

# STAYWELL

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## HEALTH SCREENINGS

The IPSC annual Health Fair in September offers the opportunity to receive several informative health screenings, which are valuable in terms of understanding health status and being aware of any risk factors that may exist.

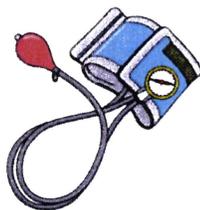
Health screenings are given routinely as a preventative measure. There are several recommended tests that can be conducted, depending on age and gender. These include:

- 📍 Blood Pressure
- 📍 Blood Lipids/Cholesterol
- 📍 Dental Exams
- 📍 Vision and Hearing Exams
- 📍 Weight/Body Composition
- 📍 Cancer (breast, colon, prostate, etc.)
- 📍 Diabetes

Regular testing can help reduce the risk of certain illnesses and make the individual aware of possible health issues. These tests can be informative as to potential health risks. Early detection increases the chance of a better prognosis and/or recovery with treatment.

## BLOOD PRESSURE

Blood pressure measures the rate of blood flow through the arteries. The top number, or systolic blood pressure, measures the rate at which blood circulates through the arteries. The bottom number, or diastolic blood pressure, measures the rate of circulation between heart beats. A normal reading should be lower than 120/80. A person with hypertension will have abnormally high blood pressure, even while at rest. Hypertension can be symptom free, yet result in a heart attack or stroke. This is why hypertension is



known as the silent killer. Having blood pressure checked on a regular basis can help save lives.

## DIABETES

Diabetes is marked by high levels of sugar in the blood. Several things can cause diabetes, but all of these can be reversed with lifestyle changes. Early detection, healthy food choices, and moderate exercise can help prevent the disease from worsening. Some symptoms of type 2 diabetes include blurry vision, excessive thirst, fatigue, frequent urination, and increased appetite. Have your blood sugar checked at the upcoming Health Fair or by a doctor to find out your risk level.



IPSC offers two different types of diabetic screenings. One is a finger prick and the other is done with a blood draw and is tested as part of the metabolic panel. While both are good, the best is the metabolic panel. You may do both or just one of them.

## CHOLESTEROL

Those who know their cholesterol levels, and have control over it, will be healthier in their later years. A normal level is below 200, while a level above 240 is considered high. Cholesterol levels between 200 and 240 are borderline high. Ideally, you want to see LDL levels, or "bad" cholesterol, below 130, and HDL levels, or "good" cholesterol, above 40 (60 is ideal). Triglycerides should be less than 150.

One thing to consider though, more importantly than individual scores is the ratio between scores which indicates an individual's overall cardiovascular risk. This is calculated by dividing the total cholesterol by HDL. Higher HDL's lower risk, even if total cholesterol is high. An individual's total blood cholesterol score

should be considered in context with the other known risk factors.

### COMPREHENSIVE METABOLIC PANEL

A comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP) is a series of blood tests looking for a multitude of chemistry functions in the body, how it produces and uses energy (metabolism), insulin function, and muscle and nerve reactions. The CMP looks at:

- How your kidneys are working
- How your liver is working
- Your blood sugar (glucose)
- Your electrolyte levels
- How much protein is in your blood
- Calcium levels

### PROSTATE SPECIFIC ANTIGEN TEST

The prostate-specific antigen test (PSA) is the most misunderstood screening for men and sometimes gets a bad rap. A (PSA) test measures the level of PSA in a man's blood. PSA is a protein produced by the cells of a prostate, a small gland just underneath the bladder. PSA circulates through the entire body at low levels at all times.



A PSA test is sensitive and can detect higher-than-average levels of PSA. This is where the problem comes in. Just because an individual has an elevated level of PSA does not mean he has cancer. High levels of PSA may be associated with prostate cancer, but may also indicate something noncancerous like an infection.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in the United States, other than non-melanoma skin cancer. A PSA test alone doesn't provide enough information for a doctor to make a diagnosis. However, a doctor can take the results of a PSA test into consideration when trying to decide whether the symptoms and test results are due to cancer or another condition.

IPSC recommends this test for all male employees and has been able to help individuals seek appropriate treatment for cancer and other conditions, even before symptoms appear. Getting a baseline test before the recommended age can be a good start for catching something early.

### OSTEOPOROSIS

Bone loss is another problem that many experience as they age. Women are most commonly affected by this disease, but prevalence among men continues to increase. Many people are unaware that they are suffering from bone loss until they break a bone. Osteoporosis can be serious and life threatening. It is characterized by thinning bone tissue and a loss of bone density. Many people have experienced advanced bone loss by living a sedentary lifestyle. Ask your doctor if you should consider a bone density screening. Osteoporosis is preventable.

### CANCER

Regular screening and self-examination for certain cancers may not prevent cancer, but it can increase the chances of discovering cancer early—when treatment is more likely to be successful. Women should have yearly breast exams starting between the ages of 40 and 50, and cervical exams every two years. Men should talk with their doctor about the benefits of prostate exams and begin regular examinations by age 50. Both men and women should be screened for colon and rectal cancer after the age of 50. Those with a family history of colon and rectal cancer should begin testing for it at age 40.

Skin cancer is the most common cancer. The American Cancer Society reports that it accounts for about half of all cancers diagnosed in the United States. Skin cancer, if caught early, is very treatable. The most serious form is melanoma, but it can be curable if detected early. Monthly screenings are ways to monitor and catch problems early and lead to early treatment. Regular self-checks can create awareness and if changes in appearance of moles, lesions or other skin abnormalities are detected seek an early medical consultation.

### CONCLUSION

Participate in the Health Fair and discuss your results and other age-related screenings with your doctor. Understanding risks and making simple lifestyle changes can have a big impact on your health and well-being.

