



# Helping Men Lead Healthier Lives

## You may have more influence than you think

Millions of women are concerned about the health of the men in their lives. They find it is not always easy to constructively encourage good health. But chances are you already make health care decisions for your family.

Typically, women determine the family diet by preparing meals and deciding which items to purchase at the grocery store. And, they have the opportunity to suggest positive leisure activities, including exercise. By learning constructive ways to promote good health, you can help anyone in your life who won't or can't take care of their own health

## Good health for your men can translate to good health for your family

There are many reasons to be concerned with the health of the men you care about. The most important is the love and caring you feel for them. There are also practical reasons to become involved in their health. A prolonged illness to a man important to you could cause financial stress, or a sickness could take precedence over your parenting duties. Plus, because you care, an illness can cause you undue stress, which in turn could lower your own defenses for fighting off sickness.

## Cornerstones of good health for men

- 1. Healthy practices:** These include proper diet, regular exercise, safety measures, stopping the use of tobacco and illegal drugs, and using alcohol in moderation.
- 2. Routine Prevention:** Set routine doctor visits and know when and which test to have.
- 3. Attention to symptoms:** Be aware of health problems and act on them.
- 4. Follow through:** After recognizing and beginning treatment for a health problem, follow through with the treatment plan until it's completed

# Better health

## How you can help the men in your life

First and foremost, be a great role model. Make good health habits a part of your daily routine, and they will spread to the rest of the family. Try to influence, not control. Be a partner when discussing health concerns. Remember the opportunities of a teachable moment. When a health question is put forward, have current, reliable information available. And, persuade him to search for his own information. The idea is to empower him to take an interest in his own health.

### Tips to start with

- Have healthy food and snacks in the house.
- Watch portion size; try using smaller plates.
- Teach your family to read food labels.
- Reduce the number of calories your family gets from saturated and trans fats.
- Use more whole grains, fruits and vegetables.
- Build regular exercise into your family's routine. As a family, take a walk after dinner.
- Have health information readily available. Pick up a free copy of *Health Wise Handbook* and other educational materials at our Health Education Department.
- Make regular visits to a health care provider a normal part of life.
- Know what the recommended health screenings and vaccines are for every member of your family.
- Watch for symptoms of possible health problems — weight gain, easily tired, shortness of breath, frequent urination — and act on them.
- Know signs of depression: increased irritability, appetite change, sleep disturbance, withdrawal and lack of joy.
- Attend doctor's visits when possible, and if a diagnosis is made, familiarize yourself with recommended treatment and track changes in health (good and bad).

Age	20	30	40	50
<b>Cholesterol</b>			Get tested every 5 years	
<b>Colorectal Cancer</b>			Have a flexible sigmoidoscopy every 10 years and/or a fecal occult blood test every 1 to 2 years.	
<b>Diabetes</b>			Get tested every 5 years	
<b>Hypertension</b>	Have your blood pressure checked every 1 – 2 years. Your goal is 120/80 or lower			
<b>Immunizations</b>	Get an annual flu shot starting at age 50. Get a tetanus diphtheria booster shot every 10 years. Get a pneumonia shot once after age 65.			
<b>Overweight</b>	Have your body mass index (BMI) calculated every 1 to 2 years.			
<b>Prostate Cancer</b>			Discuss the Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) test and rectal exam with your physician.	
<b>Testicular Cancer</b>	Adolescents, and men under age 35 with personal or family history of testicular cancer, cryptorchidism, and/or atrophic testes, should be instructed in testicular self-exam (TSE).			

**Pease note:** These recommendations are for generally healthy people. If you have an ongoing health problem, special health needs or risks, or if certain conditions run in your family, your prevention plan may be different.