

HEALTHY PRACTICES FOR WOMEN

In addition to your regular OB/GYN visit, please review this list of healthy practices. Modifying your daily activities accordingly may improve your overall health and well-being. If you have any questions regarding these recommendations, please feel free to discuss them with us.

DIET AND EXERCISE

- Limit fat and cholesterol. Emphasize fruits and vegetables.
- 8 glasses of water daily will improve your health in many ways.
- 30 grams of daily fiber intake by diet and supplements improves weight management, reduces constipation, and may decrease the risk for colon cancer.
- Exercise for 30 minutes at least five times a week. Combine aerobics & weight training if possible.
- Stay at a healthy weight. Balance your caloric intake with calories burned. We will be happy to review your ideal Body Mass Index with you.
- Obesity increases risk of diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high cholesterol, hypertension, sleep apnea, osteoarthritis, and some cancers such as breast and colon.

SEXUAL BEHAVIOR:

- You should not feel pressured to engage in sexual behavior. Please tell us if you are being abused.
- Be sure to use contraception if pregnancy is not desired.
- Emergency contraception is available without a prescription. If you need it and have difficulty getting it at the drug store, please call the office.
- Condoms help prevent sexually transmitted diseases.
- Consider HIV testing if you have:
 - ❖ Had more than one sexual partner.
 - ❖ Had any sexually transmitted diseases.
 - ❖ Used intravenous drugs.
 - ❖ A sexual partner with these risk factors.
 - ❖ A sexual partner who has had male homosexual exposure.
 - ❖ Received a blood transfusion during 1978-1985.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

- Do not smoke. Ask us for assistance in quitting.
- Avoid alcohol use when driving, boating, swimming, or operating machinery.
- A safe intake of alcohol for women is considered 1 drink or less each day.
- Recreational drug use (marijuana, cocaine, etc) is dangerous and habit-forming.

OSTEOPOROSIS PREVENTION

- Osteoporosis is preventable and healthy habits are important at all ages: from building the bones before age 30, to limiting bone loss after menopause. You may not have any symptoms until you break a bone!
- Consume 3-4 servings of calcium rich foods daily (milk, yogurt, cheese, green leafy vegetables) or use calcium supplementation for adequate calcium intake of 1000-1200mg depending on your age and hormone status. Vitamin D intake of 600-800 IU per day is necessary for calcium absorption.
- Engage in regular weight-bearing or resistance exercise.
- We recommend bone density screening (DXA) in all women over 65 and in younger women with risk factors.
 - ❖ Risk include: menopause, loss of height, tobacco, thyroid problems, history of an eating disorder or chronic steroid use.
- DXA testing is quick and painless. This scan may help determine if additional lifestyle changes or medication is necessary to prevent fractures.

BREAST HEALTH:

- A mammogram should be done every year beginning at the age of 40, or earlier for those with a strong family history of premenopausal breast cancer. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends every year screening beginning at age 40.

BLADDER PROBLEMS:

- Urinary incontinence is a major source of embarrassment for many women. It is a major reason for nursing home admissions and often results in isolations and depression.

COLON CANCER SURVEILLANCE:

- Screening is recommended at age 50 with a colonoscopy every ten years. Earlier or more frequent testing may be advised based on family history and other risk factors.

HEPATITIS C SCREENING:

- Screening is recommended if you were born between 1945-1965
- Screening is also recommended for those who have had a blood transfusion before 1992, have used IV drugs, or have had a sexual partner who has used IV drugs.

INJURY PREVENTION:

- Do not text and drive. It is more dangerous than drunk driving.
- Seat belts should be worn at all times, even during short trips “around the block.”
- Wear a helmet when using bicycles, motorcycles, roller blades, ATVs, or skiing.
- Place smoke detectors in your house and replace the batteries twice a year.
- Store guns and firearms unloaded, in a locked area. Trigger locks should also be used.
- Consider CPR training for household members. New parents should learn infant CPR.
- Remove loose rugs and clutter and keep up on your eye glass prescriptions to prevent falls and broken bones.
- If you are currently in a relationship where you feel threatened or unsafe, please discuss your situation with us.

IMMUNIZATIONS:

- Influenza vaccine is advised yearly.
- A pertussis or “whooping cough”, vaccine is recommended once as an adult, as well as during every pregnancy. It is given in combination with Tetanus/diphtheria (Tdap).
- A tetanus/diphtheria (Td) booster shot is otherwise recommended every 10 years.
- The HPV vaccine series is recommended ages 9-26. The vaccine protects against some of the high-risk human papillomaviruses that cause cervical cancer. We currently offer this vaccine for our patients.
- A Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine is indicated for non-pregnant women born after 1956 unless there is a documentation of previous immunization or proof of immunity.
- Adults susceptible to varicella (never had chicken pox or childhood vaccine) should be vaccinated.
- A zoster vaccination is recommended once after the age of 60 (to prevent shingles).
- Pneumococcal pneumonia vaccine is indicated once for women age 65 and older,
- Hepatitis A and/ or B vaccines are recommended for high-risk individuals.

DENTAL HEALTH:

- Schedule regular visits to the dentist.
- Floss and brush with fluoride toothpaste daily.

HEALTH CARE PROXY:

- All adults should have a health care proxy (a legal document that designates another person to make health care decisions for you in case you were unable) and consider a living will.