



**The Importance of  
Regular Screenings:**  
Early Detection  
Saves Lives







# The Importance of Regular Screenings: Early Detection Saves Lives

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Cancer is one of the leading causes of death worldwide, but regular screenings can make a life-saving difference. Many forms of cancer—such as **breast, cervical, colon, and prostate**—can often be detected early, often before symptoms even appear. When caught in the earliest stages, treatment is typically more effective, less invasive, and offers a much higher chance of survival. Screenings matter!

Within this Health Hub, we will be exploring the different types of cancer screenings and how often you should be checked.



## CANCER SCREENINGS

- **Mammograms** can detect breast cancer years before a lump can be felt.
- **Pap smears and HPV tests** help prevent cervical cancer by identifying abnormal cells early.
- **Colonoscopy or stool-based tests** can find precancerous growths in the colon and rectum before they turn into cancer.
- **Low-dose CT scans** are often recommended for long-term smokers to check for lung cancer.
- **Prostate exams and blood tests** can help identify prostate cancer in its earliest stages.

In addition to cancer screenings, yearly check-ups, such as your annual physical (which are a requirement for the Employee Wellness Rebate) are just as important. During these visits, your doctor can review your personal and family history, discuss lifestyle risks, and recommend the right screening schedule for you. Risk factors such as age, genetics, and lifestyle habits may mean you need certain tests earlier or more often.





## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I GET CANCER SCREENINGS?

You might be asking yourself, “How often should I get screened for cancer?” The frequency of cancer screenings depends on the type of cancer, your age, family history, and personal risk factors. Here’s a general guide (for people at average risk):

- **Breast Cancer**

- Mammogram: Every 1–2 years for women ages 40–74 (earlier or more often if at higher risk). [Learn how to do a self-check.](#)

- **Cervical Cancer**

- Pap smear: Every 3 years for women ages 21–29.
- Ages 30–65: Every 3 years with a Pap test, or every 5 years with an HPV test (or both).

- **Colon Cancer**

- Screening begins at age 45 for most adults. Earlier, if it runs in your family.
- Colonoscopy: Every 10 years if results are normal.
- Other options (stool-based tests, flexible sigmoidoscopy, etc.) may be done every 1–3 years, depending on the test.

- **Prostate Cancer**

- Men ages 50+ (or 45+ if at higher risk, such as African American men or those with family history) should discuss blood testing and exams with their doctor. Frequency depends on individual risk.

- **Lung Cancer**

- Annual low-dose CT scan for adults ages 50–80 with a 20-pack-year smoking history, who currently smoke or quit within the past 15 years.

- **Skin Cancer**

- No set schedule for the general population, but regular skin checks at routine doctor visits and self-checks at home are recommended. High-risk individuals may need dermatologist visits yearly. [Learn how to do a self-check here.](#)

These are general guidelines. Your doctor may suggest starting screening earlier, more often, or using different tests if you have risk factors such as family history, genetic predispositions, or previous abnormal results. Having a good-standing relationship with your physician can make all the difference - be open with them and don’t be afraid to advocate for what you think you need.





## EARLY DETECTION CAN SAVE LIVES

A recent National Institute of Health (NIH) study estimated that from 1975 to 2020, prevention and screening together saved about 4.75 million deaths in five major cancers: breast, cervical, colorectal, lung, and prostate. [Read more on that study here.](#)

The University of Michigan found that In terms of life-years, preventive cancer screenings (mammograms, colonoscopies, Pap tests, and lung scans for higher risk people) have resulted in at least 12 million more years of life lived in the U.S. over the past 25 years. Wow! [Read more on that research finding here.](#)

Early detection is one of the most powerful tools we have in the fight against cancer. When cancer is found at its earliest stages, treatments are often simpler, recovery is faster, and survival rates are dramatically higher. A routine screening or checkup could mean the difference between catching a small, treatable problem and facing a life-threatening diagnosis down the road.

By staying proactive with regular screenings, you're not only protecting your own health—you're giving yourself and your loved ones the priceless gift of more time, more options, and more hope.

Early detection truly saves lives. Schedule your annual check-up or cancer screening today—and remember, your annual physical also counts toward the Employee Wellness Rebate. Screenings today mean more peace of mind, more choices for care, and more moments with the people who matter most.

