

A Message to Men, Take Control of your Health!

American men fail to get the health care they need to stay in good health. A significant number of men do not get routine checkups, preventative care or health counseling. They also ignore symptoms or delay getting care when they are sick or in pain. I have been witness to these behaviors more than I care to remember during my 10 years of practice, and a new study confirms these facts as truth.

Twenty eight percent of men (compared to 8% of women) have not seen a doctor in the previous year and one in three men has no regular doctors (compared to one in five women.) Sixty percent of men over 50 have not been screened for colon cancer and 41% have not been tested for prostate cancer.

The irregular connection men have with the healthcare system means they often go without preventative care. Men put off going to a doctor until a medical crisis. Only 18% of men seek attention when symptoms of their illness begin. These behaviors that delay care and avoid preventative measures have the effect of raising healthcare expenses because they result in a longer recovery period and more costly treatments. Most importantly, these avoidance behaviors create a higher chance of severe and chronic debilitating illness and premature death.

Your healthcare professional can also be a source of information. Remember that just because a doctor gives you a diagnosis and prescription it doesn't mean you have to do what he/she says. If it doesn't feel right to you, get a second opinion. By getting an examination and recommendation (or prescription), you have gained information and you can now make informed choices regarding your health. Having knowledge is a much more powerful position to be in. Without knowledge you are weak and defenseless. I don't think that any man would choose weakness over strength. Take the time to take care of your body. Your family will thank you for it.

Yours in health,

Dr. Rick

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