



Your 40s

Taking Steps for a Healthier You

What steps can I take?

Start by reading the checklist we created for women in their 40s, and choose to take one, or all, of the steps on the list. You can use your checklist to get the conversation started at your next well-woman visit. A well-woman visit is a yearly preventive checkup with your doctor. It's a time to check in on how you're doing, how you'd like to be doing, and what changes you can make to reach your health goals.

Why should I follow the steps on my checklist?

These steps are the foundation for good health at every age.



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To live a healthy life in my **40s**

✓ Every day I will try to:

- Eat healthy — use the **MyPlate Plan** to get started
- Get at least 30 minutes of physical activity
- Get at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep
- Reach and maintain a healthy weight
- Get help to quit or not start smoking
- Limit alcohol use to 1 drink or less
- Not use illegal drugs or misuse prescription drugs
- Wear a helmet when riding a bike and wear protective gear for sports
- Wear a seatbelt in cars and not text and drive
- Take 400 to 800 mcg of folic acid (for premenopausal women)

✓ I will talk to my doctor at least once a year about:

- Whether I plan to get pregnant or the right birth control for me (for premenopausal women)
- Perimenopause symptoms
- My weight, diet, and physical activity level
- Whether I use tobacco, alcohol, or drugs
- Any violence in my life
- Depression and any other mental health concerns
- My family health history, especially my risk of cancer, heart disease, and diabetes

✓ I will ask my doctor whether I need these tests, medicines, or vaccines this year:

- Blood pressure
- Breast cancer prevention medicines
- Cholesterol
- Diabetes
- Flu
- Hepatitis A, B, and C
- HIV
- Mammogram
- Measles, mumps, and rubella
- Meningitis
- Pap and HPV
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough
- Tuberculosis
- Urinary incontinence

If you are pregnant, prenatal care can also be a well-woman visit. There are also certain tests during pregnancy to check your and your baby's health. Visit our Pregnancy section to learn what you can do before, during, and after pregnancy to give your baby a healthy start to life and to take care of yourself, too.

The decision to get any medical test or procedure, at any age, is a personal one between you and your doctor. These recommendations may not apply to every person.

These guidelines are based on recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the Women's Preventive Services Guidelines, the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the 2018 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans.



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