



Take Action with Health Information

Men's Health: A Silent Crisis



You can make a difference in your health. How? Pay attention to health information and talk to your doctor more often. Yet, for most men, taking care of their health is not a main concern.

The result? Men are at a higher risk for getting sick and dying younger than women.

Today, health information is available in many forms and in different places like health screenings, Web sites and prescription medicine ads. Reading and acting on health information can help you get diagnosed and treated before serious medical attention is needed. Using health information is an important way that men can make a difference in their health and stop the “silent crisis.”

A Snapshot of the Problem

- Men have higher rates of illness and die younger than women. Heart disease is the leading cause of death – causing half of all male deaths.¹
- The American Cancer Society estimates that more than 29,900 men will die from prostate cancer in 2004, and a similar number will die from colon cancer – making them the second and third-most deadly cancers in men (lung cancer causes the most deaths).²
- One-third of all men with diabetes – an estimated 2.5 million men – do not know they have the disease.³

And Men Tend to Be Their Own Worst Enemies

- Men have been taught to ignore pain. As a result, they delay or avoid seeking medical care even when their body is saying that something is wrong.⁴
- A Commonwealth Fund study showed that four out of 10 men had not been tested for prostate cancer. Six out of 10 men age 50 or older had not been tested for colon cancer.⁵
- More than half of all men have not had a physical exam or blood cholesterol test in the past year.⁶
- Women are 100 percent more likely than men to visit the doctor for yearly exams.⁷

“Men’s health needs special attention, and men need better education about the health risks that affect them.”

U.S. Congressman Randy “Duke” Cunningham (CA)

“Men need encouragement so that they safeguard their health and make the most of modern medical technology and knowledge.”

U.S. Senator Mike Crapo (ID)

“Paying attention to health information has helped guide me to better health.”

Larry, Florida

¹ American Heart Association website: www.americanheart.org ² American Cancer Society website: www.cancer.org ³ The Commonwealth Fund Men's and Women's Health Survey Findings, March 2000 ⁴ Men's Health Network website: www.menshealthnetwork.org ⁵ The Commonwealth Fund Men's and Women's Health Survey Findings, March 2000 ⁶ The Commonwealth Fund Men's and Women's Health Survey Findings, March 2000 ⁷ CDC 2001

Take Action with Health Information

Health Information Is Out There – and Men Can Use It to Take Charge of Their Health

- Wives and mothers are a major source of health information for men.
 - Men who live alone are less likely than those living with wives or partners to see a doctor or receive preventive care.⁸
- The Internet can provide free access to accurate health information.
 - 52 million male consumers go to Web sites to find health information.⁹
 - 17 million male consumers look at Web sites for information about prescription medicines.¹⁰
- Health screenings raise awareness of and test for medical conditions - giving a clear picture of one's health and needed follow up.

- Prescription medicine advertising provides useful health information.
 - 20 million men have made a diet, exercise or other lifestyle change as a result of seeing a prescription medicine ad.¹¹
 - 28 million men have spoken to their doctor as a result of seeing a prescription medicine ad.¹²
 - Nearly 11 million people who went to their doctor based on seeing an ad were then diagnosed with an major condition.¹³ Major conditions that are under-diagnosed and under-treated include high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and depression.

When it comes to your health, knowledge goes a long way to make a difference. Use health information to get and stay healthy.

⁸The Commonwealth Fund Men's and Women's Health Survey Findings, March 2000 ⁹"Wellness in America: Direct to Consumer Advertising," *Prevention and Men's Health* magazines, 2002 ¹⁰"Wellness in America: Direct to Consumer Advertising," *Prevention and Men's Health* magazines, 2002 ¹¹"Wellness in America: Direct to Consumer Advertising," *Prevention and Men's Health* magazines, 2004 ¹²Ibid. ¹³"Consumer Reports on the Health Effects of Direct-to-Consumer Advertising of Prescription Drugs," *Harvard Medical School and Harris Interactive Inc.*, November 2002, page 4.

"An ad caught my eye and I realized I needed to be more proactive about working with my doctor to treat my high cholesterol."

Mort, Michigan

Recommended Regular Screenings for Men Ages 20-49

Test	Recommended Guidelines
Blood Pressure	At least every 1-2 years; more frequently if indicated
Cholesterol	At least once every 3 years
Colorectal	Age 40 and over: consult with a physician
Diabetes	Age 45 and over: every 3 years or as recommended by a physician
Immunizations	Tetanus-diphtheria: every 10 years
Testicles	Self-exams monthly starting at age 15
Thyroid	Yearly as part of periodic physical examination
Prostate Cancer	Age 40 and over: consult with a physician

For more information about your health,
go to: www.menshealthnetwork.org

