



Catholic Healthcare West

Ask the Expert

Arizona Republic

Q: As my father ages, I want to remind him to take care of himself. What are some things he can do to stay healthy?

A: Talking to your dad about ways he can stay healthy may include discussing his exercise regimen and eating habits to preventive health screenings and monthly self-exams. As part of your discussion, remind him to drink plenty of water and to be sure he's getting adequate sleep.

Once a month, men should check their skin for any changes in moles or freckles, as well as examine their testicles and breasts for lumps, and their mouths for any lesions. These monthly self-exams can result in the early detection of disease, which can make a life-saving difference.

Once a year, men should visit their doctor for a physical exam, who may perform some or all of the following preventive screenings:

- An annual prostate specific antigen (PSA) blood screening test for men over 50 years of age
- Colorectal cancer screenings, such as a colonoscopy, should be performed every 10 years or a sigmoidoscopy should be done every five years for men age 50 and older
- A cholesterol blood screening should be done every five years for men age 20 and older
- A diabetes blood test should be done every three years for men over 45 years of age
- All men age 20 and older should have their blood pressure taken annually

Your dad can also determine his risk for heart disease or stroke through the free HeartAware™ online risk assessment at HeartAwareTest.com. The test takes less than seven minutes to complete and may just save his life.



Dorothy McClure, R.N., is the cardiac clinician for the HeartAware™ program at Chandler Regional and Mercy Gilbert Medical Centers. To learn more, or to arrange for a free, in-person consultation, please call 480.728.3639.