

Information and Hotline Numbers

The 800, 877 and 888 numbers are free of charge and will not show up on your phone bill.

Remember to dial 1 and then the number. Other numbers are local to the Houston area.

AID's/STD's		Health Information Clearinghouse	800-358-9295
Center for Disease Control - STD/AIDS Hotline	800-342-2437	Heart	
Houston Dept. of Health STD info	713-794-9020	American Heart Association	800-242-8721
Houston Dept. of Health STD program	713-794-9251	American Heart Association – Houston	713-610-5000
Montrose Clinic	713-529-0037	Texas Heart Institute	800-292-2221
Alzheimer's Disease		Houston Department of Health	
Alzheimer's Association	800-272-3900	Clinic Locations	713-794-9365
Alzheimer's Association – Houston	713-266-6400	Immunizations	713-794-9266
Alcohol & Drugs		Nutrition	713-794-9292
Alcoholics Anonymous – Houston	713-686-6300	Spanish Hotline	713-247-2412
Al-Anon Meeting Line	888-425-2666	TB Control	713-278-6600
Al-Anon – Houston	713-683-7227	Kidney	
Cocaine Anonymous	713-668-6822	National Kidney Foundation – Houston	800-961-5683
Council on Alcohol & Drugs Houston	713-942-4100	Lung	
Substance Abuse Hotline (U.S. Dept. Health)	800-662-4357	American Lung Association	800-586-4872
Arthritis		American Cancer Society	877-724-1090
Houston Arthritis Foundation	800-364-8000	Smoking Quitline	
Cancer		Lupus	
American Cancer Society	800-227-2345	Lupus Foundation	713-529-0126
National Breast Cancer Coalition	800-622-2838	Mental Health	
NCI– Cancer Information Service	800-422-6237	Mental Health Association	713-522-5161
Susan G. Komen Helpline	800-462-9273	Mental Health Mental Retardation	713-970-7070
Diabetes		United Way Crisis Hotline	713-228-1505
American Diabetes Association	800-342-2383	Osteoporosis	
American Diabetes Association – Houston	713-977-7706	NIH – National Resource Center	800-624-2663
Domestic Violence and Referral		Rape	
Houston Area Women's Center	713-528-2121	Houston Area Women's Center	713-528-7273
Eating Disorders		Rape Crisis Hotline	
Eating Disorders Awareness & Prevention	800-931-2237	Suicide	
Endometriosis	800-992-3636	Crisis Intervention of Houston, Inc.	713-468-5463
Epilepsy		Thyroid	
Epilepsy Foundation	800-332-1000	The Thyroid Society	800-849-7643
Houston Epilepsy	713-789-6295	United Way Helpline	211

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The Women's Fund

For Health Education and Research

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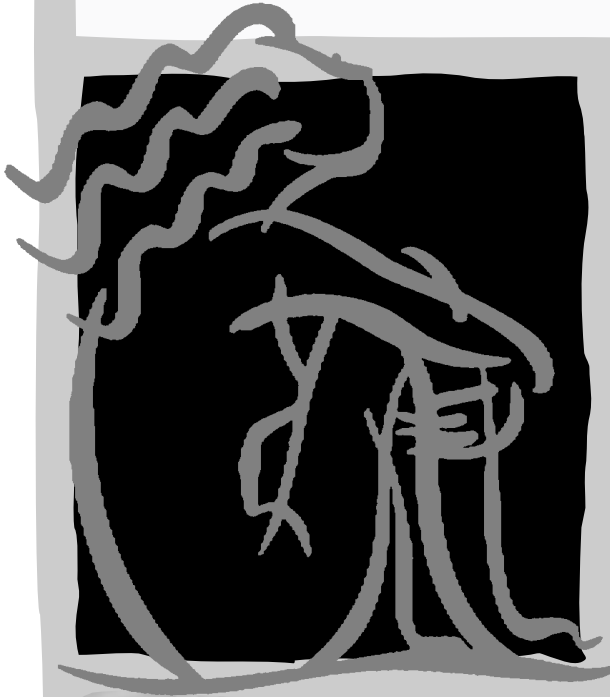
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TAKING CONTROL

WOMEN AND HEALTH

A PRIMER ON WOMEN'S HEALTH



PUBLISHED BY: THE WOMEN'S FUND FOR HEALTH EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

Founded in 1979, The Women's Fund for Health Education and Research provides leadership in funding medical research for women's health and provides health education for women of all ages. *Women and Health – A Primer on Women's Health* was first published in 1985 with the conviction that current information will motivate women to seek healthier lifestyles and help them share the responsibility of making health care decisions with their physicians. Since that time, revisions have been made every two years to update the medical information, and thousands of women in Houston and surrounding areas have benefited from the preventive health information contained in the publication.

Healthcare today must be a team effort. You must be an active partner with your doctor, pharmacist and even your insurance company in monitoring and managing your health.

The Women's Fund is grateful to Wendy Haskell Meyer, co-author of the original *Primer*, to whose memory this is dedicated. We gratefully acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for reviewing this version of *Women and Health – A Primer of Women's Health* for medical accuracy: David J. Braden, MD, private practice, internal medicine; Roberta Diddel, PhD, Psychology Works; Stanley Gertzbein, MD, Institute for Spinal Disorders; Raymond Kaufman, MD, Baylor College of Medicine; Mary Kenan, PhD, Baylor College of Medicine; Catherine Kruppa, MS, RD, LD, The Houstonian; Shahla Nader, MD, University of Texas Health Science Center; Nancy Nussmeier, MD, Texas Heart Institute/ St. Luke's Episcopal Health System; Catherine O'Brian, PhD, MD Anderson Cancer Center; John Sargent, MD, Professor of Psychiatry and Pediatrics, Baylor College of Medicine; Karen Schneider, MD, University of Texas Health Science Center; Houston Area Women's Center; Montrose Clinic.

It is vital that women remain aware of the ongoing changes occurring in women's health. We hope readers find *Women and Health – A Primer* to be a source of timely information and an inspiration for healthier lifestyles. It is made available at no cost by The Women's Fund as a resource to aid women in learning more about their health.

This publication was made possible through the generosity of the following to which The Women's Fund would like to express its appreciation:

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The Women's Fund
For Health Education and Research

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General Resources on Women’s Health Issues

PART 1. The Healthy Woman

Good Health

Chapter 1

Basics of Good Health for Women

Now, more than ever before, women need to be involved in their own health care. From prevention, to proper screening, to appropriate treatment—the responsibility starts with you!

Hardly a day goes by without the announcement of another medical breakthrough. In spite of great strides made by medical research, the health status of women has been sadly neglected until very recently. Prior to 1994, when the government established the Office of Women's Health, few clinical trials dealt with women's health issues. After 1994 the National Institutes of Health finally began to enforce its long-ignored policy that a trial or study that inappropriately excluded women would not be funded.

Women currently represent more than half of the total U. S. population, almost 60% of Americans 65 years of age and over, and almost 70% of Americans 85 years and older. Women's average life expectancy has increased by almost 30 years since the beginning of the 20th century. In 1940 the average life expectancy at birth in the United States was about 65 years for women and 61

years for men. Life expectancy is now 79.5 years for women and 74.1 years for men.

10 Leading Causes of Death for U.S. Women

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <i>Heart disease</i> | 6. <i>Diabetes</i> |
| 2. <i>Cancer</i> | 7. <i>Motor vehicle and other accidents</i> |
| 3. <i>Cerebrovascular diseases, such as stroke</i> | 8. <i>Alzheimer's disease</i> |
| 4. <i>Lung diseases</i> | 9. <i>Kidney diseases</i> |
| 5. <i>Pneumonia and influenza</i> | 10. <i>Blood poisoning</i> |

Longer does not always mean better, however. Older women have a higher incidence of osteoporosis, depression and Alzheimer's disease than do men of the same age.

There are a number of factors that greatly affect your health—either improving or harming it. Basics of good health are positive habits that you can incorporate into your everyday life. Healthy women—

- ✓ Are physically and mentally active.
- ✓ Don't smoke.
- ✓ Don't abuse alcohol or prescription drugs, or use so-called recreational drugs.
- ✓ Maintain a desirable body weight.
- ✓ Eat a varied diet, containing generous amounts of fruits, vegetables, whole-grain foods, peas, and beans.
- ✓ Get plenty of rest.
- ✓ Maintain a positive attitude.
- ✓ Are realistic and honest with themselves.

Healthy women also follow other common-sense recommendations. For example they use sunscreen to protect their skin

against sun damage throughout out their lives. Preventing wrinkles is much better than trying to erase them later. They also wear sunglasses to protect their eyes in bright sunlight.

You need to take more responsibility than ever before for your own health and healthcare. Question your doctor about your symptoms or treatment. Ask your pharmacist to explain the side effects and possible interactions of any medications you are taking.

Does this sound like a lot of work? Actually, once you have positive, healthy habits in place, you will feel so much better, and it won't seem like any effort at all.

There is no substitute for having the habit of good health!

Good Nutrition

Chapter 2

Nutrition and Exercise

Good nutrition and regular moderate physical activity are essential to the healthy woman. Nutrition experts—registered dietitians—can help you develop your own personalized eating plan. You can usually find a dietitian at your local hospital, or look in the yellow pages under “diet” or “nutrition.” If you have a computer, check the American Dietetic Association website (www.eatright.org) to locate a registered dietitian in your area.

What You Eat...

Carbohydrates (sugars and starches), protein, and fat provide the calories (fuel energy) in your diet. Carbohydrates are the body’s

Welcome to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans

*The USDA developed the following statements—
the Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

Aim for Fitness

1. *Aim for a healthy weight.*
2. *Be physically active each day.*

Build a Healthy Base

1. *Let the USDA Food Pyramid (see page 9) guide your food choices.*
2. *Choose a variety of grains daily, especially whole grains.*
3. *Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily..*
4. *Keep food safe to eat.*

Choose Sensibly

1. *Choose a diet that is low in saturated fat and cholesterol and moderate in total fat.*
2. *Choose beverages and food that limit your intake of sugars.*
3. *Choose and prepare foods with less salt.*
4. *If you drink alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation.*

favorite fuel—they provide about 4 calories of heat energy per gram. Protein, which your body uses primarily for building and repairing tissue, also yields about 4 calories per gram when burned as fuel. Fat, on the other hand, is a much more concentrated source of calories—providing 9 calories per gram. Eating healthy is sort of like being on a budget. You want to choose your foods so you get the most nutrition—vitamins, minerals, protein—for the calories you “spend.” And be sure to drink 6 to 8 glasses of water each day. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has devised guidelines to help you choose a healthier diet.

Fortunately, food labels now have detailed information on the fat, sodium, and sugar content of the food. Some of these recommendations will be easier to understand with a little additional explanation.

Choose a variety of Grain Products, Fruits, and Vegetables. A healthy diet contains generous amounts of fruits, vegetables, and grain products. Be sure to include whole-grain foods, such as whole wheat bread, brown rice, oatmeal, or bran cereal each day. Look for the term “whole grain” on the label. These foods provide essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber and contain little or no fat. They also contain substances called phytochemicals (plant chemicals), which have recently been found to have important health benefits.

Dietary Fat. Consuming a moderate amount of fat helps you control your caloric intake (decreasing the risk of obesity [see page 76]) and helps decrease your intake of saturated fat. Fat either occurs naturally in food, such as in fatty meats and whole milk, or is added during cooking or at the table, such as frying foods or smothering them in butter, margarine, or a high-fat sauce. Choose lean meats, skin your poultry, and select low-fat or nonfat dairy products. Use little or no fat in cooking. When you do use fat, try to choose olive, canola, corn, safflower, sunflower, or soybean oils for cooking and on salads. Take advantage of the growing

Dietary

number of reduced-fat and nonfat food products on the market.

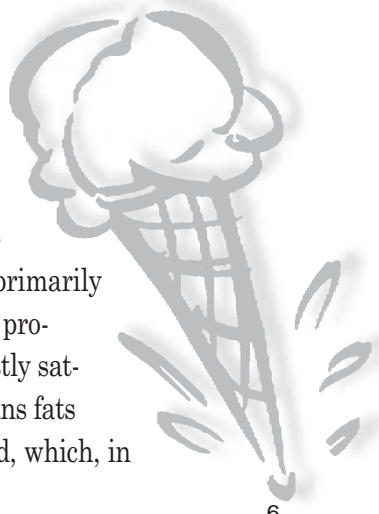
Most health authorities recommend that you limit your fat intake to 30% or less of your calories. How can you tell? Keep a list of what you eat for a couple of days. Total up the calories and grams of fat you ate; this information is listed on most food labels. Each gram of fat provides 9 calories, so multiply the grams of fat by 9 to get the calories from fat in your diet. Divide this number by the total calories and multiply by 100 to get the percent of calories from fat. Totally confused? Here's a sample to help you.

Susan consumed 2742 calories and 84 grams of fat on Monday and 2297 calories and 80 grams of fat on Tuesday.

Monday—84 grams of fat \times 9 = 756 calories from fat
756 fat calories \div 2742 total calories =
.276 \times 100 = 27.6% of her calories were from fat

Tuesday—80 grams of fat \times 9 = 720 calories from fat
720 calories from fat \div 2297 total calories =
.313 \times 100 = 31.3%

Dietary Saturated Fat and Cholesterol. The recommendation to eat less saturated fat and cholesterol is aimed at decreasing your risk of heart disease—the biggest killer of women (see page 18). All fats are made up of three types of fatty acids—saturated, monounsaturated, and polyunsaturated. There are also trans fats, which are primarily produced from polyunsaturated fats during processing. A diet high in fats that contain mostly saturated fatty acids or that provides a lot of trans fats increases the level of cholesterol in your blood, which, in



turn, increases your risk of heart disease. The recommended intake of saturated fat is less than 7% of calories. Fats high in saturated fatty acids include—

- ✓ Meat fat and poultry skin
- ✓ Dairy fat, such as is present in whole milk, butter, cream, and other high-fat dairy products
- ✓ Egg yolk
- ✓ Tropical oils, including palm kernel oil, coconut oil, and palm oil
- ✓ Hydrogenated (or hardened) fats such as shortening and margarine (may also contain trans fats)

Dietary cholesterol refers to cholesterol actually found in animal-based foods, including meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, and dairy products. Cholesterol is never found in plant foods. It is recommended that you limit your cholesterol intake to less than 200 milligrams per day, on average. The yolk of a large egg contains 213 mg of cholesterol. Skinless chicken or lean beef or pork range from about 60 to 90 mg of cholesterol per ounce. Organ meats, such as liver, are much higher in cholesterol. Food labels list milligrams of cholesterol in packaged foods.

Sugar consumption. An excess of sugar in the diet may help increase the level of a fat called triglyceride in the blood of some people. Consuming too much sugar may also contribute to cavities in your teeth and to being overweight, which raises your risk of many health problems, including Type 2 diabetes (see page 35) and high blood triglyceride levels (see page 22).

Salt consumption. The recommendation to consume less salt is to reduce your intake of the mineral sodium. In addition to being found in salt, sodium is added to some foods during processing and is naturally present in drinking water. Sodium is of concern because it helps raise blood pressure in some

people with high blood pressure (see page 22). Since most people don't know whether they are sensitive to sodium, a number of health authorities have recommended that all people limit their intake of sodium. The American Heart Association (AHA), for example, recommends that sodium intake be less than 2,400 milligrams per day, the same level recommended by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in food labeling. Milligrams of sodium are listed on food labels.

Although the body requires some sodium, Americans tend to consume much more sodium than they need. For many people, it is enough to stop salting food during its preparation or at the table. However, it is not wise to cut too far back on your sodium intake unless you are being monitored by your doctor.

Alcohol consumption. As for alcohol consumption, the first question that may come to mind is, "What is moderation?" Moderate alcohol intake is usually defined as no more than one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men. There does seem to be some benefit to moderate alcohol use, such as reducing your risk of heart disease. However, don't start drinking alcohol in an effort to prevent heart disease. An inherited tendency toward alcohol abuse could result in damaging your health and in taking a terrible toll on your personal life and your job.

What Is a Healthy Diet?

Still confused about how to plan a healthy diet? The USDA again has come to the rescue with its Food Guide Pyramid. A lot of emphasis in the Food Guide Pyramid is placed on eating foods such as bread, cereals, rice, pasta, fruits, and vegetables that contain complex carbohydrates (starches and fiber) and naturally occurring sugars. You need fewer servings each day of the high protein foods, such as dairy products and the "meat" group, which also includes dried beans, nuts, and eggs in addition to meat, fish, and poultry. You are advised to use very little fat, oil, and concentrated sweets,

such as candy and soda. Here are the food groups in the Food Guide Pyramid with the suggested servings per day.

Fats, oils, and sweets

Use sparingly



Meat, poultry, fish,
dry beans, eggs,
and nuts



2 to 3 suggested servings/day,
2-3 oz. cooked meat, fish, or
poultry; 1/2 cup dried beans,
1 egg

Dairy products:
milk, yogurt,
cheese, etc.



2 to 3 suggested servings/day,
1 cup of milk or yogurt,
1-1/2 oz. natural cheese,
2 oz. process cheese

Fruits

2 to 4 suggested
servings/day,
1 medium raw or
1/2 cup canned
fruit



Vegetables

3 to 5 suggested servings/day,
1 cup raw leafy
vegetables or 1/2 cup
cooked or chopped
vegetables



Bread, cereal, rice, pasta, crackers, etc.

6 to 11 suggested servings/day,

1 slice of bread, 1 oz. ready-to-eat cereal, 1/2 cup cooked cereal or pasta

Remember, a serving as listed in the Food Guide Pyramid may not be the same size as the serving you typically eat. If you love pasta and usually pile two cups of it on your plate, this is actually equal to 4 servings from the breads and cereals group.

Some nutrition experts favor what is called the Mediterranean Diet Pyramid. It is similar to the USDA Food Guide Pyramid in many ways. However, it emphasizes using fish and poultry in place of red meat and making olive oil the primary added fat.

Weight-loss Diets.

New (or recycled) diet programs are being promoted every day. The truth about these programs is that almost any diet plan will help you lose weight in the short term. For example, popular low-carbohydrate, high-fat diets have had some successes. The problem is that most people can't stick to diets that are too different from their normal eating patterns. Nutrition experts still recommend a balanced diet that contains limited calories, most of which come from complex carbohydrates, lean sources of protein, and a moderate amount of fat—primarily monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats, with very limited amounts of saturated and trans fats.

Exercise.

If there is one lifestyle factor that has been described as a potential fountain of youth, it is regularly taking part in moderate exercise. Did you know that performing regular moderate exercise can—

- ✓ Help you control your weight, build lean muscle, and reduce body fat.
- ✓ Help you maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints.
- ✓ Reduce your risk of dying from coronary heart disease and of developing high blood pressure, some cancers, and diabetes.
- ✓ Help reduce blood pressure (in some women with high blood pressure).
- ✓ Help control joint swelling and pain associated with arthritis.

Exercise

- ✓ Reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression and improve mood and feelings of well-being.

More than 60% of U.S. women do not engage in the recommended amount of physical activity. And more than 25% of U.S. women are not active at all.

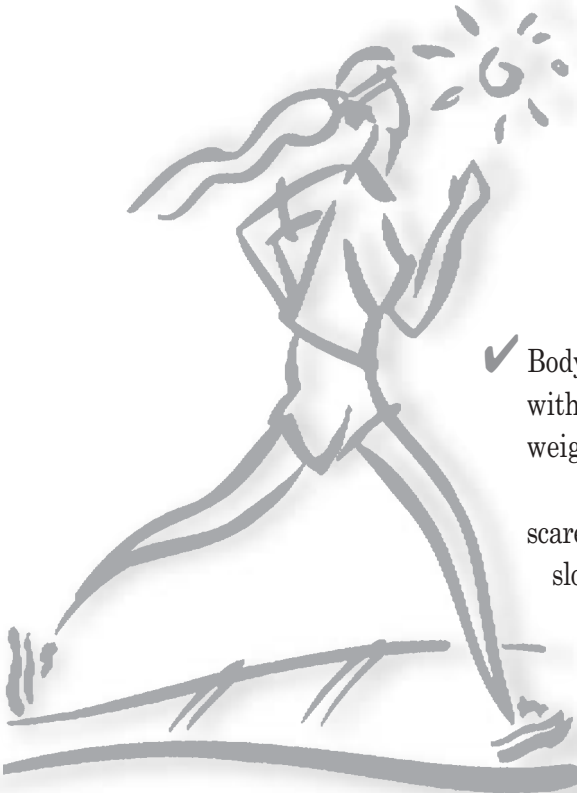
You don't have to be as physically active as an athlete in order to improve your fitness. Physical fitness refers to your ability to carry out daily tasks without being overly tired.

The Way to Fitness.

There are four components to fitness.

- ✓ Cardiorespiratory fitness means fitness of your heart and lungs. It is your heart's ability to pump blood and deliver oxygen throughout your body.
- ✓ Muscular fitness refers to the strength and endurance of your muscles.
- ✓ Flexibility is your ability to move your joints freely and without pain through a wide range of motion.
- ✓ Body composition is concerned with the percent of your body weight that is fat.

You may have been scared away from exercising by slogans such as “no pain, no gain.” The truth is that physical activity does not have to be strenuous to provide health benefits. At any age,



women can benefit from moderate physical activity performed for at least 30 minutes, on five or more days each week. This doesn't just refer to taking part in sports or performing exercises but can include activities such as gardening or yard work. Or, you can take part in more vigorous activity for at least 20 minutes on three or more days each week.

Of course, 30 minutes is the recommended *minimum* time for moderate activity—the more physically active you are, the more benefit you will enjoy. If you haven't been physically active for a while (or ever), be sure to begin gradually. Start with 5 to 10 minutes of regular physical activity and gradually build up to the level you want.

But, it is possible to get too much of a good thing. Don't fall for another false saying—"if a little is good, a lot must be better."

Excessive, strenuous activity can actually increase your risk of injury and may disturb normal menstrual cycles and/or weaken your bones. Be sure to drink plenty of water when you are exercising.

Aerobic exercise. Although *aerobic* exercise has many health benefits, it is best known for strengthening your heart. Physical activities are described as being aerobic when they cause your heart and lungs to increase the supply of oxygen to your cells. Aerobic exercises include activities such as walking, jogging, swimming, and biking. If you do these exercises so strenuously that you have trouble catching your breath, the activity is no longer aerobic. If you are breathing deeply but comfortably and can speak in short bursts before needing to catch a breath, you are exercising at a good aerobic pace.

Strength training. Strength training is also called resistance or weight training. It consists of working specific muscles hard for a short period of time, typically by using the muscle to lift a weight or to push against some type of resistance. Strength training is *anaerobic*, which means the activities don't require your body to increase its supply of oxygen to the cells. These activities build muscle mass and help keep your body strong and flexible.

Strength training also increases your bone density and helps

prevent bone loss. Don't be afraid your muscles will become too bulky—it won't happen!

It is a good idea to get some expert advice about the proper use of resistance machines, free weights, or resistance bands so that you get the most benefit from your workout and decrease your risk of injury.

Flexibility exercises. Flexibility exercises help your joints move more easily. It is possible to be both aerobically fit and physically strong while still not being flexible. Stretching and yoga are two examples of flexibility activities.

Percent body fat. Physical activities that build muscle and burn excess fat help you decrease your percent body fat and improve your body composition. Combine regular exercise with wise eating to reach a desirable percent of body fat, which, in turn, will improve your overall health and feeling of well-being.

Getting a Plan.

Not sure how to start? Choose something that is easy to do and that you enjoy. Many people find walking to be the ideal aerobic exercise. You don't have to buy a lot of expensive equipment—all you need is a good pair of walking shoes (no, they don't have to be expensive designer shoes). You may want to walk with a friend—it is more difficult to find an excuse not to exercise when you have a “walk date” with someone else. Consistency is very important—make being physically active as routine as brushing your teeth. Don't think about it—just do it!

Bulletin! Bulletin! Be sure to check with your doctor before starting any exercise program if you have any chronic health problems, such as heart disease, diabetes, or obesity (or are at high risk for these diseases). It's a good idea to check with your doctor if you haven't been physically active and/or are over age 50. A walking program doesn't usually present any risk—however, be sure to check before you start doing vigorous exercise.

Additional resources include—

The American Dietetic Association's Complete Food & Nutrition Guide, 2nd edition, by Roberta Larson Duyff. John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2002.

Strong Women Eat Well by Miriam Nelson and Judy Knipe. Putnam Publishing Group, 2001.

Nutrition for Women, 2nd edition, by Elizabeth Somer. Owl Books, 2003.

Female Fitness on Foot: Walking, Jogging, Running, Orienteering, edited by Bob O'Conner, Eystein Enoksen, Christine Wells, and Eldin Onsgard. Wish Publishing, 2002.

Healthy

Chapter 3

Women

Health Monitoring

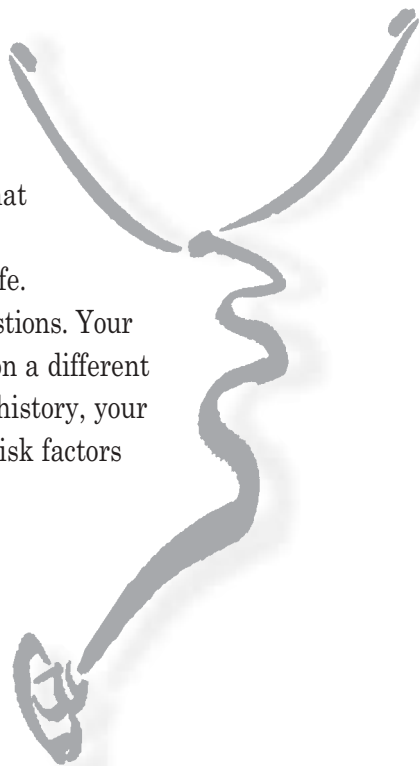
The *healthy woman* also needs to monitor her health status in order to identify any potentially harmful conditions as early as possible. Although yearly checkups may no longer be recommended for everyone, you will still want to have a periodic health examination.

Your primary care physician is your partner in keeping track of your overall health picture. However, sometimes specialists do routine screening. For example, a gynecologist often screens for potential problems in the reproductive system and an ophthalmologist or optometrist checks for vision problems.

Periodic Health Examinations.

Here are some suggestions about what should be done in a health exam for women at different stages of adult life.

Remember that these are only suggestions. Your doctor may choose to do these tests on a different schedule, depending on your family history, your personal medical history, and your risk factors for certain diseases or conditions.



Recommended Routine Procedures, Tests, and Immunizations for Women

Procedure, Test, Immunization	Age 13-19	Age 19-39	Age 40-49	Age 50-64	Age 64 or Older
<i>Height and Weight</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>
<i>Blood Pressure</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>	<i>At every exam</i>
Tests—					
<i>Pap test and pelvic exam</i>	<i>Yearly when sexually active or by age 18</i>	<i>Yearly; doctor may suggest less often if low risk</i>	<i>Yearly; doctor may suggest less often if low risk</i>	<i>Yearly; doctor may suggest less often if low risk</i>	<i>Yearly; doctor may suggest less often if low risk</i>
<i>Mammogram</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>
<i>Breast exam by doctor</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>
<i>Rectal exam</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>
<i>Fecal occult blood</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>	<i>Yearly</i>
<i>Screening colonoscopy</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Every 3-5 years</i>	<i>Every 3-5 years</i>
<i>Cholesterol test</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Every 5 years</i>	<i>Every 5 years</i>	<i>Every 5 years</i>	<i>Every 3-5 years</i>
<i>TSH test</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Every 1-5 years</i>	<i>Every 1-5 years</i>	<i>Every 3-5 years</i>
<i>Urinalysis</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Every 1-3 years</i>	<i>Every 1-3 years</i>	<i>Yearly</i>
<i>Vision test</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Every 2-3 years</i>	<i>Every 2 years</i>	<i>Every 2 years; begin yearly at 60</i>	<i>Yearly</i>
<i>Blood glucose</i>	<i>NRR (unless risk factors present)</i>	<i>NRR (unless risk factors present)</i>	<i>Every 3 years; begin at 45</i>	<i>Every 3 years</i>	<i>Every 3 years</i>
Immunizations—					
<i>Tetanus-diphtheria booster</i>	<i>Once between 14-16 years</i>	<i>Every 10 years</i>	<i>Every 10 years</i>	<i>Every 10 years</i>	<i>Every 10 years</i>
<i>Influenza vaccine</i>	<i>NRR</i>	<i>Depends on chronic diseases and occupational exposure</i>		<i>Recommended</i>	<i>Recommended</i>
<i>Pneumonia</i>	<i>Depends on chronic diseases and occupational exposure; ask your doctor</i>				<i>Recommended</i>
<i>Hepatitis B vaccine</i>	<i>Routinely given to newborns; if not given at this time, it should be given at adolescence.</i>				

NRR = not routinely recommended; women at increased risk of some conditions and diseases may be advised to have these tests. Pelvic exam is done to check for masses, cancer, and infections. Pap test is to check for signs of cervical cancer. Fecal occult blood test checks for blood in bowel movements. Screening Colonoscopy is the examination of the inner surface of the sigmoid section of the colon. TSH is thyroid stimulating hormone; test measures thyroid activity. **Note: These are only general recommendations – check with your doctor.**

Simple Screening Exams You Can Do.

Here are some simple screening exams you can do at home.

- ✓ Do a monthly breast self-examination starting at age 20 (see pages 25-28).
- ✓ Check for blood in stool. Since small amounts of blood are often invisible, you may want to use a test kit. (Although some over-the-counter fecal occult blood test kits are available, they typically are not as accurate or as well standardized as those administered by your doctor [see the table of Recommended Routine Procedures, Tests, and Immunizations for women.]
- ✓ Examine the lymph nodes under your arms and in your groin and neck for lumps.
- ✓ Examine your mouth for sores that might indicate oral cancer.
- ✓ Examine your skin for any unusual changes. Any sore that does not heal or new lump needs to be checked by a doctor. (see page 32-33)

Periodic Dental Examinations.

You will also want to visit your dentist regularly throughout your life. How often you go to the dentist as an adult will depend on a number of factors, including your amount of tooth decay, your oral hygiene, and your lifestyle habits, such as whether you smoke and/or drink alcohol. Most people should visit the dentist at least twice a year.

