



Preventive care is vital to your healthy lifestyle.

As Benjamin Franklin once said, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Many health conditions can be prevented or detected early by making healthy lifestyle choices, such as eating nutritional foods, getting appropriate exercise and visiting your doctor for routine physical care.

As a general rule, being in good health means lower health care costs. Use these guidelines to help maintain a healthy lifestyle and potentially save money on your health care. Always talk with your primary care provider about your specific health concerns and follow your doctors’ advice.



Use these guidelines to help maintain a healthy lifestyle

SCREENING: Children, birth to 18 years

Ask your child's doctor about the frequency of well-child visits based on your child's age. Generally, babies need to be seen at two-to three-month intervals; older children should be seen annually.

Age	Screening	Frequency
Newborn	Genetic metabolic screening (including PKU, sickle cell, blood disorders, hypothyroidism)	Once
Newborn	Hearing assessment	Once
Birth - 2 years	Head circumference	At each well-child visit
6 - 12 months	Iron deficiency anemia	Once for prevention
Birth - 6 years	Height/length, weight and Body Mass Index (BMI)	At each well-child visit
1, 2 and 3 years	Lead level screening	Frequency dependent on risk
Up to 3 years	Developmental/behavioral assessment	Annually
Younger than 5 years	Vision screening	Once
Up to 18 years	Tuberculin screening	Frequency dependent on risk

COUNSELING: Children, birth to 18 years

As your child grows, talk with your child's doctor about:

- Nutrition: obesity and eating disorders
- Physical activity and exercise
- Safety, inside and outside the home:
 - Car seats
 - Poison prevention
 - Seat belts
 - Injury prevention
- Child abuse
- Sexuality and sexually transmitted diseases
- Birth control
- Tobacco, alcohol and drug use/abuse
- Dental and oral health
- Skin cancer: minimizing exposure to ultraviolet radiation



IMMUNIZATIONS: Children, birth to 18 months

The following immunizations are recommended for children in the first 18 months of life. Vaccine schedules may differ based on your child's age and health when starting a series of injections. Ask your doctor how you should space your child's appointments to get the best results from these vaccines to prevent serious communicable diseases.

Immunization	Scheduling information
Hepatitis B (HepB)	3 - 4 doses before 18 months; the first is usually at birth
Rotavirus	2 - 3 doses before 6 months of age
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (whooping cough) (DTaP)	4 doses before 18 months
Haemophilus Influenza Type B (Hib)	3 - 4 doses before 18 months
Pneumococcal (PCV)	4 doses before 18 months
Inactivated Poliovirus (IPV)	3 doses before 18 months
Influenza (Flu)	2 doses first flu season; beginning at 6 months
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	Once 12 - 18 months
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Once 12 - 18 months
Hepatitis A (HepA)	2 doses after 12 months of age
COVID-19	Annually starting at 6 months
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	One dose up to age 2

IMMUNIZATIONS: Children, 18 months to 18 years

The following immunizations are recommended for children from 18 months to 18 years old. Children who have not received their vaccines earlier in life can receive a "catch-up" series. Vaccine schedules may differ based on your child's age and health when starting a series of injections. Ask your doctor how you should space your child's appointments to get the best results from these vaccines to prevent serious communicable diseases.

Immunization	Scheduling information
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (whooping cough) (DTaP)	One at 4 - 6 years old or catch-up series
Haemophilus Influenza Type B (Hib)	Hib catch-up series
Hepatitis A (HepA)	Catch-up series
Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	3-dose series, 9 - 18 years old
Influenza (Flu)	Annually; children over 2 years of age can receive nasal spray vaccine
Inactivated Poliovirus (IPV)	Once at 4 - 6 years old
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	Once at 4 - 6 years old or catch-up
Meningococcal	2 - 6 years old; high-risk children only; one 11 - 12 years old; catch-up
Pneumococcal (PCV)	PCV catch-up series
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Once at 4 - 6 years old or catch-up
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	One dose up to age 2
COVID-19	Annually

PREVENTIVE GUIDELINES: Adults, 18 years and older

The following preventive services are recommended on an annual basis or during the age ranges noted. Ask your physician about your individual needs for screening for early detection of serious illness.

Screening Services	Frequency/Age Range
History, physical examination and assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Blood pressure• Height and weight (BMI)• Depression screening• Tobacco, alcohol or drug abuse screening• Sexual wellness and disease screening	At each preventive visit
Diabetes Screening	At each preventive visit
Cholesterol Screening	Every 5 years beginning at age 35
Colorectal Cancer Screening	45 years of age and over; every 5 - 10 years with colonoscopy
Cervical Cancer Screening (Pap smear)	Women annually at age 18 or age of sexual activity and every 1 - 3 years thereafter
Breast Cancer Screening (Mammogram)	Women age 40 and older; every 1 - 2 years thereafter
Osteoporosis Screening	Age 65 and older; once every 2 years thereafter
Sexually Transmitted Disease Screening	Annually based on risk
Pregnancy-related Screenings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bacteria in the Urine• Folic Acid Supplementation• Hepatitis B Screening• Rh Compatibility• Iron Deficiency Screening• Gestational Diabetes	Ask your doctor about additional services recommended during your pregnancy
Breastfeeding Support, Supplies, and Counseling	One breast pump per pregnancy
Contraceptive Methods and Counseling	Varies based on contraceptive methods
Risk of Falling Assessment	Age 65 and older
Hepatitis C Virus Infection, Screening	Once for adults age 18 to 79
COVID-19	Annually

COUNSELING: Adults, 18 years and older

Talk with your doctor about a referral to a specialist if you have issues with:

- Physical activity and exercise
- Perinatal Depression and healthy weight gain during pregnancy.
- Calcium intake
- Tobacco, alcohol and drug use/abuse
- Nutrition: obesity and eating disorders
- Safety: sun exposure, seat belt use, fall and injury prevention
- Genetic disorders
- Interpersonal and domestic violence
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Risk of falling, mobility problems (age 65 and older)

IMMUNIZATIONS: Adults, 18 years and older

Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td/Tdap)	Tdap vaccine once, then Td booster vaccine every 10 years
Pneumococcal (Pneumonia): PCV13 PCV23	1 dose 1 - 2 doses to age 65; 1 dose, age 65 or over
Influenza (Flu)	Annually
Human Papilloma Virus (HPV)	3-dose series before age 27
Zoster (Shingles)	Two doses, age 50 or over
Meningococcal	Certain high-risk groups based on medical, occupational, lifestyle or other indications
Hepatitis B or Hepatitis A	Catch-up series if not vaccinated when were a child; two to three doses
Varicella (Chickenpox)	Catch-up if not vaccinated when a child
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	Catch-up if not vaccinated when a child
Haemophilus Influenzae Type b (Hib)	1 or 3 doses
Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)	Annually age 60 and over; Pregnant women 32 - 36 weeks of gestation

Sources:

<https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org>, website of U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, accessed 02/25/20

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/index.html>, website of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), accessed 02/25/20.

<http://brightfutures.aap.org>, website of the American Academy of Pediatrics, accessed 02/25/20.

<https://www.hhs.gov/programs/prevention-and-wellness/index.html>, website of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, accessed 06/25/24.

<https://www.hrsa.gov/womens-guidelines/index.html>, website of Health Resources & Services Administration for Women's Preventive Services guidelines, accessed 02/25/20

The preventive services listed are subject to change based on federal requirements. These guidelines are for informational purposes only. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska does not diagnose conditions or recommend specific treatment. The information provided in this document is not a substitute for your physician's care. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) went into effect for plan/policy years on and after September 23, 2010. Preventive services covered under this act must be submitted with the appropriate diagnosis and procedure code in order to be paid at the 100% benefit level. Preventive services do not generally include services intended to treat an existing illness, injury, or condition. Benefits will be determined based on how the provider submits the bill. If during your preventive services visit you receive services to treat an existing illness, injury or condition, you may be required to pay a copay, deductible and/or coinsurance for those covered services. Individual and Group health plans vary in the preventive benefits covered. Refer to your Individual Contract and/or Endorsement, Master Group Contract, Certificate of Coverage or Summary Plan Description for details on how your preventive services benefits are covered. 92-109-2-508 (12-02-24)