



Preventive health guidelines

Follow your path to better health

The power of prevention

Put these preventive health guidelines into practice. Your and your family's health could depend on it.

You've probably heard the old saying, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Your doctors know what preventive and integral services, screenings, and tests are available to you, which often are the best first steps in preventing illness. They also allow for rapid response during the early onset of health problems, when treatments can be most effective.

To take advantage of the power of prevention, you and your family should discuss with your physician the recommended preventive services, screenings, and tests appropriate for your age, gender, medical history, current health, and family history.

We have compiled the following preventive guidelines to help you keep track of what's needed and when. Your provider will evaluate your risk factors and determine which preventive services you should receive. Preventive health services are covered at no extra cost.

For children ages 0 to 2

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Safety

- Use a checklist to baby-proof your home.
- Check your home for the presence of lead paint.

Nutrition

- Breastfeed and use iron-enriched formula and food for infants.

Dental health

- Do not put your baby or toddler to bed with a bottle containing juice, milk, or other sugary liquid. Do not prop a bottle in a baby's or toddler's mouth. Clean your baby's gums and teeth daily.
- Use a clean, moist washcloth to wipe gums. Use a soft toothbrush with water only, beginning with eruption of first tooth.
- Age 6 months to preschool: Discuss with your dentist about taking an oral fluoride supplement if water is deficient in fluoride.
- Age 2: Begin brushing child's teeth with pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste.

Immunizations				
Shot number in a series	1	2	3	4
COVID-19	Recommended for children ages 6–23 months, children older than 23 months with risk factors or never vaccinated against COVID-19, children who are in close contact with others with risk factors, and all who choose protection. ¹			
DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis)	2 months	4 months	6 months	15–18 months
Flu, annual	For children 6 months and older (second dose 4 weeks after first). ^{2,3}			
Hepatitis A	12–23 months (second dose at least 6 months after first).			
Hepatitis B	0 (birth)	1–2 months	6–18 months	
Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	2 months ⁴	4 months ⁴	6 months ⁴	12–15 months ⁴
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	2 months	4 months	6–18 months	
Meningococcal Age 2–18 months	For children with risk factors. ⁵			
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	First dose at 12–15 months, second dose at ages 4–6 years. ⁶			
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	2 months	4 months	6 months	12–15 months
Rotarix (rotavirus), or RotaTeq (rotavirus)	2 months	4 months		
	2 months	4 months	6 months	
RSV (respiratory syncytial virus)	0 (birth) ⁷	For children ages 8–19 months with risk factors		
Varicella (chickenpox)	First dose at 12–15 months, second dose at ages 4–6 years. ⁶			

Screenings, counseling, and services

Annual exam	Includes head circumference, length/height, weight, body mass index (BMI), age-appropriate exam and history, and coordination of preventive services.
Dental care	Discuss use or prescribe oral fluoride supplement for ages 6 months and older. Apply fluoride varnish to primary teeth every 3 to 6 months for infants and children 6 months to 5 years old. ⁸
Developmental/behavioral	Screening to include developmental, behavioral, social, and autism.

For children ages 0 to 2

Screenings, counseling, and services

Gonococcal ophthalmia	Topical eye medication administered during initial newborn care.
Newborn screening panel	Screening recommended for all disorders listed on the Recommended Uniform Screening Panel (RUSP). ⁹
Skin cancer	Discuss the importance of sun protection to minimize exposure to ultraviolet radiation for people ages 6 months to 24 years old at high risk.
Vision and hearing	Recommends screening to detect amblyopia or its risk factors. ¹⁰

Injury prevention for infants and young children

Decrease the risk of SIDS

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is a leading cause of death for infants. Put infants to sleep on their backs to decrease the risk of SIDS. Use only a fitted sheet, and keep toys and other soft items out of the crib.

Protect your children with car seats

Use the right car seat for your vehicle and for your child's weight. Read the car seat and vehicle manufacturer's instructions about installation and use. Use a rear-facing car seat until your child is at least 40 inches tall or weighs at least 40 pounds. Never put your baby in the front seat of a vehicle with passenger air bag.

Protect your children outside

- For water safety, be sure your child has the appropriate personal flotation device for their age, weight, and type of water activity.
- Teach your child traffic safety. Children under nine years old need supervision when crossing streets.
- Make sure your child wears a helmet while riding a bicycle.

Baby-proof your home

Take these steps to give your child a safe home environment:

- Keep medicines, cleaning solutions, and other dangerous substances in child-proof containers, locked up and out of reach of children.
- Use safety gates across stairways (top and bottom) and guards on windows above the first floor.
- Keep water heater temperatures below 120° F.
- Keep unused electrical outlets covered with plastic guards.
- Consider not placing your baby in a baby walker. If you do, provide constant supervision. Block the access to stairways and to objects that can fall (such as lamps) or cause burns (such as stoves or electric heaters).
- Keep objects and food that can cause choking away from your child. This includes things like coins, balloons, small toy parts, hot dogs (whole or small bites), peanuts, and hard candy.
- Use fences that go all the way around pools, and keep gates to pools locked.

For children ages 3 to 10

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Safety

- Use a checklist to child-proof your home.
- Check your home for the presence of lead paint.

Exercise

- Participate in physical activity as a family, such as taking walks or playing at the playground.
- Limit screen time (such as mobile devices, computers, and television) to less than two hours a day.

Nutrition

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.

Dental health

- Ask your dentist when and how to floss child's teeth.
- Age 5: Talk to your dentist about dental sealants.

Other topics for discussion

- Well-child visits are a good time to talk to your doctor about any concerns you have with your child's health, growth, or behavior.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for children with risk factors or never vaccinated against COVID-19, children who are in close contact with others with risk factors, and all who choose protection. ¹
DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis)	Fifth dose at ages 4–6 (Tdap for age 7 and above).
Flu, annual	Recommended. ^{2, 3}
Hepatitis A	For children not previously vaccinated and risk factors are present. ¹¹
Hepatitis B	For children who did not complete the immunization series between 0 and 18 months.
Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	For children not previously vaccinated and risk factors are present.
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Two- or three-dose series depending on age at first vaccination. Recommended for all children starting at ages 9–12, through age 18 if catch-up doses are recommended.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	Fourth dose at ages 4–6 years.
Meningococcal	For children with risk factors. ⁵
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Second dose at ages 4–6 years. ⁶
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For children with risk factors ¹³ or an incomplete schedule (ages 2–4).
Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)	For children not previously vaccinated with DTaP.
Varicella (chickenpox)	Second dose at ages 4–6 years. ⁶

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Annual exam	Includes height, weight, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, age-appropriate exam, and history and coordination of preventive services.
Anxiety	Recommended screening for anxiety disorders in children and adolescents ages 8–18 years old.
Dental care	Discuss use or prescribe oral fluoride supplement for ages 6 months and older. Apply fluoride varnish to primary teeth every 3–6 months for infants and children 6 months to 5 years old. ⁸
Developmental/behavioral	Screening to include developmental, behavioral, social, and autism.

For children ages 3 to 10

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions for children age 6 and older with a high BMI, and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
Skin cancer	Discuss the importance of sun protection to minimize exposure to ultraviolet radiation for people ages 6 months to 24 years old at high risk.
Tobacco use and cessation	Provide education or brief counseling to prevent initiation of tobacco use among school-aged children and adolescents.
Vision and hearing	Recommends screening to detect amblyopia or its risk factors. ¹⁰

Be aware of your child's recommended weight: Use our online tools to calculate your child's BMI by logging in to [blueshieldca.com](https://www.blueshieldca.com) and searching for BMI.

Injury prevention

For older children

- Children under 8 years old must ride in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat. Children who are 8 years old or are at least 4'9" tall may ride in a booster seat, but at minimum must wear a seat belt.
- Older children should use car seat belts and sit in the back seat at all times.
- Teach your child traffic safety. Children under 9 years old need supervision when crossing streets.
- Make sure your child wears a helmet while rollerblading or riding a bicycle. Make sure your child uses protective equipment for rollerblading and skateboarding. This can include wrist pads and kneepads.

For all ages

- For water safety, be sure your child has the appropriate personal flotation device for their age, weight, and type of water activity.
- Use smoke and carbon monoxide alarms/detectors in your home. Change the batteries every year, and check once a month to see that they work.
- If you have a gun in your home, make sure that the gun and ammunition are locked up separately and kept out of children's reach.
- Never drive after drinking alcohol or after marijuana use.
- Use car seat belts at all times.
- Save the Poison Control number – **(800) 222-1222** – to your phone. Post it to your landline if you have one. Also, add the number to your home "important information" list. The number is the same in every U.S. location. Do not try to treat poisoning until you have called Poison Control.

For children ages 11 to 19

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Exercise

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes per day starting at age 11) can reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes.

Nutrition

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.
- Optimal calcium intake for adolescents and young adults is estimated to be 1,200 to 1,500 mg/day.

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention,¹⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Avoid unintended pregnancy; use contraception.
- Prior to beginning preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP), the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, periodic pregnancy testing, periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections.
- Ongoing follow-up counseling and monitoring every three months is covered without cost sharing.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for ages 2–18 years with risk factors or never vaccinated against COVID-19, people who are in close contact with others with risk factors, and all who choose protection. ¹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	Two-dose series for people not previously vaccinated and risk factors are present. ¹¹
Hepatitis B	Two-dose series for people not previously vaccinated; for people with risk factors seeking protection. ¹²
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Two- or three-dose series depending on age at initial vaccination. Recommended for all adolescents 9 through 18 years of age.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	For people not previously vaccinated.
Meningococcal	Routine vaccination two-dose series. First dose at ages 11–12, second dose at age 16.
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Two-dose series for children under 12 previously unvaccinated.
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For children with risk factors. ¹³
Tdap booster (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)	For children ages 11–12 who have completed the recommended DTaP immunization series. ^{14, 26}
Varicella (chickenpox)	Two-dose series for children previously unvaccinated.

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed for people 18 years and older. ¹⁵
Annual exam	Includes height, weight, body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, age-appropriate exam, and history and coordination of preventive services.
Chlamydia and gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹⁷
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ¹⁸
Depression/anxiety	Screening for all adolescents for major depressive disorder and anxiety.

For children ages 11 to 19

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental health and substance use disorder

- Use of alcohol, tobacco, nicotine (cigarettes, vaping, or chewing), inhalants, and other drugs among adolescents is a major concern for parents. Let the doctor know if you have any concerns about your child.
- Mental health and substance use disorders are defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Other topics for discussion

- It is a good idea to let your teenager have private time with the doctor to ask any questions they may not feel comfortable asking in front of you.

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Domestic violence and abuse	Screening for intimate partner violence in women of reproductive age and provide or refer women to ongoing support services. ¹⁹
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use for people 18 years and older. ²⁰
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for people 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²¹
Hepatitis C	Screening for HCV infection beginning at age 18.
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15 to 65 years. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommend PrEP using effective antiretroviral therapy to people at high risk of HIV acquisition.
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for people at increased risk of infection. ²²
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and behavioral interventions, and offer or refer to comprehensive intensive behavioral intervention to promote improvements in weight status.
STIs	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adolescents and for adults who are at increased risk for STIs. ²³
Skin cancer	Discuss the importance of sun protection to reduce sun exposure for adolescents at high risk.
Syphilis	Screening for people at increased risk for infection. ²⁴
Tobacco use and cessation	Provide education or brief counseling to prevent initiation of tobacco use among school-aged children and adolescents.

For children ages 11 to 19

Promoting your preteen's and adolescent's social and emotional development

Parents need to offer open, positive communication while providing clear and fair rules and consistent guidance. Let your child find their own path while staying within the boundaries you have set.

- Be a good role model for handling disagreements – for example, talk calmly when disagreeing.
- Praise them for successfully avoiding a confrontation – for example, say, "I'm proud of you for staying calm."
- Supervise the websites and computer games that your child uses.
- Set limits on the use of computers, telephones, texting, and TV after a set evening hour to help your child get regular sleep.
- Warn your child about the risk of using alcohol and drugs. Many driving and sports-related injuries are caused by the use of alcohol and drugs.
- Talk to your child about healthy relationships. Dating abuse does occur among preteens and teens.
- Be a role model for healthy eating and regular physical exercise.

For women ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Exercise

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes per day) can reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes.
- Over 40: Consult physician before starting new vigorous physical activity.

Nutrition

- Know your BMI, blood pressure, and cholesterol level. Modify your diet accordingly.
- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.
- Optimal calcium intake for women between ages 25 and 50 is estimated to be 1,000 mg/day.
- Vitamin D is important for bone and muscle development, function, and preservation.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for people with risk factors, people who are in close contact with others with risk factors, and all who choose protection. ¹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	For people with risk factors; for people seeking protection. ¹¹
Hepatitis B	Recommended 2-, 3-, or 4-dose series depending on vaccine or condition for ages 19 to 59. ¹²
HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	One or three doses depending on indication.
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Recommended for all adults through 26 years of age. 2- or 3-dose series depending on age at initial vaccination.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	For people not previously vaccinated.
Meningococcal	For people with risk factors present. ⁵
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Once, without proof of immunity or if no previous second dose. ²⁵
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For people with risk factors. ¹³
Tdap or Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)	Recommended once every 10 years. ²⁶
Varicella (chickenpox)	Recommended for adults without evidence of immunity; 2-dose series 4–8 weeks apart. ²⁷

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed. ¹⁵
Blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, vision, and hearing	At well visit, annually. This includes coordination of preventive services.
Breast cancer gene (BRCA) risk assessment and genetic counseling/testing	Women with a positive result on the risk assessment tool or have a family history of breast, ovarian, tubal, or peritoneal cancer are recommended to receive genetic counseling and/or genetic testing. ²⁸
Breast cancer	Biennial screening mammography recommended for women age 40 years and older.
Breast cancer medication use	Recommends prescription or risk-reducing medications to women age 35 and older who are at increased risk for breast cancer and at low risk for adverse medication effects.

For women ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention,¹⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Avoid unintended pregnancy; use contraception.
- Menopause (onset typically between ages 45 and 55) symptoms such as menstrual changes, hot flashes, sleepless nights, and mood swings. Discuss possible treatments and long-term health risks.
- Prior to beginning PrEP, the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, periodic pregnancy testing, and periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections. Ongoing follow-up counseling and monitoring every three months is covered without cost sharing.

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Cardiovascular disease	Statin use for primary prevention in adults ages 40–75 years who have one or more risk factors. ²⁹
Cervical cancer	Recommended screening every 3 years with cervical cytology by Pap tests for women 21–29 years of age. For women ages 30–65 years, recommended screening every 3 years with cervical cytology alone, every 5 years with high-risk HPV testing alone, or every 5 years with high-risk HPV testing in combination with cytology.
Chlamydia and gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹⁷
Colorectal cancer	Screening for adults ages 45–75. ³⁰
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ¹⁸
Depression and anxiety	Screening for depression and anxiety in all adults.
Diabetes and prediabetes	Screening for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes in adults ages 35–70 years who are overweight or obese. ³¹
Domestic violence and abuse	Screening for intimate partner violence in women of reproductive age and provide or refer women to ongoing support services. ¹⁹
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use. ²⁰
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for people with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²¹
Hepatitis C	Screening for infection.
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15–65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommend PrEP using effective antiretroviral therapy to people at high risk of HIV acquisition.
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension (high blood pressure) in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for people at increased risk for infection. ²²
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and if BMI of 30 or higher, offer or refer to intensive and multicomponent behavioral interventions.
Osteoporosis	Screening for women at increased risk, including postmenopausal women under age 65. ³³

For women ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental health and substance use disorder

- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol consumption. Avoid alcohol or drug use while driving.
- Mental health and substance use disorders are defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Screenings, counseling, and services

STIs	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adults who are at increased risk for STIs. ²³
Skin cancer	Discuss the importance of sun protection to minimize exposure to ultraviolet radiation for young adults through age 24 at high risk.
Syphilis	Screening for pregnant people, early in pregnancy or at first opportunity, and people at increased risk for infection. ²⁴
Tobacco use and cessation	Screen all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, provide behavioral interventions, FDA-approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.
Urinary incontinence	Annual screening.

If you are pregnant, please refer to the “For pregnant people” page for pregnancy-related recommendations.

For men ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Exercise

- Regular physical activity (at least 30 minutes per day) can reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes.
- Men over 40: Consult physician before starting new vigorous physical activity.

Nutrition

- Know your body mass index (BMI), blood pressure, and cholesterol level. Change your diet as needed.
- Vitamin D is important for bone and muscle development, function, and preservation.

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention,¹⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Prior to beginning PrEP the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, and periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections. Ongoing follow-up counseling and monitoring every three months is covered without cost sharing.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for people with risk factors, people who are in close contact with others with risk factors, and all who choose protection. ¹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	For people with risk factors; for people seeking protection. ¹¹
Hepatitis B	Recommended 2-, 3-, or 4-dose series depending on vaccine or condition for ages 19–59. ¹²
HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	One or three doses depending on indication.
HPV (human papillomavirus)	Recommended for all adults through 26 years of age. 2- or 3-dose series depending on age of initial vaccination.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	For people not previously vaccinated.
Meningococcal	For people with risk factors present. ⁵
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Once, without proof of immunity or if no previous second dose. ²⁵
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	For people with risk factors. ¹³
Tdap or Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)	Recommended once every 10 years. ²⁶
Varicella (chickenpox)	Recommended for adults without evidence of immunity; 2-dose series 4–8 weeks apart. ²⁷

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed. ¹⁵
Blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, vision, and hearing	At annual exam. This includes coordination of preventive services.
Cardiovascular disease	Statin use for primary prevention in adults ages 40–75 years who have one or more risk factors. ²⁹
Colorectal cancer	Screening for adults ages 45–75. ³⁰
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ¹⁸
Depression and anxiety	Screening for depression and anxiety in all adults.
Diabetes and prediabetes	Screening for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes in adults ages 35–70 years who are overweight or obese. ³¹
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use. ²⁰

For men ages 20 to 49

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental health and substance use disorder

- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol consumption. Avoid alcohol or drug use while driving.
- Mental health and substance use disorders are defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for people 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²¹
Hepatitis C	Screening for infection.
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15–65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommend preexposure prophylaxis (PrEP) using effective antiretroviral therapy to people at high risk of HIV acquisition.
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for people at increased risk for infection. ²²
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and if BMI of 30 or higher, offer or refer to intensive, multicomponent behavioral interventions.
STIs	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adults who are at increased risk for STIs. ²³
Skin cancer	Discuss the importance of sun protection to reduce sun exposure for young adults to age 24 at high risk.
Syphilis	Routine screening for people at increased risk for infection. ²⁴
Tobacco use and cessation	Screen all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, and provide behavioral interventions and FDA-approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.

For men and women age 50 and older

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Nutrition

- Eat a healthy diet. Limit fat and calories. Eat fruits, vegetables, beans, and whole grains every day.
- Optimal calcium intake is estimated to be 1,500 mg/day for postmenopausal women not on estrogen therapy.
- Vitamin D is important for bone and muscle development, function, and preservation.

Sexual health

- Sexually transmitted infection (STI)/HIV prevention,¹⁶ practice safer sex (use condoms) or abstinence.
- Menopause (onset typically between ages 45 and 55) symptoms such as menstrual changes, hot flashes, sleepless nights, and mood swings. Discuss possible treatments and long-term health risks.
- Prior to beginning PrEP, the following tests are recommended: HIV testing, serologic testing for hepatitis viruses B and C, periodic serum creatinine testing, and periodic screening for sexually transmitted bacterial infections. Ongoing follow-up, counseling, and monitoring every three months is covered without cost sharing.

Immunizations	
COVID-19	Recommended for everyone ages 65 and older, everyone younger than 65 with risk factors, people who are in close contact with others with risk factors, and all who choose protection. ¹
Flu, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A	For people with risk factors; for people seeking protection. ¹¹
Hepatitis B	Recommended 2-, 3-, or 4-dose series depending on vaccine or condition for ages 19–59. ¹²
HIB (Haemophilus influenzae type b)	One or three doses depending on indication.
IPV (inactivated poliovirus vaccine)	For people not previously vaccinated.
Meningococcal	For people with risk factors present. ⁵
MMR (measles, mumps, rubella)	Once, without proof of immunity or if no previous second dose. ²⁵
Pneumococcal (pneumonia)	Recommended. ¹³
RSV (respiratory syncytial virus)	Recommended for people age 75 and over, if not previously vaccinated, and everyone ages 50–74 with risk factors.
Tdap or Td booster (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)	Recommended once every 10 years. ²⁶
Varicella (chickenpox)	Recommended for adults without evidence of immunity; 2-dose series 4–8 weeks apart. ²⁷
Zoster (shingles)	2-dose series of recombinant zoster vaccine (RZV) 2–6 months apart.

Screenings, counseling, and services	
AAA (abdominal aortic aneurysm)	For men ages 65–75 who have ever smoked. One-time screening for AAA by ultrasonography.
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed. ¹⁵
Blood pressure, height, weight, BMI, vision, and hearing	At annual exam. This includes coordination of preventive services.
BRCA risk assessment and genetic counseling/testing	Women with a positive result on the risk assessment tool or have a family history of breast, ovarian, tubal, or peritoneal cancer are recommended to receive genetic counseling and/or genetic testing. ²⁸

For men and women age 50 and older

Topics you may want to discuss with your doctor

Mental health and substance Use disorder

- Stop smoking. Limit alcohol consumption. Avoid alcohol or drug use while driving.
- Mental health and substance use disorders are defined as those conditions listed in the most recent edition of the World Health Organization (WHO) International Classification of Diseases or in the American Psychiatric Association Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Dental health

- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily. Seek dental care regularly.

Other topics for discussion

- Fall prevention.
- Possible risks and benefits of hormone replacement therapy (HRT) for postmenopausal women.
- The dangers of drug interactions.
- Physical activity.
- Glaucoma eye exam by an eye care professional (e.g., an ophthalmologist, optometrist) for those age 65 and older.

Screenings, counseling, and services

Breast cancer	Biennial screening mammography recommended for women age 40 years and older.
Breast cancer medication use	Prescription or risk-reducing medications recommended to women age 35 and older who are at increased risk for breast cancer and at low risk for adverse medication effects.
Cardiovascular disease	Statin use for primary prevention in adults ages 40–75 years who have one or more risk factors. ²⁹
Cervical cancer	Recommended screening every 3 years with cervical cytology alone, every 5 years with high risk HPV testing alone, or every 5 years with high risk HPV testing in combination with cytology.
Chlamydia and gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹⁷
Colorectal cancer	Screening for adults ages 45–75. ³⁰
Contraception	FDA-approved contraceptive methods, education, and counseling. ¹⁸
Depression and anxiety	Screening for depression and anxiety in all adults.
Diabetes and prediabetes	Screening for prediabetes and type 2 diabetes in adults ages 35–70 years who are overweight or obese. ³¹
Domestic violence and abuse	Screening for intimate partner violence in women of reproductive age and provide or refer women to ongoing support services. ¹⁹
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use. ²⁰
Fall prevention	Exercise interventions (support to reduce risks) recommended for adults age 65 or older at increased risk. ³⁴
Healthy diet and physical activity	Behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for people 18 years and older with risk of cardiovascular disease or a diagnosis of hypertension, dyslipidemia, metabolic syndrome, etc. ²¹
Hepatitis C	Screening for infection. ³²
HIV	Screening for HIV infection for all adolescents and adults ages 15–65. Younger adolescents and older adults who are at increased risk of infection should also be screened. Recommend PrEP using effective antiretroviral therapy to people at high risk of HIV acquisition.

For men and women age 50 and older

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Hypertension	Screening for hypertension (high blood pressure) in adults 18 years and older with office blood pressure measurement (OBPM). Blood pressure monitoring outside the clinical setting is recommended to confirm diagnosis.
Latent tuberculosis infection (LTBI)	Screening for people at increased risk for infection. ²²
Lung cancer	Screening for lung cancer annually for people ages 50–80 years of age with a smoking history of 20 years or more, or for people who have quit within 15 years using low-dose computed tomography. ³⁵
Obesity	Screening, counseling, and if BMI of 30 or higher, offer or refer to intensive, and multicomponent behavioral interventions.
Osteoporosis	Recommended routine screening for osteoporosis with bone measurement testing for women 65 years and older and postmenopausal women younger than 65 who are at increased risk. ³³
STIs	Behavioral counseling for all sexually active adolescents and for adults who are at increased risk for STIs. ²³
Syphilis	Screening for people at increased risk for infection. ²⁴
Tobacco use and cessation	Screen all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, and provide behavioral interventions, and FDA-approved pharmacotherapy for cessation to nonpregnant adults who use tobacco.

For heart health, adults should exercise regularly (at least 30 minutes a day on most days), which can help reduce the risks of coronary heart disease, osteoporosis, obesity, and diabetes. Consult your physician before starting a new vigorous physical activity.

For pregnant people

Immunizations	
COVID-19 vaccine	Recommended for people planning pregnancy, pregnant, postpartum, or lactating. ¹
Flu vaccine, annual	Recommended. ²
Hepatitis A vaccine	For people with risk factors; for people seeking protection. ¹¹
Hepatitis B	First prenatal visit.
RSV (respiratory syncytial virus)	Recommended between 32–36 weeks gestational age. ⁷
Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis)	One dose of Tdap is recommended during each pregnancy. This is preferably in the early part of the gestational weeks 27–36.

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Alcohol misuse	Screening for unhealthy alcohol use and behavioral counseling as needed. ¹⁵
Anxiety	Screening during pregnancy and postpartum.
Aspirin	Low-dose aspirin (81 mg/day) as preventive medication after 12 weeks of gestation in people at high risk for preeclampsia. ³⁶
Asymptomatic bacteriuria	Recommended screening using urine culture in pregnant people.
Breastfeeding primary care interventions	Counseling, education, referrals, equipment, and supplies during pregnancy and after birth to support breastfeeding.
Chlamydia and gonorrhea	Screening for all sexually active women 24 years or younger and in women 25 years or older who are at increased risk for infection. ¹⁷
Depression	Screening for depression. Referrals to counseling interventions (support to reduce risks) for pregnant and postpartum people who are at increased risk of depression.
Drug misuse	Screening for unhealthy drug use.
Folic acid	Recommend use of 0.4 to 0.8 mg daily.
Gestational diabetes	Recommended screening for gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM) in asymptomatic pregnant people after 24 weeks of gestation.
Healthy weight gain	Behavioral counseling and interventions recommended to promote healthy weight gain and prevent excess gestational weight gain.
HIV	Screening for HIV infection in all pregnant people, including those who are present in labor or at delivery whose HIV status is unknown.
Hypertensive disorders (including preeclampsia)	Screening with blood pressure measurements throughout pregnancy.
Maternal mental health	Covered services for people who present written documentation of being diagnosed with a maternal mental health condition. Completion of covered services may extend up to 12 months from date of diagnosis or from the end of the pregnancy, whichever occurs later.
Rh(D) incompatibility	Recommend Rh(D) blood typing and antibody testing for all pregnant people during their first visit for pregnancy related care and repeated Rh(D) antibody testing for all unsensitized Rh(D)-negative women at 24 to 28 weeks gestation, unless the biological father is known to be Rh(D)-negative.

For pregnant people

Screenings, counseling, and services	
Syphilis	Early screening recommended for infection in all pregnant people, or at first opportunity. ²⁴
Tobacco use and cessation	Screening all adults about tobacco use, advise them to stop using tobacco, provide behavioral interventions, for cessation to pregnant people who use tobacco.

Having a baby? Getting prenatal and postpartum care and screenings can help you and your baby stay healthy during pregnancy, birth, and postpartum. Be aware that while almost all women get the “baby blues” after childbirth, as many as 10% will get postpartum depression.³⁷ For more information, visit our website, blueshieldca.com, or see your healthcare provider.

Recommendations for a healthy pregnancy

Prenatal care

Begin within 14 days of confirming pregnancy and see a doctor in the first 12 weeks.

Dietary supplements

Women of childbearing age should take 0.4 to 0.8 mg of folic acid daily. This can decrease the risk of fetal brain and spinal cord birth defects. The recommended calcium intake for pregnant or nursing women is 1,000 mg daily.

Screenings and diagnostics

- Blood pressure and weight check at all visits
- Urine test
- Obstetrical history and physical
- Screenings for:
 - Asymptomatic bacteriuria
 - Chlamydia
 - Gestational diabetes
 - Group B streptococcal bacteria
 - Hepatitis B
 - Syphilis
 - Gonorrhea
 - Hematocrit
 - Rubella
 - Varicella
 - Rh(D) incompatibility
- HIV counseling and screening
- Ultrasonography
- Screening for alpha fetoprotein

- Chorionic villus screening (CVS) or amniocentesis (for women age 35 and older)
- Blood tests for certain birth defects
- Fundal height; and
- Fetal heart tones

Discussion topics at prenatal care visits

- Prior vaccinations (including flu shots)
- History of genital herpes
- Nutrition
- Smoking cessation
- Preterm labor risk
- Domestic abuse
- Mental health as a first intervention service (after screening for interpersonal and domestic violence)
- Other medication and drug use

Postpartum care

To be performed within three to seven weeks following delivery. Postpartum exam to include weight, blood pressure, breast and abdomen exam, or pelvic exam.

Endnotes

1. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) recommends COVID-19 vaccines for everyone six months to 18 years old, anyone with risk factors or who is in close contact with those with risk factors, and all who choose protection. COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines may be administered on the same day.
2. Annual vaccination against influenza is recommended for all persons ages 6 months and older, including all adults.
3. Children through age 9 getting the flu vaccine for the first time – or who have received the flu vaccine – should get two doses at least four weeks apart.
4. The Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b) vaccine is usually given in a series of two or three primary doses depending on brand. An additional booster dose at ages 12–15 months is recommended for children who completed the primary doses before their first birthday.
5. Individuals at risk for meningococcal disease include international travelers and college-bound students. These individuals should discuss the risks and benefits of vaccination with their doctor.
6. The CDPH recommends that for children younger than 4 years, parents be able to choose either the combined measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella vaccine (one injection); or separate MMR and varicella vaccines (two injections). Parents should consult with their child's pediatrician as needed.
7. CDPH recommends the RSV vaccine during weeks 32 to 36 of pregnancy during September to January (if the RSV vaccine was not received during a prior pregnancy). For infants and toddlers, the CDPH recommends the RSV vaccine at the earliest opportunity between October 1 and March 31 for all infants younger than 8 months (if birthing parent did not receive vaccine during pregnancy), and for children ages 8 to 19 months if they are at higher risk for severe RSV.
8. Fluoride oral supplements should be discussed at preventive care visits if the primary water source is deficient in fluoride.
9. Selection of conditions based on "Newborn Screening: Toward a Uniform Screening Panel and System" as authored by the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG) and commissioned by the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA).
10. All children 3 to 5 years old are at risk of vision abnormalities and should be screened; specific risk factors include strabismus, refractive errors, and media opacity.
11. Risk factors for hepatitis A should be discussed with your provider.
12. Risk factors for hepatitis B should be discussed with your provider.
13. Risk factors for pneumococcal infections should be discussed with your provider.
14. The Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) booster is recommended in children ages 11 to 12 who have completed the childhood DTaP immunization series and have not yet received a tetanus and diphtheria (Td) booster dose.
15. Brief behavioral counseling interventions were found to reduce unhealthy alcohol use in adults 18 years or older, including pregnant women. Effective behavioral counseling interventions vary in their specific components, administration, length, and number of interventions.
16. Sexually transmitted infections, also known as sexually transmitted diseases, include chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, HIV, HPV, syphilis, and others.
17. Risk factors for chlamydia and gonorrhea infection include history of chlamydial or other STIs, new or multiple sexual partners, inconsistent condom use, commercial sex work, and drug use.
18. Coverage includes:
 - a. Prescribed FDA-approved contraceptive drugs, devices, and products;
 - b. Device insertion and removal;
 - c. Sterilization procedures;
 - d. Contraceptive education and counseling including for continued adherence;
 - e. Related follow-up services;
 - f. Management of side effects;
 - g. For self-administered hormonal contraceptives, you may receive up to a 12-month supply.

19. All people of reproductive age are at potential risk for intimate partner violence and should be screened including those who are pregnant and postpartum. There are a variety of factors that increase the risk of intimate partner violence, such as exposure to violence as a child, young age, unemployment, substance abuse, marital difficulties, and economic hardships.
20. Unhealthy drug use screening should be implemented when services for accurate diagnosis, effective treatment, and appropriate care can be offered or referred.
21. Intensive behavioral counseling to promote a healthy diet and physical activity is recommended for all adults who have hyperlipidemia or have any known risk factors for cardiovascular and diet-related chronic disease. The Diabetes Prevention Program, part of Wellvolution®, is a lifestyle medicine program through Blue Shield of California Promise Health Plan that focuses on diabetes prevention.
22. Tuberculosis and LTBI for asymptomatic adults at increased risk for infection.
23. Behavioral counseling to prevent STIs for sexually active adolescents and adults at increased risk for STIs.
24. Risk factors for syphilis infection include all adolescents and adults who receive health care in a high-prevalence or high-risk clinical setting, men who have had sex with men, commercial sex workers, and those in adult correctional facilities. Individuals being treated for sexually transmitted diseases may be more likely than others to engage in high-risk behavior.
25. For individuals born before 1957 with no evidence of immunity to measles, mumps, or rubella, consider two-dose series at least four weeks apart for measles and mumps or at least one dose for rubella. Check with your doctor for details regarding pregnancy.
26. People in contact with infants under 12 months of age and healthcare personnel can be given the Td vaccine as soon as feasible. It is recommended that Tdap should replace a single dose of Td for adults under age 65 if they have not previously received a dose of Tdap.
27. Individuals at risk for varicella infection include those who have close contact with persons at high risk for severe disease (healthcare workers and family contacts of immunocompromised persons) or are at high risk for exposure or transmission (e.g., teachers of young children, childcare employees, residents and staff members of institutional settings, including correctional institutions, college students, military personnel, adolescents and adults living in households with children, nonpregnant women of childbearing age, and international travelers).
28. Your doctor will assess your personal or family history of breast, ovarian, tubal, or peritoneal cancer or family history of breast cancer susceptibility 1 and 2 (BRCA1/2) gene mutations. People with a positive result on the risk assessment tool are recommended to receive genetic counseling and, if indicated after counseling, genetic testing.
29. Statin use for the primary prevention of cardiovascular disease in adults: The USPSTF recommends that adults without a history of cardiovascular disease (CVD) (e.g., symptomatic coronary artery disease or ischemic stroke) use a low- to moderate-dose statin for the prevention of CVD events and mortality when all of the following criteria are met: they are ages 40 to 75; they have one or more CVD risk factors (e.g., dyslipidemia, diabetes, hypertension, or smoking); and they have a calculated 10-year risk of a cardiovascular event of 10% or greater. Identification of dyslipidemia and calculation of 10-year CVD event risk requires universal lipids screening in adults ages 40 to 75. Statin medicines are a pharmacy benefit.
30. According to the U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce (USPSTF), colorectal cancer is the third leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. It is most frequently diagnosed among people ages 65–74 years. It is estimated that 10.5% of new colorectal cancer cases occur in persons younger than 50 years. There are several recommended screening tests for colorectal cancer. Your provider will consider a variety of factors to decide which test is best. Screenings include:
 - a. High sensitivity guaiac fecal occult blood test (HSgFOBT) or fecal immunochemical test (FIT) every year;
 - b. Stool DNA-FIT every 1 to 3 years;

- c. Computed tomography colonography every 5 years;
 - d. Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years;
 - e. Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 10 years with annual FIT;
 - f. Colonoscopy screening every 10 years; and
 - g. Colon cancer DNA blood test every 1 to 3 years.
31. Diabetes/prediabetes screening should be performed for adults ages 35 to 70 who are overweight and obese. Intensive behavioral counseling interventions to promote a healthy diet and physical activity for patients with abnormal blood glucose. Individuals with prediabetes may be referred for preventive interventions.
 32. Hepatitis C screening for adults 18 to 79 years.
 33. Osteoporotic fractures, particularly hip fractures, are associated with limitation of ambulation, chronic pain and disability, loss of independence, and quality of life. Women have higher rates of osteoporosis than men at any given age.
 34. Fall prevention counseling for older adults to exercise or physical therapy to prevent falls in community-dwelling adults age 65 and older who are at increased risk for falls.
 35. Lung cancer screening for adults ages 50 to 80 years who have a 20-pack per year smoking history and currently smoke or who quit within the last 15 years.
 36. Pregnant women who are at high risk for preeclampsia should use low-dose aspirin (81 mg/day) as preventive medicine after 12 weeks of gestation.
 37. As many as 10% of pregnant women will get postpartum depression, according to the American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Volume 228, Issue 1, Supplement S122-S123, January 2023.

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These are Blue Shield of California's Preventive Health Guidelines, which are based on nationally recognized guidelines. Members must refer to their *Evidence of Coverage* or *Certificate of Insurance* or policy for plan or policy coverage of preventive health benefits.

For more help and resources, visit blueshieldca.com or call Customer Service at the number on your Blue Shield member ID card. If you do not have your ID card, you can call (800) 393-6130 (TTY: 711).

To opt out of future nonrequired communications, please call Customer Service at the number on your Blue Shield member ID card.

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