



Health Tips for Women in their 20s and 30s

There are many lifestyle choices that women can make in their 20s and 30s that help set the stage for good health. A lot of these choices stem from following recommendations for preventative care and can greatly reduce the risk of developing certain diseases and ailments.

1. Don't Overlook Important Nutrients

Women in their 20s and 30s need to be sure they're not skimping out on protein. Studies suggest that 60 to 70 grams of protein a day is needed. Other nutrients to focus on: potassium, omega-3 fats, calcium, phytonutrients, and iron. If you plan on becoming pregnant, it's critical to get enough folic acid.

2. Get Enough Sleep

Most adults need 7 to 8 hours of good sleep every night. Getting adequate sleep can provide health benefits, including fewer illnesses, the ability to maintain a healthy weight, and a lower risk of high blood pressure and diabetes.

3. Maintain A Healthy Weight

Exercise regularly (try to move for at least 30 minutes every day), make healthy food choices and watch portion sizes, eat 2 servings of fruit and 5 servings of veggies every day, and increase your water intake.

4. Drink In Moderation

For healthy women, this means up to one drink a day (12 fluid oz. of beer, 5 fluid oz. of wine, and 1.5 fluid oz. of distilled spirits). While it's been found that moderate alcohol use has some health benefits for older adults, some evidence shows that even moderate alcohol use may cause more harm than good in younger adults.

5. Do Not Smoke

Not smoking, or quitting if you do, is the single most effective step you can take to reduce your risk of future illness. Smoking causes lung and other cancers, and increases your risk of heart disease and stroke.

6. Get Important Screenings

It's important to first choose a primary care physician (PCP) who can help you establish a baseline by checking your weight, blood pressure, cholesterol levels, thyroid, and blood glucose levels in order to help you establish good health habits.

- For women, reproductive and breast health are an important focus. Clinical **breast exams** are recommended every three years, a **pap test** every two years, and a **pelvic exam** yearly. Women should also learn how to give themselves breast self-exams and do so monthly.
- **Sexually transmitted infection (STI)** tests and HIV testing are key for those with new or multiple partners.
- **Mole exam**—this can be done monthly as a self-exam and also as part of your routine checkups with your PCP.

If you don't have a primary care physician, [find a doctor here](#), or call 1-888-996-9644.

Top Health Concerns For Women Over 20

Weight or Weight Gain

Maintaining a healthy weight requires establishing some healthy habits, and that's not always easy. If weight gain has become an issue, ask your doctor for recommendations. Another option is to join a weight management program like the Healthy Weight for Wellness Program offered by our Integrative Wellness Center.

Contraception

Birth control options are key for women, especially in their mid-20s when fertility is at its peak. While the pill is a popular option, women should discuss with their doctor the best method for their lifestyle and medical history.

Mental Health

Women are nearly twice as likely to suffer from major depression than men, and the average age at onset is the mid-20s. Other mental health disorders generally begin in the 20s as well, such as bipolar disorder. If you feel like you are suffering from a mental health disorder, talk to your doctor.

Fertility

While women in their mid-20s are at their fertility peak, waning fertility is most noticeable after the mid-30s. Talk to your doctor about your options if you plan on starting a family, or experience fertility issues.

Other Exams

- **Eye and ear health**—both a comprehensive eye exam and a hearing test every 10 years
- **Oral health**—dental exams and cleanings should be done every 6 months

Immunizations

- Seasonal Influenza Vaccine—Yearly
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis Booster Vaccine (Tdap)—Every 10 years
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine—Up to age 21
- Meningococcal Vaccine—Especially college students or those in the military

