

SCREENING TESTS: What Tests When

Reference: The Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care

Screening tests are recommended for the early detection and treatment of particular medical conditions in individuals of *average risk* and with *no symptoms*.

These guidelines do not apply if you have symptoms or a family history for certain conditions that may require earlier or more frequent testing. For example, if you have been found to have high blood pressure or abnormal pap smears, your doctor will advise you of the appropriate frequency of retesting.

CONDITION	SCREENING TEST	WHO SHOULD BE SCREENED
High Blood Pressure	Blood pressure measurement by a doctor or nurse	Adults 18 and older at every appropriate medical visit (e.g. annually)
Cervical Cancer	Pap smear	Women aged 25 to 69 years every 3 years Women 70 years and older may stop screening after 3 successive normal paps in the previous 10 years
Diabetes	Hb a1c (alternatives: fasting glucose, glucose tolerance test)	Those at <i>high risk</i> based on the FINDRISC or CANRISK calculators every 3 to 5 years Those at <i>very high risk</i> every year
Breast Cancer	Screening Mammogram	Women 50 to 70 years every 2 years
Colon Cancer	Stool Occult Blood Colonoscopy	Adults over 50 years every 2 to 3 years Adults over 50 years every 10 years
Prostate Cancer	Rectal Exam by physician PSA	Men over 50 every year Not recommended as a routine screening test Should be interpreted in conjunction with the rectal exam Men should discuss the value of this test with their GPs