

Routine Health Checks



Would you drive your car on low tires or ignore checking the oil level? Our cars, lawnmowers and other machines all benefit from routine checks so they can work at their best. These checks are also a great way to find small problems and fix them before they turn into major breakdowns. But the truth is, many of us take better care of these machines than our own bodies!

When was the last time you saw your healthcare provider for a “look under the hood”? Many people are good at taking their children to well baby checks or school and sports physicals but neglect to take care of themselves as adults.



It might seem strange at first to see a doctor when you feel fine, but there are good reasons for doing so. Routine visits help you build a good relationship with your doctor. They also help your doctor learn what is normal for you.

As we age, it is just a fact of life that our bodies are more at risk for illness. There are certain screens that should be done at specific points in life to make sure diseases are not starting to take root in our systems.

Sometimes there are barriers that prevent us from getting these tests done:

- Knowledge
- Time
- Money

None of these reasons will seem important if you wait too long and a serious illness like cancer takes hold of your body.

There are ways to deal with money issues. Ask your healthcare provider or call your local health department. Many agencies or physician offices have low cost or free screenings.

Each of us has a unique background and makeup so our needs are different. Because of who you are you may need tests done sooner or more often than other people. Don't neglect yourself! Talk with your healthcare provider about what YOU need to prevent illness or find a disease in an early stage. It can mean the difference between life and death. Take the time today!



**Here are a few of the tests most people need to have done.
They are not by any means all things that should be checked.**



Cancer:

Breast Cancer

- Mammogram yearly starting at age 40. It is the best way to find breast cancer. If you are at high risk for breast cancer it may need to be done at a younger age.
- Clinical breast exam done by a healthcare provider every 3 years in your 20s and 30s and yearly starting at age 40.
- Breast self exam (BSE) monthly starting during the 20s to learn how your breasts feel and report any change or problems.

Cervical Cancer

- Yearly cervical cancer screen starting at age 21 or 3 years from the start of vaginal intercourse. This includes a pap test. How often this test is done might change with results or as you age.

Colon Cancer

- At age 50, both men and women at average risk for colon cancer should be screened for this disease. There are a number of ways to have this done. Ask your healthcare provider which is right for you.

Heart Disease:

High blood pressure

- Know your blood pressure. If it is in a normal range and you are healthy, you should have it rechecked every 1-2 years. If your blood pressure is not normal, you need to follow up with your healthcare provider for guidelines on treatment and how often it should be rechecked.

High Cholesterol

- Starting at age 20, have a fasting lipid panel done to check your cholesterol levels. If normal, they can be repeated at 5 year intervals. If they are not normal, a healthcare provider needs to review your results and advise you on further follow up.

Choose Wisely, Choose HEALTH!

**To learn more about healthy living, call us at (309) 282-1624
or visit the Choose HEALTH! website at www.osfsaintfrancis.org
[select “Services” then “Wellness”].**

Resources: cancer.org, cdc.gov, americanheart.org

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If you have any questions or concerns about your health or well-being, please talk with your doctor or healthcare provider who knows you best.*