Dear Friend:

At Shawnee Mission Health, we are dedicated to improving the health of all individuals – including the men who live and work in the communities we serve – men like you.

We believe that when it comes to matters related to good health, men deserve special attention. Research shows that compared to women, American men are less likely to carry health insurance, less likely to regularly see their physician, and more likely to delay seeking health care (both for prevention and even when a problem is detected).

We think it’s time to change those trends. Our goal is to help men understand the importance of caring for their health. It’s more than just exercising, watching what you eat and visiting your doctor… it’s about taking charge! There are many things you can do to feel your best and enhance your overall health. We are here to help you take the important steps that will keep you healthy – physically, mentally and spiritually.

I invite you to take a look and make a change.

In good health,

Ken Bacon
President & CEO
Shawnee Mission Health

It started with a simple idea back in 1962: Provide quality health care for residents of growing Johnson County. More than 50 years later, Shawnee Mission Medical Center (SMMC) has expanded its reach and draws patients from throughout the Kansas City metropolitan area and around the Midwest.

Shawnee Mission Health (SMH) isn’t a big corporate hospital system; we’re a network of health care facilities and providers, working to exceed your expectations by delivering quality care with compassion.

Does it really matter what hospital your doctor is affiliated with? We think so. Having a doctor in the SMH network means when you need a higher level of care, you have access to our medical staff of nearly 700 physicians in 50 specialties covering everything from cancer and heart care to robotic surgery and women’s health. It means if you are hospitalized, you can rest assured you’ll be admitted to the hospital not only preferred by more Johnson County residents, but the one with some of the highest patient satisfaction scores in Kansas City.

As Johnson County's most preferred provider of emergency care, we see nearly 70,000 patients annually. Whether you visit our Emergency Departments at our Merriam or Prairie Star campuses, you can expect to be seen immediately by a nurse to assess your condition and prepare you to be seen by one of our experienced doctors. And, if you need follow-up care, the depth of our medical staff allows us to provide referrals to specialists you can feel confident will provide the best care possible. For immediate care in less serious situations, Centra Care Urgent Care is available for walk-in service seven days a week.

But we don’t want to see you just when you’re sick. SMH offers one of the most comprehensive schedules of community wellness classes in the area. From parenting classes and CPR to yoga and diabetes education, we want you to focus on your health. And, our contribution to the health of the community extends far beyond our walls. SMMC supports many area not-for-profit organizations that share our mission of improving health.

Come see us soon. Whether you’re working to get well, stay well, visiting loved ones or if you just want to learn why SMH is different, we’re here for you.
Men’s Health Program

Guys, you know you need to be more proactive about your health. Eat right, get more exercise, sleep more, you’ve heard it all. But for some reason you’re still not doing it. At Shawnee Mission Primary Care we know it’s not easy, but we think we can help you get on the right track.

Our men’s health program will help you determine where you are with your health and our experts will work with you to get you to where you need to be.

Here’s how it works:
Call our Men’s Health Line at 913-632-3232 to schedule an appointment with one of our men’s health experts at Shawnee Mission Primary Care. These aren’t just great doctors, they are doctors with special interest in men’s health who can work with you to achieve optimal performance. Prior to your appointment, you’ll get a draw at one of our lab locations so that all of your results are ready when you visit your doctor. Then, on the day of your appointment, our experts will perform various additional screenings so the time you spend with the doctor will be used effectively.

Because our doctors are part of Shawnee Mission Health (SMH), they have access to nearly 700 physicians in 50 specialties should you need follow-up care. And SMH programs such as our nutrition clinic, SportsCare and Center for Pain Medicine can be part of your continued wellness plan. We know you don’t want to see the doctor, but being proactive about your health now is a lot easier than dealing with a major health emergency later.

Call 913-632-3232 for an appointment today, or visit SMphysiciansgroup.com.
Decades of Health

Aging

Aging is a normal process of physical change over time.

The signs of aging are generally the same for everyone, although your timeline may be different from your friends. Family genetics definitely play a role, but more and more researchers believe your lifestyle choices may have a more powerful impact on how well your body ages.

The aging process happens to everyone – you’re not alone. Take charge of your health today to feel your very best throughout your lifetime.

Your 30s

“During your 30s, you want to minimize the effects of aging by striving to maintain the peak levels of health, fitness and performance you enjoyed in your late 20s,” says Chad Winters, DO, Shawnee Mission Primary Care at Prairie Star. “Staying strong and healthy now sets the stage for your 40s and beyond.”

• Focus on good nutrition and regular exercise. Maintain a healthy weight and drink in moderation.
• If you smoke or chew tobacco, work with your doctor to kick the habit.
• Testicular cancer is most common among men in their 20s and 30s. Be sure to give yourself a testicular self-exam once a month.
• Keep an eye out for early signs of skin cancer, including changes in your skin, moles that grow, change color or change shape.

Your 40s

You may be feeling fine at 40, especially if you established good lifestyle habits in your 30s. But don’t wait until you have a problem to see your doctor. Get proactive about your health by scheduling annual wellness exams.

“There is no one-size-fits-all answer to how often you should go for regular checkups,” says Matthew Buss, MD, Shawnee Mission Primary Care at the Prairie View Medical Building. “For many people, annual visits provide a good balance between ensuring you’re in good shape and not going too often.”

“After 40, getting an overall physical each year is really critical,” says Matthew Buss, MD, Shawnee Mission Primary Care at the Prairie View Medical Building. “If problems are caught early, it can make a huge difference in prolonging your life and maintaining your general well-being as you get older.”
50s
Every year: Physical exam for cancer (skin, thyroid, lymph nodes, testicles, prostate and rectum), dental exam
Every 1-2 years: Vision and glaucoma check, blood pressure check, height/weight measurements
Every 3-5 years: Cholesterol check, blood sugar check
Every 3-10 years: Colon cancer screening (talk to your doctor about colonoscopy frequency based on your history and risk factors)

- Prostate cancer screenings include digital rectal exams (DRE) and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests. Different organizations have different recommendations for when or if to start these tests. Please discuss your personal and family medical history with your physician to determine your best individual course of action.
- Genetics really come into play in your 40s. Much of what your doctor recommends will depend on your family history.
- Skin cancer and precancerous lesions become more common. Stay diligent about changes to your skin, including moles that grow, change color or change shape.
- Check with your doctor to see if your risk is high enough to take aspirin daily to prevent heart attacks or strokes and to make sure there are no contraindications.

Your 50s
After age 50, you may be more concerned about your health, especially if some of your friends have health problems. Annual wellness check-ups are a good opportunity to catch problems early, and many problems can be prevented if you stay diligent about nutrition and exercise.

“One of the most important things you can do in your 50s is stay physically active. Regular exercise reduces your risk for a host of serious health conditions, including high blood pressure, heart disease and depression,” says Gregory Sweat, MD, Medical Director of Shawnee Mission Physicians Group. “Playing golf on the weekends isn’t enough – exercise needs to be part of your daily routine.”

- Aging has minimal effects on sexual function. You may notice changes in response (e.g., it may take more time to get an erection), but pleasure and interest in sex shouldn’t diminish. If they do, talk to your doctor, as certain health problems can affect sexual performance.
- Prostate cancer screenings include digital rectal exams (DRE) and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests. Different organizations have different recommendations for when or if to start these tests. Please discuss your personal and family medical history with your physician to determine your best individual course of action.
- Good mental health is as important as physical health. Maintain a low-stress environment and keep a positive attitude.
- Keep an eye on your eyes. Presbyopia, the loss of the ability to focus up close, is the most common vision problem for those in their 50s, and age-related macular degeneration sometimes develops this early.
- Check with your doctor to see if your risk is high enough to take aspirin daily to prevent heart attacks or strokes and to make sure there are no contraindications.
Your 60s
Many signs of aging become more apparent in our 60s, from graying hair to reduced stamina. Instead of worrying about getting older, focus your energy on feeling younger. Your biological age doesn’t have to match your chronological age.

“For many men with healthy lifestyles, the 60s are the new 40s,” says Steven Broxterman, MD, Shawnee Mission Primary Care at the Shawnee Mission Medical Building. “You can optimize your health by getting the appropriate screenings to identify any problems, staying committed to regular exercise, and sticking to a healthy diet.”

- If you find yourself forgetting things, you aren’t alone. Everyone experiences some age-related memory loss. If you have concerns about memory loss or other cognitive changes, talk with your doctor.

- A 60-year-old man has a 50 percent chance of suffering from an enlarged prostate. Ask your doctor about the benefits of having a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test or digital rectal exam (DRE).

- Older adults are more susceptible to viral infections and more likely to experience serious complications. Ask your doctor about vaccinations for flu and shingles (starting at age 60) and pneumonia (starting at 65).

- Check with your doctor to see if your risk is high enough to take aspirin daily to prevent heart attacks or strokes and to make sure there are no contraindications.

60s
Every year: Blood pressure check, height/weight measurements, physical exam for cancers (skin, thyroid, lymph nodes, prostate and rectum), dental exam

Every 1-2 years: Vision and glaucoma check

Every 1-3 years: Cholesterol check, blood sugar check, hearing check. Starting at age 65: Thyroid hormone check, blood count, lab tests or urine sample

Every 3-10 years: Colon cancer screening (talk to your doctor about recommended colonoscopy frequency based on your history and risk factors)
Your 70s and beyond

“Americans are living longer and better than ever before,” says Bradley Yost, MD, Shawnee Mission Primary Care at the Prairie View Medical Building. “Constant improvements are being made in medicine, and there are many choices older men can take to maximize overall health and vitality.”

The basic recipe for successful aging remains the same in your 70s and beyond: stay active, eat healthy and maintain a positive attitude. More than ever, it’s important to be proactive about your health. Deal with small problems before they become big problems, work with your doctor to manage chronic conditions, and take steps to prevent injury and disease.

- Keep moving! Limber joints and strength for balance will reduce your risk of falling, and regular exercise will make you look and feel younger.
- Some memory loss and slowing of cognitive functions is normal, but you can keep your brain healthy by flexing it. Especially after you retire, it’s important to use your brain every day and stay intellectually engaged.
- About half of all people over age 75 have some amount of hearing loss. The bad news: age-related hearing loss is irreversible. The good news: today’s hearing aids are sophisticated and inconspicuous.
- Ask your doctor about the benefits of having a prostate specific antigen (PSA) test or digital rectal exam (DRE).
- Older adults are more susceptible to viral infections and more likely to experience serious complications. Talk to your doctor about vaccinations for flu, shingles and pneumonia.
- Check with your doctor to see if your risk is high enough to take aspirin daily to prevent heart attacks or strokes and to make sure there are no contraindications.
Exercise

The most important 30 minutes of your day

More than half of American men and women do not get enough physical activity. You’ve heard it a thousand times (and, we’re going to say it again!). Regular physical activity goes a long way to improve health and lower premature aging and death.

There are 1,440 minutes in every day. Schedule just 30 minutes of moderate physical exercise on most, preferably all, days of the week and you will:

- Reduce the risk of developing coronary heart disease
- Reduce the risk of stroke
- Reduce the risk of having a second heart attack if you have already had one heart attack
- Lower total blood cholesterol and increase high-density lipoproteins (HDL or the “good” cholesterol)
- Lower the risk of developing high blood pressure
- Lower blood pressure if you already have hypertension
- Lower the risk of developing non-insulin-dependent (type 2) diabetes
- Reduce the risk of developing colon cancer
- Help yourself achieve and maintain a healthy body weight
- Reduce feelings of depression and anxiety
- Promote psychological well-being and reduce feelings of stress
- Help build and maintain healthy bones, muscles and joints
- Improve sexual performance
- And the list goes on and on and on...

Source: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Quit making excuses and get off the couch!

Step 3: Find the time/think creatively. Invent fun ways to stay in shape. What do you enjoy? Take advantage of activities you already incorporate into your daily routine: Park the car farther away from your destination; get on or off the bus several blocks away; take the stairs instead of the elevator; play with children or pets; walk to the store instead of drive. You get the idea.

Step 4: Develop support. Share your commitment with those around you and you’re more likely to succeed. Turn exercise into a group activity. Post motivating messages in your day planner or on your bathroom mirror.

Step 5: Reward yourself regularly. Buy yourself a health club membership, an iPod to accompany your workout, a massage, a new workout outfit, etc.

The best part is it’s never too late to start! No matter what your age or physical condition, you will begin to reap positive benefits almost immediately. If you’re new to exercise, start slowly and build your workout regimen as you progress. If you’ve been sedentary for a long period of time, discuss an exercise program with your health care provider before beginning.

Man vs. Machine

To accomplish strengthening, stretching and aerobic exercises, man created exercise equipment and placed it in an indoor gym. He spent hours running in place, rowing without a paddle and climbing the endless staircase, with little to show for it but an expensive health club membership and sore muscles. Where were the Ironman bulges and the lean and mean physique?

Quit fighting your machine and try these bodybuilding, fat burning and heart pumping tips to get the most out of your equipment workout.

**Elliptical Trainer**

*Health benefit:* Many experts agree that this device can provide the same cardiovascular benefits as a treadmill without the excessive pounding to the joints.

*Use it right:* Instead of holding on to handles, pump your arms as if you were running to improve your balance.

*Training tip:* By alternating between levels of high resistance and those of high speed, you’ll be able to work at a higher relative intensity for a longer period of time.

**Stairclimber**

*Health benefit:* For men with insulin resistance, a risk factor for diabetes and heart disease, exercising on a stairclimber 15 minutes, four days a week improved sensitivity to insulin by 43 percent in just six weeks.

*Use it right:* For a better calorie burn, pump your arms as if you were walking or running briskly instead of leaning on the handles. If you want to burn even more calories, do it backwards, facing away from the console.

*Training tip:* After you warm up, increase the resistance level by one unit while maintaining a pace of 60 to 80 steps per minute for two minutes. Then increase the resistance by one unit every two minutes until you reach your 20-minute goal.
Stationary Bike

*Health benefit:* Cycling on a stationary bike for as little as 10 minutes reduces fatigue and negative moods, while improving energy levels.

*Use it right:* To relieve lower back pain and pressure, stand up every five minutes and pedal as if you were climbing a hill for 60 seconds. This breaks the monotony and forces you to use different muscles.

*Training tip:* Start cycling at an intensity that’s about 95 percent of your full effort for 90 seconds, followed by a 90-second recovery interval at about 40 percent of your full effort. Using the same intensities, perform 60-second and 30-second intervals. Continue for at least 20 minutes.

Treadmill

*Health benefit:* The treadmill burns calories at the highest rate of any exercise machine.

*Use it right:* To most closely mimic outdoor road running, raise the incline of the treadmill to one percent before starting.

*Training tip:* Pick a speed that’s about two minutes per mile slower than your average outdoor pace. Run at that speed for two minutes at an incline of one percent. Then raise the incline to four percent for another two minutes. Continue to raise the elevation of the treadmill by two percent every two minutes until you reach a 10 percent grade. Then step it back down one percent at a time, in two-minute intervals, until you complete your 20 minutes.

Stay stronger longer!

Weight training complements the benefits of cardio and should be a regular part of your exercise routine. You don’t have to lift a lot of weight to see and feel results, and weights are a great way to add variety to your workouts. An investment of just 60 minutes each week can have a huge impact on your long-term health and fitness.

“Resistance training makes you stronger in more ways than you may realize,” says Tom Riggs, MPT, CSCS, FAFS, Physical Therapist with SportsCare at Shawnee Mission Health. “You may be most aware of improved muscle definition, but you are also strengthening deeper muscles and building bone density.”
If you’re new to weight training, be sure to check with your doctor before diving in. Don’t make the common mistake of trying to lift heavy weights right away. Take it slow so you can avoid injury, maximize results and maintain motivation.

**Weight machines**

*Health benefit:* Lifting weight with machines increases your range of motion, improves stability around your joints, and counteracts the loss of bone density that comes with age.

*Doing it right:* If you are new to weight machines, ask a fitness representative or personal trainer for guidance. Be sure you know how to adjust each machine to fit your body properly. Start with a weight that allows you to easily do 10-15 reps. If you can’t, you need to lower the weight. Start with two 30-minute training sessions a week, and focus on different muscles during each session to give your body proper recovery time.

*Training tip:* Always start with a warm-up to lubricate your muscles. If your goal is to tone up, work up to doing 15-25 reps on each machine and 2-3 sets. If your goal is to add bulk, give your body three or four weeks to acclimate to using resistance. Then you can increase the weight and aim for 6-10 reps and 3-5 sets.

**Free weights**

*Health benefit:* Free weights offer the same benefits as weight machines, plus you can work your arms independently and provide a more powerful workout for deep stabilizing muscles around your joints.

*Doing it right:* Go slow. Since you don’t have a machine guiding your motions or stabilizing the weights, proper form is essential. Typically, you won’t be able to lift as much weight as you would with a machine, but your approach to a new training program should be similar: start with two sessions a week and switch up the muscles you are working on during each session.

*Training tip:* Be sure to prime your muscles by warming up. Lift and lower weights using slow and steady motions. Combine free weights with balance exercises to maximize results. Resistance bands are a great alternative and allow you to work out almost anywhere with minimal equipment – and no excuses!
Nutrition

Eating right can have a big impact on your health, your life expectancy, and your risk for developing lifestyle illnesses such as heart disease, cancer and diabetes. We know foods in their most natural state provide the best source of nutrition. The National Institutes of Health recommends men eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables daily. Eat a variety of foods, including plenty of:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Whole grains
- Low-fat or non-fat dairy products
- Lean meats
- Poultry
- Fish
- Legumes.

Drink a lot of water (experts recommend a full eight glasses a day). Go easy on:

- Salt
- Sugar
- Alcohol
- Saturated fat.

Supercharge with super foods

Food is fuel for your body. Eating the right foods gives you the strength and stamina you need to get through your busy day.

Your body benefits from a wide variety of essential nutrients. By selecting foods from each of the five food groups (fruit, vegetables, grains, dairy and lean protein) in the amounts recommended, your meals can be healthy and interesting. And by choosing a variety of foods, you are less likely to become bored with what you are eating.

Super foods are a great way to give your body the fuel it needs for optimal health. Why are certain foods “super”? Because they offer high levels of essential vitamins and minerals in a small amount of calories.
By including a variety of super foods in your diet, you can power your brain and your body efficiently. Super foods fight infections, enhance your immune system, and protect against lifestyle diseases. They are also affordable, familiar, and readily available at your grocery store or favorite produce market.

Here are 12 super foods that can help you create a healthy, high-octane diet.

**Bananas** – High in potassium, which regulates nerves, heartbeat and blood pressure. Good source of Vitamin B-6, which is essential for a healthy nervous system. This portable source of fast energy is perfect with breakfast or before a workout. Try to eat a banana every day.

**Beans** – Provide a powerful combo of high protein and high fiber. Also rich in antioxidants. Beans help lower cholesterol, fight heart disease and stabilize blood sugar. Beans to look for: red kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, navy beans and black-eyed peas. Also good: green beans, sugar snap peas, green peas or chick peas. Eat four to five servings a week.

**Blueberries** – Rich in antioxidants, phytoflavonoids, potassium and vitamin C. Blueberries lower the risk of heart disease and cancer, are anti-inflammatory, and may contribute to brain health. Also good: cranberries, raspberries, strawberries, cherries, currants and purple grapes. Eat a cup of blue, violet or red berries every day (frozen or fresh).

**Broccoli** – Loaded with vitamin C, beta-carotene, potassium, and a phytochemical called sulphoraphane, which has strong anticancer properties. Also good: other cruciferous vegetables, such as cabbage, bok choy, cauliflower and brussel sprouts. Eat a half-cup to a cup every day.

**Oats** – High in soluble fiber and vitamin B, oats help lower LDL cholesterol and promote prostate health. In addition to oatmeal and other oat products, be sure to include a variety of whole grains to your diet, such as barley, brown rice, wheat, buckwheat, rye, millet and quinoa. Whole grains are full of B vitamins, Vitamin E, magnesium, iron and fiber, as well as other valuable antioxidants not found in some fruits and vegetables. Look for labels that say 100 percent whole grain, with three to five grams of fiber per serving. Aim for three servings of whole grains every day.
**Oranges** – Excellent source of Vitamin C. Oranges promote heart health while helping prevent cancer, stroke, diabetes and other chronic ailments. Other citrus fruits to try: lemons, grapefruit, kumquats, tangerines and limes. Eat an orange or other citrus fruit every day. If you opt for juice, drink a moderate amount (around eight ounces) and try OJ with added calcium for extra nutritional impact.

**Pumpkin** – Packed with antioxidants, Vitamin C and beta-carotene and high in fiber. Supports skin health and immune function and reduces the risk for cancer and heart disease. Also good: carrots, sweet potatoes, butternut squash and red and orange bell peppers. Eat one cup of red-orange vegetables every day.

**Spinach** – High in vitamins K, A and C, as well as a variety of flavonoids. Lowers the risk of cardiovascular diseases, a variety of cancers, age-related macular degeneration and cataracts. Good alternatives: kale, collards, Swiss chard, bok choy, romaine lettuce, mustard or turnip greens. Eat one cup of steamed spinach or two cups of raw spinach every day.

**Tomatoes** – High in lycopene, which lowers the risk for prostate cancer and other cancers, as well as vitamin C and other antioxidants. Tomatoes decrease risk of arterial aging, heart disease, stroke, memory loss, impotence and wrinkling of the skin. Cooked tomatoes have much higher concentrations of nutrients. Eat at least 10 tablespoons of tomato sauce a week.

**Turkey** – Skinless turkey breast is a terrific source of lean protein and also provides a rich array of nutrients, including niacin, selenium, vitamins B6 and B12 and zinc. Protects heart health and helps builds a strong immune system. Also good: skinless chicken breast. Eat three or four servings a week.

**Walnuts** – One of the best plant sources of protein. Rich in fiber, B vitamins, magnesium, antioxidants, plant sterols and omega-3 fatty acids. Reduces the risk of heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Also good: almonds, pistachios, sesame seeds, peanuts, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, macadamia nuts, pecans, hazelnuts and cashews. Nuts are high in fat but nutritionally dense, so a little goes a long way. Eat one ounce (a small handful) five times a week.

**Wild Salmon** – Rich in omega-3 fatty acids that lower the risk for heart disease, and a great source of protein (wild salmon is preferable, as farmed fish can be high in cancer-causing PCBs). Also good: other fatty cold-water fish, including halibut, sardines, herring and trout. Eat two or three servings a week.

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**Making room for fruits & veggies**

Most men should aim for two to four servings of fruit and three to five servings of vegetables each day. This may sound like a lot, especially if you’re a “meat and potatoes” guy. But keep in mind you don’t have to consume huge quantities.

Have a small apple, a large orange, or a large banana with breakfast or as a midday snack – each piece of fruit counts as a serving. So does an eight-ounce glass of 100% fruit juice or just a half-cup of dried fruit. Need another serving of vegetables to meet your goal? Twelve baby carrots will do the trick, as will 10 broccoli florets, two cups of raw spinach, or a medium baked potato.

For more tips on adding fruits and vegetables to your diet, visit ChooseMyPlate.gov.
Health in a bottle?

You may be tempted to boost your health and fitness with supplements. Instead, focus on getting your daily dose of vitamins and nutrients from a well-rounded diet.

“To give your body everything it needs, you want eat a diet rich in whole foods – foods that haven’t been processed or refined,” says Christopher Ehly, MD, Shawnee Mission Primary Care at Prairie Star. “In particular, most men need to up their intake of fruit and vegetables to a combined total of about eight servings a day.”

While it’s always best to get the vitamins and nutrients you need through good nutrition, here are four supplements worth considering.

1. Vitamin D aids in the absorption of calcium, helping to form and maintain strong bones. It also decreases the risk of osteoporosis, increases muscle strength, and lessens the risk of falls among the elderly. Vitamin D is found in fish, eggs, and fortified milk. Sun exposure contributes significantly to daily production of vitamin D, and just 10-15 minutes of sun exposure a day (without sunscreen) can help prevent deficiencies. You need a daily dose from food, sunlight or supplements because our bodies don’t store vitamin D. Recommended dose: 400 to 600 IU per day.

2. Calcium strengthens bones and is often taken in combination with vitamin D, which aids calcium absorption. Yogurt, milk, cheese, broccoli, spinach and salmon are all good sources for calcium. Calcium-fortified products, such as citrus juices, are another good source. If you can’t get enough in the food you eat, a supplement is a good idea. Recommended dose: 1,000 mg per day.

3. Omega-3 fatty acids reduce the risk of heart disease and arrhythmias (abnormal heartbeats), decrease triglyceride levels, slow the growth of atherosclerotic plaque, and slightly lower blood pressure. Omega-3s may also boost the immune system and help protect you from an array of illnesses. To get the omega-3s you need from food, eat a variety of cold-water, fatty fish (such as salmon, tuna and mackerel) at least twice a week. If you don’t eat much fish, a supplement makes sense. Recommended dose: 1,500 mg per day.

4. Glucosamine is a natural compound found in healthy cartilage. Taking glucosamine can help reverse cartilage loss and increase mobility, and it is often used to help treat osteoarthritis (particularly of the knee). Be sure to look for “glucosamine sulfate” on the label, as other forms are not as effective. Recommended dose: 1,500 mg per day.
Lifestyle

No Brainers

Smoking
Sure, there are plenty of reasons to kick the habit. Smoking is linked to cancer and lung disease. Smokers triple their risk of dying from heart disease, not to mention the risks of second-hand smoke on your family. Smoking is estimated to kill 400,000 Americans every single year. Researchers are also finding that smoking, over many years’ time, can also damage and block the blood vessels inside the penis, resulting in a failure to sustain a normal erection. Add impotence as one more reason to quit.

Because smoking is addictive, it affects both the body and mind, and the withdrawal symptoms are similar to a withdrawal from drugs. But you can quit. In fact, one million Americans quit smoking every year, and almost 50 million Americans are former smokers. Almost everyone who quits has to try more than once. Don’t feel less of a man if you fail a few times before success.

Shawnee Mission Health offers smoking cessation classes throughout the year. For upcoming class dates, visit ShawneeMission.org/classes.

Drinking
Too much alcohol affects your erections, sleep, mood and overall health. Drinking in excess can increase your risk for cancer. If you drink more than three glasses of a libation a day, you’ll be shooting yourself in the arm and doing damage to your liver.

Sleep
“When men don’t get enough sleep, they often try to power through the fatigue rather than making sleep a priority,” says Michael Nelson, MD, Director of the Sleep Disorders Center at Shawnee Mission Medical Center. “This is short-sighted, because chronic lack of sleep can lead to serious health problems, including an increased risk for heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and a weakened immune system.”
Most people need seven to nine hours of good sleep every night, and the amount of sleep required varies from person to person. Here are things you can do to improve the quantity and quality of your sleep:

- Go to bed and wake up around the same time, even on weekends.
- Don’t exercise or eat a big meal late in the evening.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeine and nicotine before going to bed.
- If you take a nap, do so in the early afternoon and limit it to one hour.

If you have good sleep habits and still have trouble getting enough sleep, you may have a sleep disorder. One of the most common sleep disorders is obstructive sleep apnea. Men are twice as likely as women to suffer from sleep apnea, and being overweight and having a large neck size greatly increase your risk. Signs to watch for: loud snoring, gasping and choking during sleep and constant fatigue.

We all have occasional restless nights. But if you have trouble sleeping for more than a few weeks, be sure to talk to your doctor. The same goes for too much sleep, which can be a symptom of depression and other medical conditions.

**Mental Health**

*It’s called “MEN”opause for a reason*

Now a man’s “mid-life crisis” has a name. You might describe male menopause, or andropause as it’s called in medical circles, as puberty in reverse. Andropause is characterized by a loss of testosterone – the hormone that makes men men. Most men see testosterone levels drop as they age. However, some men are impacted more than others. As many as 25 million American males between 40 and 55 are experiencing some menopausal symptoms, such as:

- Energy loss
- Depression
- Loss of libido
- Sexual dysfunction
- Irritability.

As well as physical changes, you may find yourself:

- Discontent with life and/or the lifestyle that may have provided happiness for many years.
- Bored with things/people that have held great interest and dominated your life.
• Feeling adventurous and wanting to do something completely different.
• Questioning the meaning of life and the validity of decisions clearly and easily made years before.
• Confused about who you are, or where your life is going.

Is testosterone replacement therapy right for you?
Testosterone replacement therapy is the primary means of treating men with declining levels of testosterone, but it is a controversial area. Some doctors believe men should be brought up to a certain minimal level of testosterone. Testosterone replacement therapy is advised in men with clear bone density loss, which can lead to osteoporosis and decreased height, and in treating sexual dysfunction in cases where prescribed remedies don’t work. Another area of possible benefit for testosterone therapy may be in cases to maintain body composition and muscle — for instance, in patients fighting cancer.

Specialists say that men considering testosterone replacement therapy – whether by injection, patches, cream, gel or oral form – should get their PSA levels checked as testosterone replacement therapy could increase the risk of prostate cancer. (A PSA blood test identifies a man’s risk for prostate cancer.) Other risks associated with hormone supplementation include the risk of stroke, an increase in liver toxicity and breast development. Ironically, testosterone supplementation also shuts down the production of sperm.

Depression
Each year, six million men in the U.S. are affected by depression. Because men are less likely to admit to depression and doctors are less likely to suspect it in men, initial diagnosis is often delayed two to seven years. The rate of suicide in men is four times that of women, and the rate of suicide rises after age 45, reaching a peak after age 85.

“Men tend to see mental illness as a threat to their masculinity. Having learned to place an emphasis on self-control, independence and competitiveness, they find it ‘unmanly’ to open and share their feelings, so they suppress them,” says Kemal Sagduyu, MD, Psychiatrist at Shawnee Mission Medical Center and professor of psychiatry at the University of Missouri–Kansas City. “Men often react to their depressive symptoms by using unhealthy coping mechanisms, such as drinking, other substance use, and shutting-off from the world.”

Any time you have concerns about the way you feel, talk to your health care provider.

When you’re just having one of those “down” days (and everyone does), here are some things you can do to lift your spirits and relieve some stress:

• Talk about it. Share your feelings with others. Confide in friends and family members when you’re feeling good or bad.
• Be a joiner. Join a book club, go to the library and learn about ongoing groups.
• Stay active. Make sure you’re getting some form of exercise most days of the week. Go for a walk, swim, practice yoga or anything else that makes you move.
• Soak up some sun. Get exposure to at least one hour of sunlight each day. Use a light box in the fall and winter.
**Male bonding**

One of the best things you can do for your mental health? Call a buddy.

In the age of email, 80-hour work weeks, family and household commitments and technological entertainment galore, Americans, especially men, are more isolated than ever. Consider connecting with the guys for a weekly gathering, a regular game of racquetball, bowling or golf or maybe even organize a book group or investors’ club.

**Keep work in perspective**

Perhaps now more than ever before, job stress poses a threat to the health of workers and, in turn, to the health of organizations. With global competition, downsizing and outsourcing, it seems work settings sometimes place more value on economics than humanity.

Job burnout is a real disorder that is as complex as it is devastating. “Burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion due to a long-term, highly demanding work environment. It is a cumulative result of work stress.” Sagduyu explains.

You may be more at risk for job burnout if:

- You feel you have little or no control over your work.
- You try to be everything to everyone.
- You can’t balance your work and your personal life because you identify very strongly with work.
- Your job consists of monotonous tasks.

If you feel you are creeping close to the abyss, do something about it before it’s too late. It can take up to a year to recover from total burnout.
Sexual Health

Protect your sexual fitness

Your sexual health is a good indicator of your overall health, and lifestyle choices can have a big impact on sexual performance.

If you are overweight, out of shape, a smoker, or have undiagnosed or uncontrolled health problems, your sexual performance is going to suffer. If you are eating right, exercising and working with your doctor to manage any health conditions, you should be able to enjoy a healthy, vigorous sex life at every age.

Keep in mind that most erectile problems are avoidable, and most problems that do arise are treatable. As anyone who’s ever seen a commercial for that “little blue pill” knows, help is available.

For most men, problems with erections and orgasms aren’t inevitable. You don’t have to just put up with declining sexual performance and you can prevent most problems by following some common-sense guidelines.

Here are things you can do to maintain your sexual fitness:

- Achieve and maintain ideal body weight. The most effective prevention for erection problems is a healthy lifestyle.
- Work out regularly. Exercise leads to better overall health, improved circulation and a more positive outlook. It also produces nitric oxide, a chemical that is critical to maintaining an erection.
- Lose the cigarettes. Smokers are generally less healthy than non-smokers. Nicotine has been proven to interfere with normal erections.
- If you have diabetes, get it under control. Men with diabetes have erection problems more than twice as often as men without diabetes. Good control of your diabetes can dramatically improve your sexual performance.
- Schedule regular physical exams. Your doctor can help you detect problems you may not even know you have – like diabetes and high blood pressure – that could lead to erection problems.
- Be honest with your doctor. If you have a problem, by all means, ask about it. It may be a sign of a more serious problem. Or it could be as simple as changing one of your medicines. Several common medications used for treatment of high blood pressure, depression and pain have been proven to cause erection problems.
Heart Health

*Keep your heart beating strong*

Coronary heart disease is America’s number one killer. Today, more than one in five Americans suffer from some form of cardiovascular disease, with more than 2,500 Americans dying from it each day. Of those with heart disease, 53 percent are male and 48 percent are female; 89 percent are white, 10 percent are black, and 3 percent are of other races.

As we age, our family history can increase our risk of cardiovascular disease, as can work and home environments and the lifestyle choices we make.

If you want your heart to be healthy for the rest of your life, follow this prescription:

- Get plenty of exercise.
- Follow a good diet.
- Keep your heart clean. That means stay smoke-free, drug-free and limit alcohol consumption.

Your blood pressure and cholesterol levels have a huge impact on determining your risks for heart disease and even stroke.

*Know your “silent killer” numbers*

According to recent estimates, nearly one in three U.S. adults has high blood pressure, but because there are no symptoms, nearly one-third of these people don’t know they have it. In fact, many people have high blood pressure for years without knowing it. Uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart attack, heart failure or kidney failure. This is why high blood pressure is often called the “silent killer.” The only way to tell if you have high blood pressure is to have your blood pressure checked.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blood Pressure (mm hg)</th>
<th>Normal</th>
<th>Prehypertension</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Systolic</td>
<td>Less than 120</td>
<td>120-139</td>
<td>140 or higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diastolic</td>
<td>Less than 80</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>90 or higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once hypertension is detected, it can be controlled with medication.
The other silent killer is cholesterol. Not all cholesterol is bad. In fact, you need some cholesterol. The trouble comes when there is too much bad cholesterol and not enough good cholesterol. Bad cholesterol, known as LDLs, can pump artery walls full of dangerous plaque, which raises the risk of heart attack and stroke. Good cholesterol, known as HDLs, help sweep out those nasty LDLs, but only if you have a lot of it.

Cholesterol screenings also reveal levels of triglycerides, another blood fat that can raise heart and stroke risk.

**Cholesterol and triglycerides**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>For people with no more than one risk factor for heart disease:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>Desirable: Less than 200 milligrams per deciliter (mg/dL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borderline high: 200–239 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High: 240 mg/dL and greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HDL cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>High (desirable): Greater than 60 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acceptable: 40–60 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low: Less than 40 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LDL cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>Optimal: Less than 100 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Near optimal: 100–129 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borderline high: 130–159 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High: 160–189 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very high: 190 mg/dL and greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Triglycerides</strong></td>
<td>Normal: Less than 150 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Borderline high: 150–199 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High: 200–499 mg/dL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very high: 500 mg/dL or higher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The figures in this table are provided by the National Cholesterol Education Program (NCEP) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).*
Are statin drugs the answer?
It may be easier to pop a pill to improve cholesterol counts than to eat better and exercise, but there are always side effects to every drug. Before you choose the easy way out, try controlling bad cholesterol and improving good cholesterol with healthy lifestyle changes. You’ll help more than just your heart.

Different folks have different stroke risks
Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the U.S. Ask yourself these questions to find out if you are at risk for stroke.

Is my blood pressure (BP) higher than 140/90?
Every 30-point increase to systolic BP (top number) and every 10-point rise to diastolic BP (bottom number) doubles your risk of dying from stroke.

Do I smoke?
One in four strokes strikes a smoker. Quitting cuts your risk in half after just one year.

Do I have diabetes?
Diabetes ravages blood vessels, tripling your risk of stroke.

Does my waistline expand to at least 93 percent of my hip circumference?
The more ab flab you have, the more artery-inflaming C-reactive protein is circulating in your blood.

How much exercise do I get a day?
Just 30 minutes a day reduces blood pressure and inflammation, and improves insulin efficiency and blood-sugar control.

How much alcohol do I drink?
Heavy drinkers (more than three a day) are more likely to suffer a stroke than nondrinkers.

Has one of my parents, or a brother or a sister, ever had a stroke?
According to British researchers, a stroke in an immediate family member who’s 65 or younger more than doubles your risk of having one before you reach retirement age.
Do I eat broiled or baked fish in my diet regularly?
One serving a month of fish cuts stroke by almost 10 percent, says a Northwestern University study.

Do I eat at least three fruits and vegetables a day, including oranges and other citrus fruits?
Danish researchers believe Vitamin C may be behind a nearly 40 percent lower risk of stroke.

Do I limit my intake of salt?
Doctors with the Northern Manhattan Stroke Study found that one extra teaspoon of salt a day boosts stroke risk by 80 percent.

Am I African-American?
The burden of stroke is greater among African-Americans than in any other group. In fact, blacks have almost twice the risk of first-ever stroke compared with whites, and blacks 35–54 years old have four times the relative risk for stroke.

Am I married?
Divorced and widowed men have a 23 percent higher stroke risk.

Do I suffer from depression?
A bout of depression can raise risk by as much as 40 percent.

Do I readily explode in anger or startle easily?
A study in the journal Neurology notes that 34 percent of stroke patients experienced anger, fear, irritability, nervousness or a startling event in the hours before the stroke.

HEALTHaware
For a free online heart or stroke risk assessment, visit ShawneeMission.org/TellMeMyRisk.
Preventing and Detecting Cancer

Cancer is more likely as you grow older, but it affects men at every stage of life.

Men need to be aware of the types of cancer most likely to affect them. It is very important to know the warning symptoms and what they can do to prevent these cancers in the first place.

The most common kinds of cancer in men are skin, prostate, lung and colon. Of these, lung cancer causes the most deaths, followed by prostate cancer and colon cancer.

Lung Cancer

Who's at risk?
Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. Compared to non-smokers, men who smoke are about 23 times more likely to develop lung cancer and a host of other tobacco-related diseases such as heart disease, stroke and emphysema – and don’t forget impotence. Exposure to toxic substances such as asbestos also drastically increases your risk for developing lung cancer, so it’s important to know if you are at risk for having had this type of exposure.

Watch for these warning symptoms:
• Coughing
• Trouble breathing
• Chest pain
• Lymph node enlargement
• Pneumonia that doesn’t go away

Be aware that lung cancer is difficult to detect and can be completely asymptomatic.

Best thing you can do:
DON’T SMOKE! If you don’t smoke, don’t start. If you do smoke, ask your physician about help quitting. Smoking is the major known and avoidable risk factor. If you have smoked at least one pack of cigarettes a day for 20 years (even if you have quit in the last 15 years), you may be eligible for lung cancer screening with a low dose CT scan of the chest. Talk to your health care provider about your risk factors, any warning symptoms, and the best options for you.
Prostate Cancer

Who’s at risk?
Prostate cancer is the second leading cause of death in men simply because so many men are affected by it. Most cases of prostate cancer occur in men older than 50, and more than 70 percent of these cases are in men over 65. African American men are more likely to develop prostate cancer and twice as likely to die from it. Having one or more close relatives with prostate cancer also increases your risk, as does eating a diet high in animal fat.

Watch for these warning symptoms:

- Blood in the urine
- The need to urinate frequently, especially at night
- Weak or interrupted urine flow
- Pain or burning feeling while urinating
- The inability to urinate
- Constant pain in the lower back, pelvis or upper thighs

Best thing you can do:
Prostate cancer screenings include digital rectal exams (DRE) and prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood tests. Many different organizations have different recommendations for prostate cancer screening and when or if to start PSA blood tests or exams. Please discuss your personal and family medical history with your physician to determine your best course of action.
Colon Cancer

Who’s at risk?
Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related death overall, and the third most deadly cancer to men behind lung and prostate cancer. Most colorectal cancers are found in people over 50. Individuals with a personal or family history of the disease, or who have polyps in the colon or rectum, or inflammatory bowel disease, are at greater risk than the general population. A diet mostly of high-fat foods (especially from animal sources), being overweight, smoking and being inactive also increase a person’s risk for colon cancer.

Watch for these warning symptoms:
- Change in bowel habits (frequency, constipation, diarrhea)
- Bright red blood in stool
- Dark discoloration of stool (a possible sign of hidden blood)
- Abdominal pain

Best thing you can do:
Eating a low-fat diet rich in fruits and vegetables may lower the risks. The American Cancer Society recommends one of these testing options beginning at age 50:
- Colonoscopy
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy
- Fecal occult blood test

Talk with your doctor about your risk factors for colon cancer and the best testing option for you.

Stay vigilant!
Ask your health provider for more information about cancer and your risk factors for different types of cancer. Another good source for information is the American Cancer Society: cancer.org.
In addition to learning how to prevent and detect lung, prostate and colon cancers, educate yourself about other types of cancer that affect men most frequently, including:

- **Skin cancer.** Be aware of any changes to your skin, including moles that grow, change color or change shape. Melanoma is the most dangerous type of skin cancer and the leading cause of death from skin disease.

- **Testicular cancer.** Most common among men in their 20s and 30s. Be sure to do a monthly testicular self-examination.

- **Penile cancer.** Risk factors include coming in contact with the human papilloma virus (HPV) and smoking. Be alert to any abnormalities on your penis, such as warts, blisters, sores, ulcers or white patches (even if they are not painful).

Cancer is a problem that unites us all – patients, family members, friends and health care providers. The good news is that a cancer diagnosis is not a death sentence. There are more than 10 million people living as cancer survivors.

**Take Action!**

For answers to your questions about men’s health, or to find a doctor, call the ASK-A-NURSE Resource Center at 913-676-7777 or visit ShawneeMission.org.