Q. Why should I get a check-up once a year?

A. You don't know what you don't know. Going to your doctor once a year might seem like a waste of time, especially if you're healthy.

But what if you're not as healthy as you think?

- You could be at risk for health problems like heart disease, diabetes, obesity, or cancer and not know it.
- If you are at risk, the sooner you do something about it, the better.

Here's just ONE reason an annual doctor visit is a good idea.

More than 1 in 3 adults in the United States has pre-diabetes.[1]

- It's a risk factor for diabetes, heart disease, and stroke.
- So what's your blood glucose (sugar) level? You can't know if it's higher than normal by looking in a mirror. Pre-diabetes often doesn't have any symptoms.
- And it's not the only health problem like that. In other words, what you don't know can be bad for your health. Make sense?

4 Simple Tests to Measure Your Health

Simple tests and a talk with your doctor once a year about your health and lifestyle can be good for your overall well-being.

Here are some common tests your doctor may recommend during an annual visit:[2]

SEE YOUR DOCTOR ONCE A YEAR

Check blood pressure

About 116 million adults in the United States have high blood pressure.[3] Only about half have it under control. And many others don't even know they have high blood pressure.

Keeping your blood pressure in check will help prevent heart disease...the leading cause of death in the U.S.

Calculate Body Mass Index

Are you overweight or obese? It's a risk factor for a long list of health problems like:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Certain types of cancer
- Joint pain
- Arthritis

Being overweight or obese can have an impact on your quality of life, too. A healthy Body Mass Index (BMI) is 18.5 to 24.9. In the United States, and estimated 73.6 percent of adults are overweight or obese.[4]

Screen for certain types of cancer

Almost 40 percent of adults will be diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives.[5]

The most common cancers include:

- Breast
- Lung
- Prostate
- Colorectal

ASK THE Wellness DOCTOR

Not all cancers are preventable or treatable. But many are. Your age, gender, family history, and lifestyle – such as tobacco use – are factors your doctor will consider to screen for cancer.

Test your blood

A simple blood test is often part of an annual doctor's visit.

Why? It's an easy way to identify risk factors for chronic diseases.

Common tests include glucose, cholesterol, and triglycerides. But your doctor can also order tests for other things (like vitamin deficiencies) to evaluate your health.

Want to be healthier, live longer, and lower your risk for chronic disease?

See your doctor once a year for a check-up. It's a simple way to protect your health.

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