

THE **M5** PROJECT

MEN'S PREVENTIVE HEALTH

# HELPING MEN HELP THEMSELVES



[M5project.com.au](http://M5project.com.au)

Your GP has an important role in providing preventive care. But what exactly does this mean for you?

First, your GP is not just there to treat you if you feel unwell, but also to prevent future health problems.

One way of doing this is for them to identify existing or potential things that may affect your health (known as 'risk factors'). Your GP may want to detect an illness in its early stages so that it can be treated more effectively. This could involve them giving you tests such as

checking your blood pressure.

Second, preventive care includes the provision of advice on a healthy lifestyle, eg. they may suggest cutting down on alcohol, exercising more, quitting smoking and/or eating healthier foods. This can have a big effect on your health.

Also, if you have a family history of, for example, heart disease or stroke, your GP may want to discuss this with you.

There are a range of regular health checks that are recommended at different ages in a man's life. This is a really

important part of preventive health – a bit like getting your car serviced BEFORE it breaks down!

These recommendations apply to men with an average risk of ill health. Some men will have a higher risk, and need to start tests at an earlier age, or be tested more often.

There are many factors that may mean you are at a higher risk. These include:

- being overweight
- family medical history
- your own medical history and existing illnesses

- lifestyle factors such as smoking, poor diet, high alcohol consumption, and lack of exercise

- your ethnic background
- social factors.

Your GP will advise you on what is best for you, based on your own circumstances.

Talk to your GP if you have any concerns.

Age	What should be done?	How often?*
All men	Assess lifestyle risk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• smoking</li> <li>• nutrition</li> <li>• alcohol</li> <li>• physical activity</li> </ul> Skin checks for high risk skin only	When possible Every 2 years Every 3–4 years Every 2 years When possible
From 18 years	Height and weight (body mass index) Waist circumference Blood pressure Depression assessment	Every 2 years Every 2 years Every 2 years (18–49 years) Every year (from 50 years) When possible
From 40 years	Risk of diabetes	Every 3 years
From 45 years	Cholesterol levels Stroke risk (if other risk factors) Risk assessment of heart attack or stroke ('absolute cardiovascular risk')	Every 5 years Every year Every 2 years
From 50 years	Urine protein levels Faecal occult blood test (FOBT) for bowel cancer screening Prostate cancer: discuss risks and benefits of testing with your GP Osteoporosis risk	Every year Every 2 years As required Every year
From 65 years	Vision and hearing Assess risk factors for falls	Every year Every year

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