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## Preventative Healthcare

Preventative healthcare focuses on proactive measures to maintain health, prevent disease, and detect potential health issues early, allowing for more effective treatment and better long-term outcomes. Here are key aspects and strategies for preventative healthcare:

### 1. Regular Health Screenings

- **Routine check-ups:** Visit your healthcare provider regularly for general health check-ups, even when you're feeling well. This helps detect issues early.
- **Blood pressure:** Regular checks can identify high blood pressure, a risk factor for heart disease and stroke.
- **Cholesterol levels:** Monitoring cholesterol helps manage the risk of cardiovascular disease.
- **Cancer screenings:** Depending on age and risk factors, screenings such as mammograms, Pap smears, colonoscopies, and skin checks can help catch cancers early.
- **Vision and hearing tests:** Regular eye exams and hearing assessments can detect problems early, ensuring proper treatment.

### 2. Immunizations and Vaccines

- **Stay up to date:** Vaccines are essential in preventing diseases like flu, pneumonia, hepatitis, and HPV.
- **Childhood vaccines:** Ensure children receive their recommended vaccinations to protect against preventable illnesses.
- **Flu shots:** Annual flu vaccinations are especially important for children, older adults, and those with weakened immune systems.
- **Travel vaccines:** If traveling internationally, research and get any necessary vaccines for your destination.

### 3. Healthy Lifestyle Habits

- **Balanced diet:** Eat a variety of nutrient-dense foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats, to maintain overall health.
- **Regular exercise:** Aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity per week, along with strength training.

- **Adequate sleep:** Prioritize 7-9 hours of sleep per night to support physical and mental health.
- **Stress management:** Practice relaxation techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, or yoga to reduce stress and its negative effects on health.

#### 4. Avoid Harmful Behaviors

- **Tobacco use:** Quit smoking or using tobacco products to reduce the risk of respiratory diseases, heart disease, and cancer.
- **Alcohol moderation:** Limit alcohol intake to reduce the risk of liver disease, certain cancers, and other health issues.
- **Substance abuse:** Avoid illegal drugs and misuse of prescription medications to safeguard mental and physical health.
- **Safe driving:** Always use seat belts, avoid driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and follow traffic laws to prevent accidents.

#### 5. Mental Health Care

- **Regular check-ins:** Prioritize mental health by seeking therapy or counseling when needed. Regularly evaluate emotional well-being.
- **Mindfulness:** Engage in mindfulness practices such as meditation or journaling to manage stress and promote emotional balance.
- **Social connections:** Foster positive relationships and stay connected with friends and family to support mental well-being.
- **Mental health screenings:** Routine assessments for depression, anxiety, and other mental health conditions can help detect issues early and provide timely intervention.

#### 6. Oral Health Care

- **Regular dental visits:** See a dentist at least twice a year for cleanings, check-ups, and early detection of dental problems like cavities or gum disease.
- **Good oral hygiene:** Brush your teeth twice a day, floss daily, and use mouthwash to maintain oral health.
- **Limit sugary foods and drinks:** Reduce the intake of sugary and acidic foods to prevent tooth decay and gum disease.

## 7. Healthy Weight Management

- **Maintain a healthy weight:** Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight through a balanced diet and regular exercise can reduce the risk of many chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and joint issues.
- **BMI and waist circumference:** Keep track of body mass index (BMI) and waist circumference as indicators of healthy weight.
- **Seek professional advice:** If you're struggling with weight management, consult a healthcare provider or dietitian for personalized guidance.

## 8. Environmental Health

- **Avoid toxins:** Minimize exposure to harmful chemicals and pollutants, such as those found in household cleaners, pesticides, or industrial chemicals.
- **Healthy living environment:** Ensure proper ventilation and cleanliness in your living space to reduce the risk of respiratory issues and allergies.
- **Protect against UV rays:** Use sunscreen, wear protective clothing, and avoid excessive sun exposure to reduce the risk of skin cancer.

## 9. Preventative Care for Chronic Conditions

- **Diabetes management:** For those at risk, regular blood sugar testing and maintaining a healthy diet and weight can prevent or manage diabetes.
- **Osteoporosis prevention:** Engage in weight-bearing exercises and ensure adequate calcium and vitamin D intake to maintain bone health.
- **Heart disease prevention:** Monitor cholesterol, blood pressure, and weight to minimize the risk of heart disease.

## 10. Knowledge and Self-Care

- **Self-exams:** Perform regular self-exams, such as checking for unusual lumps in your body or monitoring changes in your skin.
- **Health education:** Stay informed about your personal health risks and preventive measures to take control of your well-being.
- **Stay proactive:** Don't wait until you feel sick to address your health; make preventative care a priority to ensure long-term health and longevity.

## 11. Seek Professional Help When Needed

- **Early intervention:** Address health concerns early to prevent them from developing into more serious conditions.
- **Follow-up care:** Maintain regular communication with your healthcare provider and follow their recommendations for screenings, tests, and preventive care.