

# PLAN FOR HEALTH

Preventive Care 101 – Back to Basics

JANUARY 2023



## PROTECTING YOUR HEALTH STARTS WITH YOU

Preventive care is getting the right kinds of preventive health services (screenings, counseling, immunizations, and preventive medicine) at the right times. It's about protecting your health by knowing what you need and when to get it. Preventive care focuses on staying well. Many of us only think of health care when we're ill or treating a disease, being reactive to our health, rather than managing it.

Preventive care is also about knowing if you're at risk for developing a certain disease or chronic condition (i.e., heart disease, cancer, diabetes, etc.) that may be based on your family history, tobacco use and other lifestyle behaviors, such as a lack of physical activity or imbalanced nutrition.

Preventive care extends to many areas of our lives. Think about it - people practice preventive maintenance on their cars, homes, tools, and other equipment. Do you routinely take your car in for service and keep records detailing oil changes and service appointments? Do you buy an extended warranty plan every time you purchase a new appliance or electronic device? You probably do, but do you know your cholesterol and other important health numbers? Do you have a primary care health provider and make a "service appointment" every year for a check-up? Preventive care brings awareness to our health status, let's us be proactive with taking care of our health needs, and most importantly, helps us on our journey to better health.

## WHAT IS EARLY DETECTION?

Now is the time to keep you and your family safe and healthy. Early disease detection is the use of screening tests, medical exams, and self-exams to identify health problems and/or conditions before symptoms appear. Often, the earlier a disease or health condition is diagnosed, the more it is that it can be treated or successfully managed. Managing a disease, especially in the early stages, may prevent or delay the onset of serious complications. Understanding the importance of preventive care may literally save your life.

## TIPS ON BEING YOUR OWN BEST ADVOCATE

- **Build a relationship with your health care provider:** Make the most of your time with your health care provider and discuss your expectations, concerns, feelings, and questions you have about your health.
- **Speak up:** Listen carefully to your health care provider and if you do not understand a diagnosis or treatment, ask questions. Remember, you are there for YOU!
- **Be prepared:** Before you meet with your health care provider, create a list of questions to ask them and have a list of any current medications and supplements you are taking. Being prepared allows you to make the most of your limited appointment time.
- **Become an educated health care consumer:** When you're planning for your preventive care appointment, take advantage of the valuable tools on your member website including your preventive schedule. Your member website provides you access to information and education on a variety of topics that can help you discuss your concerns and improve communication between you and your health care provider.

**“Those who don’t make time to take care of themselves, will sooner or later have to make time for illness.” - Edward Stanley**



## Sharecare Featured Challenge - A Healthier Me in 2023

Discover the happiest, healthiest you in 2023! Live in the Green for 21 days between January 1st and January 31st to complete this challenge. Join the challenge by clicking **Achieve → Challenges → A Healthier Me in 2023**. You can enroll in the challenge starting December 25th.



## Plan Ahead...

Join us next month for February’s health topic: *Choosing the Right Care*