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Men's Health Fundamentals: A Guide to Preventive Wellness (Up to Age 65)

Building a strong foundation for men's health focuses on proactive disease prevention, early screening, and targeting the unique cardiovascular, metabolic, and physical health risks men face as they age. This guide outlines the essential health maintenance pillars for men from early adulthood up to age 65.

Preventive Clinical Screenings

Many chronic health conditions develop quietly without any obvious symptoms. Keeping up with these baseline screenings can catch issues early:

- **Cardiovascular Health (Blood Pressure & Cholesterol):** Blood Pressure: Check annually. If your readings are elevated, track them at home using a device from your [Home Diagnostic Kit List](#).
 - **Cholesterol (Lipid Panel):** Get a baseline check in your 20s, then repeat every 4 to 6 years if normal. Increase frequency to every 1 to 2 years after age 40.
 - **Type 2 Diabetes and Prediabetes:** Starting at age 35, get an A1C or fasting blood glucose test every 3 years if you are overweight or obese, or if you have a family history of diabetes.
 - **Colorectal Cancer Screening:** Recommended for all men starting at age 45 through age 75. Options include non-invasive annual stool tests (like FIT or Cologuard) or a colonoscopy every 10 years.
 - **Prostate Health Awareness:** Routine screening with a Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test is not a "one-size-fits-all" requirement. Starting at age 50 (or age 45 if you are African American or have a first-degree relative with prostate cancer), have a shared clinical decision-making conversation with your provider about the benefits and risks of PSA testing.
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Hormonal, Sexual, and Structural Health

Paying attention to physical changes throughout adulthood helps sustain high energy, sexual function, and metabolic health.

Metabolic Vitality and Testosterone

Testosterone levels naturally decline by about 1% per year after age 30. While a gradual drop is normal, a significant deficiency (Low-T) can cause unexplained fatigue, depression, low libido, and loss of muscle mass. If you experience these symptoms, a simple morning blood test can evaluate your total testosterone levels.

Sexual Health and Circulation

Erectile dysfunction (ED) affects millions of men and is highly treatable. Crucially, your provider views ED not just as a lifestyle issue, but as an early warning sign for cardiovascular health. Because the arteries supplying the pelvic region are smaller than those leading to the heart, a decline in erectile function can be the first physical indicator of restricted blood flow or high blood pressure.

Lifestyle Pillars for Longevity

Daily habits are your primary defense against hypertension, heart disease, and metabolic decline.

Cardiovascular-Focused Exercise: Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the United States. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity (like brisk walking, cycling, or swimming) each week to keep blood vessels flexible and manage stress.

Preserving Lean Muscle Mass: Incorporate strength or resistance training at least twice a week. Building and maintaining muscle mass directly improves insulin sensitivity, protects your joints from injury, and keeps your metabolic rate high as you age.

Mindful Nutritional Habits: Prioritize whole foods, lean proteins, and plenty of fiber while limiting red meat, highly processed foods, and excessive alcohol. Proper nutrition keeps blood pressure and systemic inflammation in check.

Medication Safety Checklist

As you manage everyday aches and pain, pay close attention to your over-the-counter choices:

- **Manage Pain Safely:** If you regularly use NSAIDs (like Ibuprofen or Advil) for muscle strains, joint pain, or headaches, always take them with food to protect your stomach lining. Review your [Pain Management Guide](#) to understand how these medications affect your kidneys and blood pressure.
 - **Avoid Ineffective Decongestants:** If you encounter sinus or cold symptoms, avoid oral products containing Phenylephrine, as clinical data has proven they are no more effective than a placebo. Refer to the guide on [Five Common Medications to Avoid](#) for better alternatives.
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Take Action: Your preventive health needs shift with every passing decade. Use your next annual physical or wellness exam to map out a personalized screening timeline that aligns directly with your current age, lifestyle habits, and family history.

The above information was reviewed and validated by David Campbell-O'Dell, DNP, APRN-IP, FNP-BC, FAANP