

Get your health back on track



According to a study published by the National Institutes of Health, more than one-third of adults have not received recommended screenings for age-associated risks during the pandemic. Moreover, 43% of patients missed routine preventive appointments because of COVID-19.¹

Vaccine rollout and declining COVID-19 infection rates mean a return to normal for many. So how can you get your health back on track following the major disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic? This checklist can help you and your family get back to your routine.



Catch up on annual physicals, bloodwork and health screenings

Undergoing routine preventive care is one of the most effective ways to stay healthy. However, according to the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), preventive care is not used as often as it should be, leading to higher rates of chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, cancer and more. To catch any health issues before they become serious, you should see your primary care doctor once a year for an exam. During this exam, your doctor will learn about your family health history, ask you about any recent health issues you may have, order bloodwork and recommend health and lifestyle choices tailored to you.

Based on your age or other risk factors, your primary care doctor will also recommend routine screenings and other preventive medical treatments specific to your health.² This might include receiving a mammogram, prostate exam, colonoscopy, getting vaccinated for pneumonia or shingles, and more. These screenings are important as they may help you identify early-stage cancer or prevent a more serious illness.

Finally, don't forget any other routine care that you may have postponed because of the pandemic. This includes eye exams, dermatology visits and teeth cleanings.

¹<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7738274/>

²https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2019/18_0625.htm



Address those aches and pains

Many people adopted a more sedentary lifestyle as a result of the pandemic or had to start working from home in a space not suited for working long hours. If you find yourself dealing with neck and back pains brought on by changes in your routines during the pandemic, don't put off addressing your issues any longer. A doctor or health coach can give you exercises that can relieve tension, address an injury or eliminate your pain entirely.



Be more mindful about nutrition

If you experienced changes in your weight during the pandemic, you're not alone. In a study conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA), 61% of surveyed people had unwanted weight changes during the pandemic.³ Added stress, a more sedentary lifestyle and other factors are common causes of weight change. Improving your nutrition can help with your overall health. This means eating more fruits and vegetables, preparing more healthy meals at home or engaging in more mindful snacking. Talking to your doctor, a health coach or nutritionist can often help you to stay accountable. Livongo coaches can help with meal planning and making the right choices for your health goals, all from the comfort of your home.



Take care of your body's largest organ: your skin!

If you've noticed recent changes to your skin but delayed treatment because of COVID-19, it is important to have those issues looked at now. If you have any new or darkening spots or areas that are dry, itchy, scabbing or bleeding, it's particularly important that you see a dermatologist. They can also help with rashes, hair loss, acne, dandruff and psoriasis.



Check in on your mental health too

When you feel sick with the flu, you go to the doctor. Did you know there's also a doctor for when you feel stressed, anxious, sad, depressed or not like yourself? Because of the pandemic, many people are feeling increased levels of anxiety, stress, sadness and worry. If that sounds like you, therapy can help you work through those concerns and feel like yourself again. An increase in available teletherapy services means you don't have to delay getting care. You can see a therapist or psychiatrist from the comfort of your home.

The pandemic disrupted almost every aspect of our lives, but now we all have an opportunity to get back on track. By taking care of your health with these steps, you can feel your best and enjoy each day to the fullest.

³<https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2021/one-year-pandemic-stress>

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