

Men's Health Article

Getting Men in for a Checkup May Take a Bit of Reminding from Their Loved Ones

If you ask a man to make a list of things he *least* wants to do, going to the doctor is likely near the top. In fact, many men don't even like talking about their health and some will avoid going to the doctor until their condition is so serious that it can't be ignored.

It's important to remember that ignoring what seems like a minor symptom now could allow it to develop into something bigger down the road. And some conditions can have no obvious symptoms until they've gotten serious.

For example, heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the U.S. And half of men who die suddenly of heart disease had no previous symptoms to alert them there was a problem.¹ A major risk factor for developing heart disease is having high blood pressure, which is sometimes called the "silent killer," because it, too, sometimes shows no symptoms.² All of this shows us how important it is for men to keep track of their health.

So, what's a loving partner, mother, sister or friend to do? Remind the men in your life to get a checkup – over and over until they agree to go.

Here's a suggestion: Tell them to think of it like car maintenance. We don't wait until there's smoke coming out from under the hood. We take the car in for regular oil changes and diagnostics to keep it running smoothly. A primary care doctor can do an exam, check lab work and ask questions about symptoms and lifestyle that may contribute to certain health conditions, like heart disease. If an issue is found, they'll make a plan to treat it, so it doesn't progress to something serious. Seeing a doctor may seem scary or inconvenient the first time, but it's worth it!

And if going to a doctor is too big for a first step, he can check his blood pressure for free at many local grocery stores or pharmacies. A normal blood pressure is less than 120 over 80.³

Our Florida Blue Center teams can also check their blood pressure and help them find care, like a low- or no-cost clinic or other resources that may be available nearby. We also host events online and in person that are open to the community. You can find upcoming events at floridablue.com/center or call 877-352-5830.

You can read more about heart disease, its risk factors and healthy lifestyle choices at floridablue.com/MensHealth.

¹ <https://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/men.htm>

² https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/communications_kit.htm?adlt=strict

³ <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings>