



Wellness guidelines for all ages

Live healthy, stay safe

Independence 

A message about your health

Thank you for choosing Independence Blue Cross(IBC).

Your health and wellness are important. That's why we provide you with these wellness guidelines to help you and your family stay healthy. The wellness guidelines are a summary of recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force and other nationally recognized sources. These recommendations have also been reviewed by some of our network health care providers.

We encourage you to take the time to review these guidelines. Use them as a starting point for conversations with your and your family's health care providers. Your health care provider may recommend alternatives to the information outlined in these wellness guidelines based on your specific needs and the history of health or illness in your family. Please log onto www.ibxpress.com for the most up-to-date wellness guidelines and for more resources on how to stay healthy.

We hope you will find the wellness guidelines both educational and useful in helping you and your family stay in the best of health.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'R. Snyder', with a large, sweeping flourish above the name.

Richard L. Snyder, M.D.
Senior Vice President
Chief Medical Officer

Wellness Guidelines

The Affordable Care Act and the Independence Blue Cross Member Wellness Guidelines

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) and The Health Care Education and Reconciliation Act (HCERA) of 2010 provide for free preventive health screenings for the average person according to the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources. For information on Preventive Health Screenings according to Health Care Reform, visit www.healthcare.gov/prevention/index.html.

The Independence Blue Cross Member Wellness Guidelines provide additional recommendations not included in the USPSTF guidelines for preventive health.

Please discuss your individual needs and the recommended wellness screenings with your health care provider. For coverage information and questions, please contact Customer Service at 1-800-ASK-BLUE. This booklet is not a statement of benefits. Please refer to your health benefits contract for complete details of terms, limitations, and exclusions of your health care coverage.

Tips to stay healthy and safe

- Adhere to a healthy diet and maintain a healthy weight.
- All women who are planning to or are capable of becoming pregnant should take 400 – 800 mcg of folic acid daily.
- Practice regular physical activity as recommended by your health care provider.
- Follow good oral hygiene, including tooth brushing with fluoride toothpaste, flossing daily, and regular dentist visits.
- Avoid illegal drug use, tobacco use, and excessive alcohol use.
- Adopt sensible sun protection/safety practices.
- Use appropriate protective/safety practices and gear when engaged in recreational activities.
- Practice regular use of seat belts, car seats, and air bags as appropriate.
- Store firearms, matches, medications, and toxic chemicals safely.
- Keep the number for poison control handy (1-800-222-1222).
- Properly install, test, and maintain smoke/carbon monoxide detectors.
- Use flame-retardant sleepwear for all children; maintain proper sleep environment/position for infants.
- Evaluate your home for risk of falls and other injuries, especially if there are young children and/or older individuals in the home.
- Keep your hot water heater at a temperature less than 120 degrees.

For pregnant members:

Please call 1-800-598-BABY (2229) to enroll in our Baby BluePrints program and to find out how to get more information on screenings specific to pregnancy.

As soon as you think you are pregnant, schedule your first prenatal appointment. An initial exam should be done within the first three months of pregnancy with follow-up examinations as recommended by your health care provider.

Recommendations*

Birth — 17 years

	Birth – up to 3 years	3 - 11 years	12 - 17 years
Well check-ups/ physical exams	<p>The first visit is usually 3-5 days after hospital discharge. Well visits are then scheduled by 1 month, then 2,4,6,9,12,15,18,24, and 30 months.</p> <p>Well visits: Includes length/height, weight, body mass index (BMI) ages 18 months and older, obesity screening starting at 24 months; assessment of nutrition and eating habits, developmental milestones, behavior, and parental concerns; age-appropriate screenings for hearing, lead, hematocrit or hemoglobin, dental care, and other screenings if at risk (blood pressure, vision, genetic or hereditary diseases).</p>	<p>Annually. Includes height, weight, BMI, obesity screening; assessment of nutrition and eating habits, dental care, developmental milestones, behavior, and parental concerns; age-appropriate screenings for hearing, vision, bone and muscle disorders (such as scoliosis, a curvature of the spine), and onset of puberty.</p> <p>Depending on the age of your child, this visit may also include assessment and counseling on bullying, physical violence, self esteem, safety (swimming, car/bike/skateboards/rollerblades, guns), and other risk factors in the home or school environment.</p>	<p>Annually. Includes height, weight, BMI, obesity screening; assessment of nutrition and eating habits, dental care, developmental milestones, behavior, and parental concerns; age appropriate screenings for hearing, vision, bone and muscle disorders (such as scoliosis, a curvature of the spine), and puberty and adolescent physical development.</p> <p>Depending on the age of your child, this visit may also include assessment and counseling on bullying, physical violence, self esteem, safety (swimming, car/bike/skateboards/rollerblades, guns), drugs and alcohol, smoking, and other risk factors in the home or school environment.</p>
Immunizations	<p>Check with your health care provider that all immunizations are up to date. For immunization schedules visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html*</p>		
Diabetes screening	<p>Not recommended for this age group.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Risk factors include a family history of diabetes in siblings, parents, and first degree relatives; maternal gestational diabetes during the pregnancy of the child; high blood pressure; abnormal cholesterol test results; race/ ethnic background; polycystic ovarian syndrome; and acanthosis nigricans (a skin condition associated with diabetes).</p>	<p>Screening at age 10 or start of puberty for overweight youths (BMI is in 85th percentile or higher for age) who also have two additional risk factors.</p>	<p>Every three years if at risk.</p>
Cholesterol screening (fasting)	<p>If at risk, two screenings between ages 2-8.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Your child’s health care provider will discuss risk factors and determine screening frequency. Risk factors include a family history of early coronary heart disease or parental history of high cholesterol, diabetes, high blood pressure, obesity, or smoking. Screenings include total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein [LDL], high-density lipoprotein [HDL], and triglycerides.</p>	<p>If at risk, two screenings between ages 2-8, otherwise one screening between ages 9-11.</p>	<p>If at risk, two screenings between ages 12-16, otherwise one screening between ages 17-21.</p>
Cervical cancer screening (females)	<p>Not nationally recommended for these age groups.</p>		
Sexually transmitted disease screening	<p>Not nationally recommended for this age group.</p>	<p>Discuss prevention and screening as appropriate.</p>	<p>Discuss prevention and screening as appropriate. Females ages 16 - 24 who are sexually active should be screened for Chlamydia infection.</p>
HIV screening	<p>Not nationally recommended for this age group.</p>	<p>Discuss prevention and screening as appropriate.</p>	<p>Discuss prevention and screening as appropriate. Adolescents ages 15 and older should be screened.</p>
Depression/ suicide risk	<p>Discuss with your child’s health care provider.</p> <p><i>Note:</i> Risk factors for depression include family or personal history of depression or substance abuse, recent loss, chronic medical illness, major life changes, traumatic events, and domestic abuse/ violence. Females of childbearing age are also at risk for postpartum depression.</p>		

Recommendations*

18 years and older

	18 - 39 years	40 and older
Well check-ups/ physical exams	<p>Annually ages 18 - 21, then every two years.</p> <p>Includes height, weight, BMI, blood pressure, obesity screening; assessment of nutrition and eating habits, physical activity and endurance; other age related or condition related screenings or assessments (such as vision, circulation, and foot care).</p> <p>This visit may also include assessment and counseling on physical and domestic violence, drug and alcohol use, smoking, and other risk factors in the home or work environment.</p>	<p>Every two years to age 65, then annually.</p> <p>Includes height, weight, BMI, blood pressure, obesity screening; assessment of nutrition and eating habits, physical activity and endurance; other age related or condition related screenings or assessments (such as vision, circulation, and foot care).</p> <p>This visit may also include assessment and counseling on physical and domestic violence, drug and alcohol use, smoking, safety (car/fall), and other risk factors in the home or work environment.</p>
Immunizations	<p>Check with your health care provider that all immunizations are up to date. For immunization schedules visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html†</p>	
Diabetes screening	<p>Discuss risk factors for early screening with your health care provider. If you are at risk, every three years or as recommended by your health care provider.</p>	<p>For ages 40-44, discuss risk factors for early screening with your health care provider. Screening as recommended by your health care provider, and every three years beginning at age 45.</p>
	<p><i>Note:</i> Risk factors include a family history of diabetes in first degree relatives, gestational diabetes, high blood pressure, abnormal cholesterol test results, race/ ethnic background, polycystic ovarian syndrome, and acanthosis nigricans (a skin condition associated with diabetes).</p>	
Cholesterol screening (fasting)	<p>One screening between ages 17-21, then every five years.</p>	<p>Every five years.</p>
	<p>Screenings include total cholesterol, low-density lipoprotein [LDL], high-density lipoprotein [HDL], and triglycerides.</p>	
Colorectal cancer screening	<p>Discuss screening with your health care provider if you have a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, or if you have a history of inflammatory bowel disease.</p>	<p>Discuss early screening with your health care provider if you have a family history of colorectal cancer or polyps, or if you have a history of inflammatory bowel disease.</p> <p>Starting at age 50. Frequency dependent upon screening provided. Discuss with your health care provider which screening would be best for you, options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• colonoscopy• flexible sigmoidoscopy• fecal occult blood test <p>Once you reach age 75, discuss with your health care provider when to stop colorectal cancer screening.</p>

* Your health care provider may suggest alternative tests/screenings to those listed. Wellness guidelines are constantly changing, and these guidelines were current at the time of publishing.

† If you do not have Internet access, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) to request a copy of the immunization schedules. You can also obtain a copy of immunization schedules from your health care provider.

Recommendations*

18 years and older

	18 - 39 years	40 and older
Prostate cancer screening (males)	Not nationally recommended for this age group.	Discuss the potential benefits and limitations with your health care provider. Discuss screening at age 40 or 45 if you have a family history of prostate cancer, or African American; otherwise, this discussion usually is done at age 50. Men age 75 and older should discuss with their health care provider when to stop prostate cancer screening.
Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) screening	Not nationally recommended for this age group.	Once for men ages 65 or older, or women age 65 or older with a family history of AAA or who have smoked. For men with a family history of AAA, screening at age 55 is appropriate.
Breast cancer screening (females)	Clinical breast exam every three years. If you have a family history of breast cancer, discuss mammogram screening and frequency with your health care provider.	Annual mammogram and clinical breast exam. Women with risk factors or history of breast cancer should discuss frequency of screening with with your health care provider.
Cervical cancer screening (Pap test)	Ages 21-29: Pap test without Human Papillomavirus (HPV) DNA testing age 21 and then every three years. Ages 30-39: Pap test plus HPV test every five years or Pap test every three years. Women with certain risk factors may require more frequent Pap tests. <i>Note:</i> Women who have had a hysterectomy should discuss continued pelvic exams and cervical cancer screening with their health care provider.	Ages 40-65: Pap test plus HPV test every five years or Pap test every three years. Women with certain risk factors may require more frequent Pap tests. Women older than age 65 should discuss with their health care provider when to stop pelvic exams and cervical cancer screening. <i>Note:</i> Women who have had a hysterectomy should discuss continued pelvic exams and cervical cancer screening with their health care provider.
Osteoporosis screening	Not nationally recommended for this age group.	Females: begin screening at age 65. Post menopausal women should discuss risk factors with their health care provider, with bone mineral density (BMD) testing if the risk for osteoporosis is equal to that of a 65 year old female. Males: starting at age 70, discuss risk factors and osteoporosis screening with your health care provider.
Sexually transmitted disease screening	Discuss screening and prevention with your health care provider. Females ages 16 - 24 who are sexually active should be screened for Chlamydia infection.	Discuss prevention and screening with your health care provider.
HIV screening		Discuss prevention and screening with your health care provider. Adolescents and adults ages 15 to 65 years should be screened.
Depression/ suicide risk		Discuss with your health care provider. <i>Note:</i> Risk factors for depression include family or personal history of depression or substance abuse, recent loss, chronic medical illness, major life changes, traumatic events, and domestic abuse/ violence. Females of childbearing age are also at risk for postpartum depression.

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Topics to discuss with your health care provider

We suggest the following:

- Discuss any individual or family health history that may affect your current health status.
- Review any screening results such as blood pressure, height, weight, body mass index (BMI), and cholesterol.
- Review taking medication safely and correctly; routinely review usage/dosage of medications, including over-the-counter and oral supplements such as herbals, vitamins, and minerals.
- Check that all age-appropriate immunizations are up to date, including flu, pneumococcal, and tetanus vaccinations (see specific immunization schedules: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html, and www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html[†]).
- Discuss feelings of sadness and/or depression.
- Review your risk of violence, signs of abuse, and risk of neglect.
- Review sleeping concerns and ways to reduce stress.
- Review dental health for infants and children, including how to prevent baby bottle tooth decay and the need for fluoride supplements.
- If sexually active, discuss birth control options, family planning, and ways to prevent sexually transmitted diseases.
- For men ages 45 to 79 and women ages 55 to 79, review if aspirin is recommended for the prevention of heart disease.
- Review need for diabetes, vision, glaucoma, and bone density screenings.
- Females: Ask about the benefits and limitations of breast self-exam.
- Females: Ask about managing menopausal signs and symptoms and available treatment options.

Make the most of each visit with your or your family's health care provider. Bring a list of topics to discuss.

Resources

Information in this booklet is based on the following sources:

- Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules
- American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org
- American Cancer Society, www.cancer.org
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, www.acog.org
- American College of Physicians, www.acponline.org
- American Diabetes Association, www.diabetes.org
- American Heart Association, www.heart.org
- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, www.nhlbi.nih.gov
- National Institutes of Health, www.nih.gov
- National Osteoporosis Foundation, www.nof.org
- Society for Vascular Surgery, www.vascularweb.org
- Specialty Consultant Review
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Sciences, www.Healthcare.gov
- U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/recommendations.htm

[†] Please be advised that once you go to a website not maintained by Independence Blue Cross (IBC), you will be at websites maintained by organizations that IBC does not control. The websites are to be used as a reference for informational purposes only and are not intended to replace the care and advice of medical professionals. IBC is not responsible for the content or for validating the content nor is it responsible for any changes or updates made. Once you link to a website not maintained by IBC, you are subject to the terms and conditions of that website, including, but not limited to, its privacy policy.



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