

MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS

TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR WELL-BEING

June marks the annual celebration of Men's Health Awareness Month, a time to focus on the importance of men's health and well-being.

The Importance of Preventive Care

One critical component of men's health is engaging in preventive care. Regular check-ups and screenings can help identify potential health issues before they become more serious. The proactive approach allows for early intervention, which is crucial for successful treatment and better long-term outcomes.

During Men's Health Awareness Month, men are encouraged to schedule appointments with their primary care providers for routine screenings such as:

- Blood pressure checks
- Cholesterol tests
- Diabetes screenings
- Prostate Cancer screenings (for men over 50, or earlier if at high risk)

- Colorectal cancer screening (for men over 45, or earlier if at high risk)
- Depression screenings

Focusing on Mental Health

Mental health is a vital aspect of overall well-being, and it's essential to recognize its significance during Men's Health Awareness Month. Men may be less likely to discuss their mental health concerns or seek help, but it's crucial to address these issues to ensure a healthier, happier life. If you are experiencing symptoms of depression, anxiety, stress, or other mental challenges, don't hesitate to reach out to professional support.

Staying Active and Maintaining a Healthy Weight

A sedentary lifestyle and obesity can contribute to various health issues, such as heart disease, diabetes, and certain cancers. Men's Health Awareness Month is a perfect opportunity to recommit to an active lifestyle and work toward achieving a healthy weight.

Incorporate regular physical activity into your daily routine, aiming for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity aerobic exercise per week. Additionally, engage in strength training exercises at least two days per week, focusing on all major muscle groups.

To maintain a healthy weight, adopt a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. If you need guidance on creating a personalized nutrition plan, consult with a registered dietitian.

Prioritizing Sleep and Stress Management

Adequate sleep and effective stress management are essential components of men's health. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night and establish a consistent bedtime routine to promote better sleep hygiene. Moreover, identify healthy coping mechanisms for stress, such as meditation, deep breathing exercises, or engaging in hobbies that bring you joy.

Men's Health Awareness Month serves as a reminder for all men to prioritize their well-being and take proactive steps toward a healthier future.

MEN'S HEALTH MONTH: 7 TIPS TO TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR WELL-BEING NOW (AND EVERY DAY!)

PRIORITIZE PREVENTIVE CARE, HEALTHY HABITS, AND MENTAL WELLNESS FOR A STRONGER YOU DURING MEN'S HEALTH MONTH

June is Men's Health Month, a dedicated time to shine a spotlight on the importance of prioritizing the well-being of men. While every month should be about taking care of yourself, this focused period serves as a powerful reminder to men of all ages to step up, check in, and take charge of your health.

Why Men's Health Matters:

The reality is concerning statistics show men tend to lag behind women in preventive healthcare. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, men are 41% more likely to die prematurely (before age 65) compared to women. This gap is partly due to fewer doctor visits and a tendency to delay screening. Men are also likely to engage in risky behaviors like smoking and excessive alcohol consumption, further impacting their health outcomes.

Taking Action: Simple Steps for Big Wins

Men's Health Month is a springboard, but prioritizing your health is a lifelong commitment. Here are some actionable tips to get you started, along with some additional details on the benefits:

➤ **SCHEDULE REGULAR CHECKUPS:**

Think of it as a yearly maintenance plan for your body. Talk openly with your doctor about your health history, concerns, and lifestyle habits. Preventive care for men is crucial for early detection and treatment of potential health issues. Regular checkups can significantly reduce a man's risk of developing chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.

➤ **KNOW YOUR NUMBERS:**

Blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels are crucial health indicators. Regular screenings help you and your doctor identify potential health risks early on. High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease, stroke, and kidney disease. Early detection and treatment can significantly improve health outcomes.

➤ **EMBRACE PREVENTATIVE SCREENING:**

Don't shy away from screenings for prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, and other age-appropriate checks. Early detection often leads to better treatment outcomes. According to the American Cancer Society, recent study suggests regular prostate cancer screenings can significantly reduce a man's risk of dying from the disease. Early

detection of colorectal cancer can also greatly improve the chances of successful treatment.

➤ **MOVE YOUR BODY:**

Physical activity isn't just about aesthetics. Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous activity each week. This improves overall health, boost energy levels, and can even reduce stress. Exercise strengthens your heart and lungs, helps manage weight, improves your mood, and can significantly reduce the risk of depression in men.

➤ **FUEL UP RIGHT:**

Diet plays a critical role in maintaining a healthy weight and reducing your risk of chronic diseases. Focus on whole foods, fruits, vegetables, and lean protein sources. Don't forget to stay hydrated. A healthy diet provides your body with the essential nutrients it needs to function optimally. Eating a balanced diet can help you maintain a healthy weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and certain cancers.

➤ **PRIORITIZE MENTAL WELLBEING:**

Men are less likely to seek help for mental health concerns. Talking to a doctor or therapist is a sign of strength, not weakness. Taking care of your mental health for men is just as important as your physical health. A recent study published in JAMA Psychiatry found that men with untreated depression were more likely to develop heart disease. Taking care of your mental health can improve your overall well-being, relationships, and work performance.

➤ **BUILD A SUPPORT SYSTEM:**

Surround yourself with positive influences who encourage healthy habits. Talk openly with friends, family, and even connect with men's health support groups—you are not alone. Having a strong support system can provide you with encouragement, motivation, and accountability on your health journey.

Men this is your call to action! Men's Health Month is a great time to get started, but remember, taking charge of your well-being is an ongoing journey. By prioritizing these simple steps, you can invest in a healthier, happier future for yourself and those you love. Be a role model for the younger generation. Talk openly about your own health journey and encourage them to prioritize healthy habits from a young age.

Men's health: Checkups, screenings key



Historically, men have been hesitant to seek medical attention when something seems wrong with their health. Also, men aren't as likely as women to have preventive screenings and checkups with their healthcare team. This is a problem because early detection of a medical issue is the best way to treat and manage it effectively.

Why should you reconsider your reservations about seeing a healthcare professional? Delaying or avoiding a checkup or screening could lead to a treatable situation turning deadly.

While you should get some screenings, such as HIV and hepatitis C, you should have other screenings for certain conditions and cancers regularly.

Vaccines also are essential to prevent infectious diseases. Vaccinations for men are administered at different intervals throughout adulthood.

Regular physical exams

Males older than 50 should have a yearly physical exam, and those younger than 50 should have a physical exam every three to five years. Even if you're

Feeling healthy, a regular checkup with your healthcare team is an excellent way to validate your health or identify a problem in its early stages.

Another thing to think about: Health isn't only physical. [Talk to your healthcare team](#) about your mental and emotional health. If you're struggling in those areas, effective help is available.

Screening can identify specific conditions and cancers, including:

Abdominal aortic aneurysm

For men between 65 and 75 who have smoked more than 100 cigarettes in their lifetime, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends a one-time abdominal aortic aneurysm screening ultrasound. An abdominal aortic aneurysm is an enlarged area in the lower part of the aorta, the major blood vessel that supplies blood to the body. Because the aorta is the body's main supplier of blood, a ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysm can cause life-threatening bleeding. Men over 60 with a family history of abdominal aortic aneurysm should consider repeat screening at regular intervals.

Colon cancer

Colon cancer screening should begin at age 45 or 10 years prior to an age at which an immediate relative was diagnosed with colon cancer. For example, get screened at age 36 if your mother was diagnosed at age 46. A colonoscopy is a traditional, effective procedure to identify colon cancer or precancerous polyps. A more recent noninvasive option available is a [take-home test to screen for colon cancer](#).

Talk to your healthcare professional about which option is best for you.

Diabetes

If you're older than 45 or have a body mass index above 25, no matter your age, the American Diabetes Association recommends that you be screened for diabetes. [Type 2 diabetes](#) and prediabetes symptoms can happen slowly and may not be noticeable, so staying aware of your blood sugar levels and risk of developing diabetes is essential.

High blood pressure

A blood pressure reading is a good indication to many aspects of your health. High blood pressure can lead to many physical problems, especially those associated with the heart.

You should have your blood pressure checked at least every two years. However, talk to your healthcare professional about having it checked more frequently if you have [high blood pressure](#) or are at risk of developing high blood pressure.

High cholesterol

Like high blood pressure, high cholesterol may pose serious risks to your health and well-being. Starting at age 18, men at average risk for heart disease should have a cholesterol screening every five years. If you have a family history of high cholesterol or heart attacks, smoke, eat a poor diet, are overweight, have diabetes, are physically inactive or older than 45, you may need more frequent testing.

Lung cancer

The U.S. Preventative Services Task Force recommends annual screening for lung cancer with a low-dose CT for adults ages 50 to 80 who have a 20-pack-per-year smoking history, currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years. Screening can be stopped when a person has not smoked for 15 years or develops a health problem that substantially limits life expectancy.

Prostate cancer

Many organizations advise men to be screened for prostate cancer starting at age 50. However, the subject is somewhat controversial, so the best course of action is to discuss what's best for you with your healthcare team.

Do yourself and your family a favor by protecting your health with regular checkups and screenings.

[Mohammed Solaiman, M.D.](#), is a physician in Family Medicine in Mankato, Minnesota.



Men's Mental Health



There is often a strong focus on men's physical health — fitness, annual checkups, and heart health — but mental well-being is equally as important because mental health is health!

Just as the body needs care and attention, so does emotional and mental well-being. Yet, there is a silent crisis in men's mental health — one that too often goes unnoticed or unspoken. Tragically, men are nearly four times more likely to die by suicide than women*, underscoring the urgent need to break this silence and seek support.

In 2023, among U.S. men* age 18 and older:

19% experienced a mental illness

21.4% dealt with a substance use disorder

4.3% faced a serious mental illness

45.9% with a mental illness received treatment in the past year

4.5% had serious thoughts of suicide in the past year

*Data from SAMHSA and NIMH, and reflects individuals assigned male sex at birth.

These numbers serve as a powerful reminder: no one struggling with mental health is alone. Talking about mental health is not a sign of weakness. Real strength lies in facing pain, not ignoring it.

Small steps can lead to significant change, changes that we all can lead together. Let's build a culture where men feel safe speaking up and reaching out. As a community, we can break the stigma, support one another, and ensure no one struggles in silence.

How Can You Help?



Start a conversation

A simple conversation can spark transformation. Whether a father, brother, uncle, friend, or colleague, check in with the men in your life.



Share resources

Help normalize seeking help by sharing information about mental health support services, hotlines, and local organizations. Let others know support is available — and that it works.

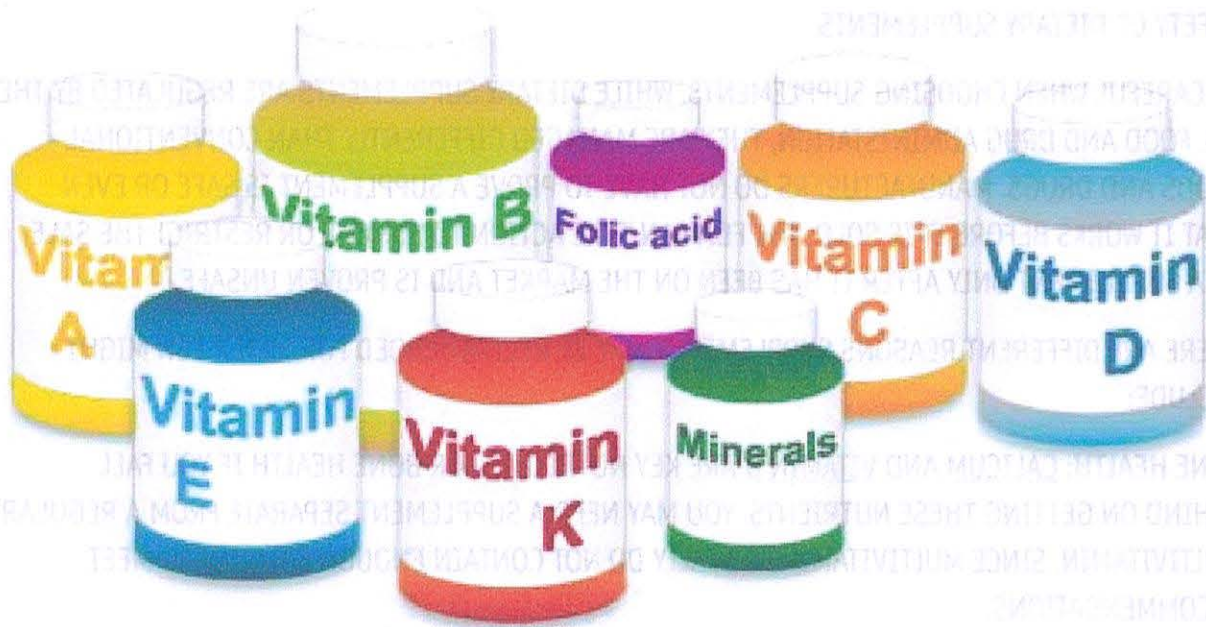


Create safe spaces

Encourage environments — at home, work, school, the barbershop, gym, church, or in the community — where men feel comfortable opening up without judgment. Sometimes, just knowing it's OK to talk makes all the difference.

Visit [NAMI.org/mensmentalhealth](https://www.nami.org/mensmentalhealth) to learn how you or someone you know can recognize the signs, find support, and take the first steps toward mental wellness.





SUPPLEMENTS AND MEN'S HEALTH

THERE ARE A VARIETY OF SUPPLEMENTS AVAILABLE MANY MARKETED SPECIFICALLY TO MEN. WITH ALL THE FLASHY PACKAGING AND EXCITING HEALTH CLAIMS, IT CAN BE TEMPTING TO REACH FOR THE LATEST PRODUCTS.

DESPITE ALL THE ADVERTISING, FOOD SHOULD BE YOUR FIRST SOURCE OF NUTRIENTS.

FOLLOWING A BALANCED EATING PATTERN IS THE BEST WAY TO GET THE NUTRIENTS YOUR BODY NEEDS. INCLUDING PROTEIN, VITAMINS, AND MINERALS. YOU CAN GET THESE KEY NUTRIENTS FROM FRUITS, VEGETABLES, WHOLE GRAINS, LEAN PROTEIN FOODS, AND LOW-FAT OR FAT-FREE DAIRY PRODUCTS.

THESE SUPPLEMENTS MENTION THAT THEY BOOST ENERGY. BUT IF YOU ARE NOT FOLLOWING A BALANCED EATING PATTERN, GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP, OR PHYSICALLY ACTIVE ON A REGULAR BASIS, YOU MAY NOT HAVE GOOD ENERGY LEVELS. WHEN YOU ARE NOT GETTING ALL THE NUTRIENTS YOU NEED OR IN THE RECOMMENDED AMOUNTS, YOUR BODY ALSO MAY HAVE TROUBLE FENDING OFF ILLNESS, AND DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS MAY BE NECESSARY FOR AN ADDITIONAL NUTRIENT BOOST. BUT BEFORE TAKING A SUPPLEMENT, TALK WITH YOUR HEALTH CARE PROVIDER. IT'S IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE SAFETY AND USEFULNESS OF SUPPLEMENTS BEFORE STARTING A NEW ROUTINE.

SAFETY OF DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS

BE CAREFUL WHEN CHOOSING SUPPLEMENTS. WHILE DIETARY SUPPLEMENTS ARE REGULATED BY THE U.S. FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, THEY ARE MANAGED DIFFERENTLY THAN CONVENTIONAL FOODS AND DRUGS. MANUFACTURERS DO NOT HAVE TO PROVE A SUPPLEMENT IS SAFE OR EVEN THAT IT WORKS BEFORE IT IS SOLD. THE FDA CAN TAKE ACTION TO REMOVE OR RESTRICT THE SALE OF A SUPPLEMENT ONLY AFTER IT HAS BEEN ON THE MARKET AND IS PROVEN UNSAFE.

THERE ARE DIFFERENT REASONS SUPPLEMENTS MAY BE RECOMMENDED FOR MEN A FEW MIGHT INCLUDE:

BONE HEALTH: CALCIUM AND VITAMIN D ARE KEY NUTRIENTS FOR BONE HEALTH IF YOU FALL BEHIND ON GETTING THESE NUTRIENTS. YOU MAY NEED A SUPPLEMENT SEPARATE FROM A REGULAR MULTIVITAMIN, SINCE MULTIVITAMINS USUALLY DO NOT CONTAIN ENOUGH CALCIUM TO MEET RECOMMENDATIONS.

- MEN NEED 1,000 MILLIGRAMS OF CALCIUM A DAY. MEN OLDER THAN 70 NEED 1,200 MILLIGRAMS A DAY, AND TEENS NEED 1,300 MILLIGRAMS A DAY.
- MEN ALSO NEED 600 IU OF VITAMIN D EACH DAY. AFTER AGE 70, THIS INCREASES TO 800 IU OF VITAMIN D.

VEGETARIAN DIET: PEOPLE WHO FOLLOW A VEGETARIAN OR VEGAN EATING STYLE MAY NOT GET ADEQUATE AMOUNTS OF VITAMIN B 12, A NUTRIENT THAT SUPPORTS THE NERVOUS SYSTEM.

EYE HEALTH: CAROTENOIDS, SUCH AS LUTEIN AND ZEAXANTHIN, MAY PLAY A ROLE IN EYE HEALTH. FOCUS ON INCLUDING FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SUCH AS KALE, SPINACH, CARROTS, CANTALOUPE, SWEET POTATOES AND BROCCOLI INTO YOUR DAY.

FACTOR IN FORTIFIED FOODS

SUPPLEMENTS DON'T ONLY COME IN A BOTTLE MANY FOODS INCLUDING CEREALS, BREADS, PASTAS, ENERGY BARS, AND DRINKS ARE ENRICHED OR FORTIFIED WITH VITAMINS, MINERALS, HERBS AND AMINO ACIDS—THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF PROTEINS.

FOOD SHOULD BE FACTORED IN WHEN CONSIDERING A DIETARY SUPPLEMENT. CONSUMING TOO MUCH OF ONE NUTRIENT MAY POSE SERIOUS HEALTH THREATS. CONSULT A REGISTERED DIETITIAN NUTRITIONIST TO HELP EVALUATE YOUR DAILY EATING PATTERN PRIOR TO STARTING A SUPPLEMENT REGIMEN.

SARAH KLEMM, CD, LDN