

# long term care connection

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things to know  
**Glaucoma screenings**

Glaucoma causes extra fluid to build up in your eyes. This can harm the nerves in your eyes.

You may not feel pain or notice that you can't see well. But slowly you may lose your sight and go blind.

People older than 40 need to see an eye doctor to get checked for glaucoma. If it is treated early, your sight may be saved.

You're at high risk if you:

- Are older than 60
- Are black and older than 40
- Have a family history of the disease
- Have other health problems, like diabetes

Treatment includes pills or eyedrops. In some cases, surgery may be needed.

Sources: American Academy of Family Physicians;  
American Academy of Ophthalmology;  
National Institutes of Health



## Shots aren't just for kids



We work hard to make sure babies and kids get their shots on time. But did you know adults need regular shots too?

Each year many adults get sick or die from diseases that vaccines could prevent. Some diseases, such as meningitis, mainly affect young adults. Others, such as shingles, tend to occur as you get older.

Vaccines are safe. Which ones you need depends on your age, health and lifestyle. Also, tell your doctor where you work and if you go to school. That might help your doctor know which

vaccines you need.

Here are some common diseases adults can get vaccinated for:

- Flu
- Pneumonia
- Chickenpox
- Hepatitis A or B
- Tetanus
- Whooping cough
- Meningitis
- Shingles

Ask your doctor which shots you might need to help prevent diseases.

Sources: American College of Physicians; U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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## Don't let stress harm your health

Everyone has to deal with some stress. But too much stress is not good for your health.

Too much stress can cause you to feel depressed. It can also weaken your body's ability to fight illnesses and increase your chances of getting sick.

Having too much stress in your life may make you feel anxious and tired and cause you to have trouble sleeping. Stress can also cause back pain, headaches, an upset stomach and high blood pressure.

You can't get rid of all the stress in your life. But you can take steps to reduce your stress levels and help yourself feel better. You can:

**Make time for yourself.** Do your best to get organized. Try to set a routine and follow it. And

don't forget to set aside time for fun and relaxing activities.

**Take care of yourself.** Eat healthy foods and exercise often. Be sure to get plenty of sleep.

**Stay positive.** Think about good things. Try not to worry about things you can't control—like the weather.

*You can take steps to reduce stress and feel better.*

**Reach out to others.** Work to resolve conflicts. Talk to family and friends about your problems.

If you think stress is making you sick or feel you can no longer cope, talk to your doctor right away.

Source: American Academy of Family Physicians

## How to lower blood pressure

If your doctor says your blood pressure is up, it really should come down.

High blood pressure can put you at risk for problems such as heart attack, stroke and heart failure.

But you can reduce those risks by taking these steps to lower your blood pressure.

### **Lose weight if needed.**

That way your heart doesn't have to work so hard. Talk to your doctor for help losing weight. Also:

- Drink water when you get hungry between meals. Or eat a piece of fruit.
- Eat high-calorie or high-fat foods less often.
- Be more active.

**Take your medicine.** Your doctor may order medicine to help you control your blood pressure. Take it just the way your doctor tells you to.

**Get plenty of exercise.** Aim for 30 to 60 minutes of activity most days of the week. But talk to your doctor first, especially if you haven't been active for a while.

**Eat well.** Include plenty of fruits and vegetables, as well as low-fat or fat-free dairy products.

Also limit salt (sodium) as much as possible. Try cooking with herbs and spices to add flavor.

Source: American Heart Association