



Kidney Q&A

4-12 months

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Q: Do I still need routine tests, like a PAP smear or prostate check?

A: Yes. Having kidney disease does not prevent you from getting other health problems.

For men, the American Cancer Society suggests:

- A check-up each year that includes prostate screening
- Depending on age, this may mean a rectal exam to feel the prostate and/or a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test

For women, the American Cancer Society suggests:

- Cervical cancer screening – each year, starting 3 years after first intercourse or by age 21, until at least age 70
- Pap smear – each year in women ages 21 to 30, then every 3 years if three Pap smears in a row have been negative
- Breast exam – every 3 years for women aged 20-39, each year for women aged 40 or older
- Mammogram – each year for women aged 40 or older, younger if there is a family history of breast cancer

At age 50, both men and women need:

- A test for hidden blood in your stool – each year

- Flexible sigmoidoscopy to look at your lower colon – every 5 years
- Colonoscopy to look at your entire colon – every 10 years
- Barium enema to X-ray your colon – every 5-10 years

What I can do to make sure I have the health screening I need:

- Ask my doctor what screening tests I should have, based on my age, family history, and other health problems:

- Mark my calendar to call for a check-up at least 6 months before I need it. Write down questions I want to ask the doctor.
- Learn to do self-exams of the breasts and/or testicles and call my doctor if I feel a lump, thickening, or gritty area.
- Know what my health insurance covers for screening.
- Find out what screenings are offered free or low cost in my area.
- Visit module 11 of Kidney School™: *Sexuality and Fertility* at www.kidneyschool.org to learn more about check-ups I need.