



HEALTH AWARENESS

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PREVENTATIVE CARE AND WELLNESS

Preventive care is key to helping you stay healthy and detecting problems early on before they cause other issues or become more difficult to treat.

Most of us think of going to the doctor as something we do when we aren't feeling well or when we need treatment for a specific medical condition. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) refers to [preventative health](#) as routine care you receive in order to maintain your health; it's key to diagnosing medical conditions before they become a problem. Preventing serious diseases before they happen is one of the most important things you can do to protect your health. Unfortunately, [one study](#) found that only 8% of adults in the United States who are 35 years and older received the preventive care recommended to them.

WHAT EXACTLY IS PREVENTIVE CARE?

Preventive health encompasses a set of wellness services meant to screen and possibly identify health issues before symptoms develop. Preventive healthcare can help you live a longer, healthier life.

Adult preventive healthcare typically includes screenings for conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and cancer, as well as counseling for optimum mental health and balanced eating habits. For children, preventive health includes yearly checkups, vaccinations, and screenings for conditions like autism and lead poisoning.

WHAT TYPES OF SERVICES ARE PART OF PREVENTIVE CARE FOR ADULTS?

Preventive care for adults involves [screening for chronic conditions](#) like heart disease and diabetes, as well as immunizations against serious illnesses like the COVID-19 and the flu. It also involves education and counseling that can help you make positive lifestyle choices that protect your overall health and well-being.

The types of screenings recommended for you may vary based on your age and family history. The following are the most common preventive screenings for adults:

- Screenings for breast cancer, colorectal cancer, cervical cancer, and prostate cancer: These screenings are some of the most common cancers affecting men and women, and early detection can stop them from spreading or becoming more serious.
- Screenings for blood pressure, cholesterol, and diabetes: These screenings can help detect common metabolic conditions that can be treated with medication and lifestyle changes. If left untreated, they may lead to serious disease and premature death.
- [Vaccines recommended](#) for adults include annual flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines, and boosters for vaccines you received as a child that may have worn off.



WHAT'S CONSIDERED PREVENTIVE CARE FOR CHILDREN?

Preventive care for children helps protect them from some of the serious illnesses that can affect kids and includes screenings to detect behavioral and health conditions. Preventive healthcare can help children stay healthy when they're young and also as they grow older.

Preventive healthcare for children is covered in full under most insurance plans. Some of the preventive care offered to children includes:

- Wellness visits happen every few months when your child is an infant, and yearly after that. These appointments include measurements of your child's growth and developmental milestones. Routine immunizations and screenings are also conducted during these visits.
- Pediatricians routinely screen children for behavioral and mental health conditions like autism, depression, and developmental delays.
- Vaccinations for children protect them from serious diseases now and in the future. Routine childhood vaccines include polio, hepatitis A and B, [DTaP](#) (diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis), [MMR](#) (measles, mumps, and rubella), and [chickenpox](#) (varicella).

DO YOU KNOW YOUR FAMILY HEALTH HISTORY?

If a close relative has a health condition like diabetes, heart disease, or cancer, you're considered to have a [family history](#) of that condition. This means that screenings for that particular condition are important, and you may even need early or more robust screenings than someone who doesn't have this same family history.

While you can't change your genetic risk, knowledge is power and you can participate in health screenings that can detect conditions early, so that treatment is more effective. Furthermore, when you know your family history, you can take steps to lower your risk of specific conditions. You can be proactive about engaging in healthy lifestyle choices that are known to help prevent these conditions from developing or worsening.

If you aren't sure what your family health history is, now is the time to discuss this with your close family members. If you find that certain diseases tend to run in your family, tell your physician at your next appointment.

BENEFITS CORNER

[CTSI](#) recommends reviewing the preventive healthcare available to you and what types of tests, screenings, and services are included, and the role your family history plays when it comes to the preventive tests you may need.

Preventative services offer significant health benefits, and usually won't cost you anything. In fact, if any conditions are identified, early treatment will likely save you money on healthcare costs in the future. CHP members with medical coverage can get their flu shots reimbursed, up to the reasonable and customary amount. Health Fair attendance is also reimbursed up to \$40 annually and offers education about common health issues and concerns and the opportunity for convenient screenings and assessments.

If you have questions about preventative care and what screenings you or your family should get, please speak with your healthcare professional.

