

## **Healthwatch: Keep Your Body “Tuned Up”, Part 1**

### **Ann Pinning, Parish Nurse**

Keeping up with regular health screenings and vaccines can keep your body well tuned and staying strong. Healthy adults and children frequently miss their regular check-ups. Physicals should be done annually for children over 2 and every 3 years for adults (annually if you have chronic health problems). Regular health screenings are especially important as we age because the earlier we identify that something has gone “haywire” in our body, the easier it is to treat. Next month’s “Healthwatch” will provide information on vaccine recommendations. Following are some basic health screening recommendations for kids and adults:

**Blood Pressure:** Adults should have their BP checked every 2 years; every 6 months for those with hypertension. Children should begin getting BP checks at age 3 with each physical.

**Cholesterol:** Initially at age 20 years (after age 10 and annually if obese or have a strong family history of high cholesterol); then every 2 years after that.

**Blood Sugar:** Your glucose should be tested at age 45 and every 3 years after. However anyone who is overweight (including obese children) should be checked. If you had gestational diabetes when you were pregnant you should be screened every 3-5 years after delivery.

**Vision/Hearing:** Children age 4 and up as well as adults should have annual or biannual vision screens—even if you think you have eagle eye vision. Children should have hearing screens at least every 2 years. Adults should have hearing screens regularly after age 65, sooner if problems are suspected.

**Bone density:** Women 65 and older; sooner if osteoporosis runs in your family.

**Colorectal cancer:** An initial screening should be done at age 50 (age 21 if you have a primary relative—mom, dad or sibling with colorectal cancer). A colonoscopy is the best screening tool and should be done every 5 years after the initial screening.

**Breast Cancer:** Women in their 20’s need a clinical breast exam at least every three years. Yearly mammograms should be started at age 40. An earlier mammogram may be necessary if you have a strong family history of breast cancer. An ultrasound is a good option for younger women—mammograms aren’t as accurate at a young age.

**Cervical Cancer:** Pap tests should be done every 1-2 years after the onset of sexual activity, but no later than age 21.

**Prostate Cancer:** Screening should begin on men 50 and older; sooner if your brother or father has prostate cancer. Some doctors recommend annual screening after 50.

Note that these are simply guidelines. It is important that you follow yours or your child’s doctor’s recommendations for your healthcare. However, if you feel you are due for a screening that has not been offered you, don’t be afraid to ask for it.

Dear Beverly,

Please place on the *calendar*—BP checks October 14 and 28; Flu clinic 4-6 pm Nov. 14; Health Ministries Cooking Class (at Pinning's) Nov 2, 6:30 pm; Married Couples, October 6, 5:30 pm (at BUNDAYS)

Please remove the Health Ministries meeting timeline that you have in the computer. Our meetings are not on a regular schedule. I'll keep you posted about the next meeting date—it won't be til January.

Please include these blurbs in the newsletter:

**Flu Clinic will be held again this year at RLC:** Wednesday, November 14 from 4-6 pm. Sorry, no shots will be given to kids at this clinic. The flu vaccine is again recommended for anyone with chronic disease, those over 65, and those who work around children or who are in the healthcare industry. There will be a nominal charge. Some insurances will be accepted.

**Healthy Cooking Class to be offered Friday, November 2 @ 6:30 pm:** The Health Ministries Committee will be offering another fun cooking class for those of you who are interested in learning how to prepare meals more healthfully. This year we'll be featuring a delicious menu from the Mediterranean so plan to come hungry. The class will be held at Ann Pinning's home. Cost is \$10. Space is limited, so RSVP by October 28<sup>th</sup> to Ann or Chef Debbie Benson.

## Healthwatch: Keep Your Body “Tuned Up”, Part 2

Ann Pinning, Parish Nurse

### Vaccine Recommendations:

Varicella (chickenpox): Children kindergarten age and older are now required to have a booster.

Shingles: Adults over the age of

Flu vaccine: Given annually in the Fall. Any person with chronic disease. Children between the ages of 6 months to 2 years. Families with an infant under 6 months. Adults 65 and older. Any person working with children or in the health care industry.

Meningitis vaccine: Teens 12 and older.

Tdap: The new tetanus booster—includes a pertussis (whooping cough) booster as well. For children 11-12 years (entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade) and all adults every 10 years.

Pnuemovac: Those with chronic disease or over age 65. A one time vaccine.