april 2009

your health & well-being

Is it time for that checkup?

Preventive care. It's what you do for yourself, and for the people who love you. Invest some time in learning about any conditions you may have, so you can understand and manage them more effectively.

Some health problems, such as heart disease and cancer, can often be caught early and treated successfully. Others, like diabetes and high blood pressure, need regular monitoring and treatment. That's why it's important to have regular medical checkups. Work together with your Primary Care Physician (PCP) and get the screenings and preventive care information you need. Once you understand your risk factors and know what to watch out for, you can take action to ensure your health is the best possible.

Preventive Health Screenings for Adults:

Cholesterol Level
If your total cholesterol level is high, you may be at increased risk for heart disease. The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that you have a cholesterol screening every five years starting at age 20.

Blood Pressure
High blood pressure (also called hypertension) can lead to conditions that increase your risk of having a heart attack, stroke or kidney failure. According to the American Heart Association, you should have your blood pressure checked at least once every two years, or as often as your doctor recommends. If you have to track it frequently, consider getting a home blood pressure monitor.

Colorectal Cancer
Colorectal cancer can often be treated successfully if caught early. The American Cancer Society (ACS) recommends that you have a fecal occult blood test every year after age 50 (this test checks your stool for blood). Your doctor may also recommend a colonoscopy test once every 10 years after age 50.

Tests for Men:

Prostate Cancer
According to the ACS, prostate cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related death in men. Talk with your PCP about prostate cancer screenings, generally after age 50. You may be given one or more tests, such as a prostate-specific antigen blood test. If you have risk factors, this screening may be done at any age.

Testicular Cancer
Testicular cancer is the most common type of cancer in men ages 15 to 35. Ask your PCP about the symptoms of the disease. Learn about performing monthly testicular self-exams so that you can check for signs of testicular cancer.

Tests for Women:

Cervical Cancer
A Pap test has helped physicians to find and successfully treat cervical cell abnormalities in thousands of women, before the abnormalities could become cervical cancer. Women ages 19 to 64 who are sexually active and still have a cervix should have this important test at least every three years. Women over age 65 should have a Pap test as often as their doctor advises.

Breast Cancer
Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women. For an individual woman, the lifetime risk of developing breast cancer is 1 in 8. Studies have shown that mammography is an effective way to detect cancer early, when it is most treatable. That's why it's recommended that all women age 40 or older get a mammogram every year.

More Preventive Steps for All Adults
Exercising, eating a balanced diet and stopping smoking are also essential to staying healthy whatever your age, health history, or risk factors.

If you haven't seen your PCP recently, call today for an appointment!

Source: CIGNA Preventive Care Guidelines

"CIGNA," "CIGNA HealthCare" and the "Tree of Life" logo are registered service marks of CIGNA Intellectual Property, Inc., licensed for use by CIGNA Corporation and its operating subsidiaries. All products and services are provided exclusively by such operating subsidiaries and not by CIGNA Corporation. Such operating subsidiaries include Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Tel-Drug, Inc. and its affiliates, CIGNA Behavioral Health, Inc., Intracorp, and HMO or service company subsidiaries of CIGNA Health Corporation and CIGNA Dental Health, Inc. In Arizona, HMO plans are offered by CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona, Inc. In California, HMO plans are offered by CIGNA HealthCare of California, Inc. and Great-West Healthcare of California, Inc. In Connecticut, HMO plans are offered by CIGNA HealthCare of Connecticut, Inc. In Virginia, HMO plans are offered by CIGNA HealthCare Mid-Atlantic, Inc. In North Carolina, HMO plans are offered by CIGNA HealthCare of North Carolina, Inc. All other medical plans in these states are insured or administered by Connecticut General Life Insurance Company.

CIGNA®

825523 01/09 © 2009 CIGNA