – 5th dose, flu shot – annually, MMR – 2nd dose, VAR – 2nd dose
- **11-12 years old:** Flu shot – annually, Tdap, booster, HPV (Gardasil), Meningococcal – 1st dose
- **13-15 years old:** Flu shot, annually
- **16 years old:** Meningococcal – 2nd dose, flu shot
- **17-18 years old:** Flu shot – annually

Physicals:

In the child's first year, routine visits are scheduled during the first and second weeks of life, and at 2, 4, 6, 9 & 12 months. The infant's first visit to the pediatrician may be as early as 2-3 days of age. Physicals are yearly after age 1.

At every visit to the pediatrician, ask questions about your child's development, including language, movement, thinking, behavior and emotions.

A girl's first gynecology exam is recommended at 13-15 years old.

Screenings:

Birth: Hearing

18 months: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

24 months: ASD

19–39 YEARS

Immunizations:

Flu shot, annually; one-time HPV vaccine (if not received as adolescent, male and female); COVID-19 vaccine, as eligible

Physicals:

Annually, including height, weight, blood pressure and blood work

Cholesterol/Heart Health Check: Annually, if there are known risk factors; otherwise every five years

Women: Breast exam: monthly at home; annually by physician; gynecological exam, annually

Men: Testicular exam: monthly at home; annually by physician

General Health: Annually, hearing, vision and dental

Screenings:

Skin: Annually for suspicious-looking moles or lesions

Historical illness: Annually for such family medical issues as cancer, heart disease, diabetes, etc.

Diabetes: Annually, if there are risk factors; biannually if BMI is 25/27+

Depression/Mental Health: Annually

Sexually Transmitted Infections: Depending on risk factors or patient request

Women: Cervical cancer: Pap smear every 3 years

* For general guideline purposes only; please consult your physician for specific recommendations.

40–60 YEARS

Immunizations:

Flu shot, annually; one 2-dose shingles vaccine: 50+; COVID-19 vaccine, as eligible

Physicals:

Annually, including height, weight, blood pressure and blood work

Screenings:

Skin: Annually for suspicious-looking moles or lesions

Colorectal: Annually 45+ unless there are risk factors; 10 years before onset of colorectal cancer in first-degree relative

Lung Cancer (CT scan): Annually 55-80 for those with history of heavy smoking who currently smoke or have quit within past 15 years

Depression/Mental Health: Annually

Sexually Transmitted Infections: Depending on risk factors or patient request

Hepatitis C screening: At least once in a lifetime for all adults aged 18 years and older, except in settings where the prevalence of HCV infection (HCV RNA-positivity) is less than 0.1%

Women: Mammogram: annually, depending on risk factors; Pap smear every 3 years (or more frequently with risk factors)

Men: Prostate exam: 40-50+ annually, unless there are risk factors; PSA blood test: 40-50+ annually, unless there are risk factors

Lower Your Risk of Viral Infections: COVID-19 and other

- Wear a mask
- Wash hands/use hand sanitizer frequently
- Refrain from touching face or eyes
- Limit in-person interaction with non-household members and crowds
- Maintain social distance (6 feet) from others
- Quarantine if exposed
- Call your doctor if you have a cough, fever, loss of smell and/or taste, sore throat, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea



65 YEARS & OLDER

Immunizations:

High-dose flu vaccine, annually; Pneumococcal pneumonia vaccine: one-time, 2-dose series (65+); one 2-dose shingles vaccine: 50+; COVID-19 vaccine, as eligible

Physicals:

Annually, including height, weight, blood pressure and blood work

If you've had Medicare Part B (medical insurance) for longer than 12 months, you can get a yearly "wellness" visit once every 12 months. At this visit, you will develop or update a personalized prevention plan to help prevent disease and disability, based on your current health and risk factors. Your provider may also perform a cognitive impairment assessment.

Screenings:

Skin: Annually for suspicious-looking moles or lesions

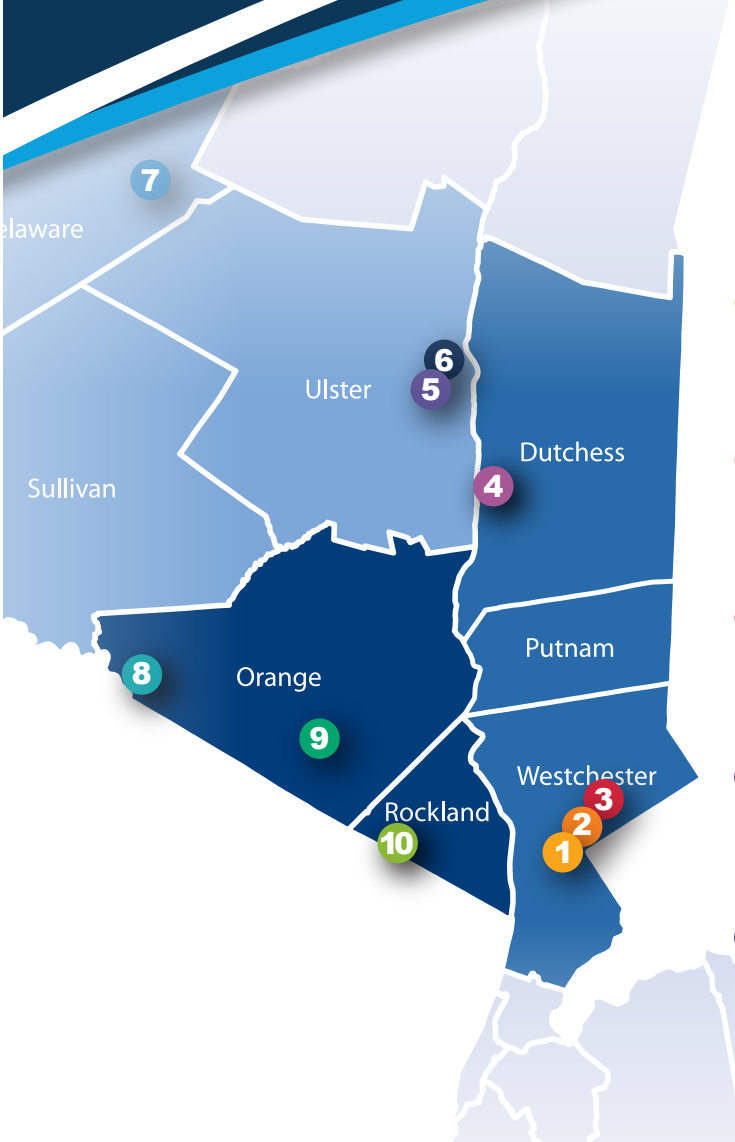
Osteoporosis (bone density): Every 2 years 65+ (or earlier if postmenopausal with risk factors)

Fall Prevention: Baseline and then as recommended

Men: One-time abdominal ultrasound: 65-75 for current or former smokers or for never-smokers with a first-degree relative who had an abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) repair or a fatal AAA



*Westchester Medical Center
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is Advancing Care
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Advancing Care. Here.

WMCH Health Physicians includes the medical practices of Advanced Physician Services and Bon Secours Medical Group, with 150+ offices across the Hudson Valley.

Individuals who are not established with a provider, or who need to see a new provider for any reason, can call WMCH Health Physicians at 1.833.329.0095 for a convenient connection to a medical practice, in Westchester, Putnam, Dutchess, Ulster and Delaware counties. Call 845.533.7188 for appointments in Rockland and Orange counties, Bergen County, NJ and Pike County, PA.