### **Health checks**

How to stay healthy throughout your life





#### Language

- We take a broad and inclusive approach to the topic of women's health.
- We write health information for people with diverse backgrounds, experiences and identities. We use the terms 'women' and 'girls, but we acknowledge that these terms are not inclusive of all people who may use our content.

#### Presentation aims

By the end of this presentation, we hope you will:

- be aware of the importance of regular health checks
- know which health checks are recommended for your age
- know when you need to see a doctor.



# Maintain your health rather than fix health problems

### Things you can do to stay healthy

- Make healthy lifestyle choices
  - eat a nutritious diet
  - exercise regularly
  - get enough sleep
  - limit alcohol
  - don't smoke.
- Maintain a healthy weight.



#### Things you can do to stay healthy

- Stay socially connected.
- Check your mental and emotional health.
- Monitor your skin.
- Check your eyesight.
- Take care of your teeth.
- Have regular health checks and stay up to date with your immunisations.



#### Regular general health checks

- A health check is a medical examination by a health professional.
- Have regular general health checks with your doctor to:
  - check on your current health
  - find health issues early
  - have age-specific screening tests
  - gain information.
- Ask your doctor if you need other tests and how often you should have them.

#### **Immunisation**

To help you stay healthy, make sure you're up to date with your immunisations, including:

- childhood immunisations
- HPV vaccine
- COVID-19 vaccine
- flu vaccine
- shingles vaccine
- pneumococcal vaccine.





## Health checks for different ages and life stages

#### Sexual health

Check for sexually transmitted infections (STIs):

- once you become sexually active
- every time you have a new sexual partner
- regularly if you or your partner have sex with other people.



#### Sexual health

- Protect yourself against STIs at every age.
- Talk to your doctor about your contraception needs and any sexual problems you may be having.



#### Reproductive health

- Have a pre-pregnancy health check six months before trying to get pregnant.
- Before becoming pregnant, be as healthy as possible.
- Once you become pregnant, have regular antenatal checks.



#### Breast health – self-check

- Get to know your breasts.
- From your 20s onwards, check your breasts once a month for any changes.
- See your doctor if you notice any changes.



#### Breast health – breast cancer screening

- A mammogram is an X-ray of your breasts.
- It looks for cancer in your breast tissue.
- Once you turn 50, have a mammogram every two years until you're 74.



#### Cervical screening

- The cervical screening test has replaced the Pap test.
- It checks for human papillomavirus (HPV) in the cells of your cervix.
- HPV can cause changes in your cervix that can lead to cancer.
- Have the test every five years once you turn 25 until you're 74.



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#### Heart health

- Heart disease is a group of conditions that affect the heart.
- See your doctor for a heart health check to assess your individual risk of heart disease.
- Understanding your risk of heart disease can help you take steps to protect your heart.



#### Heart health check – know your numbers

Blood pressure

Less than 130/80 mmHg

Cholesterol

Less than 5.5 mmol/l

Blood sugar

Less than 5.5 mmol/l (fasting)

Weight

BMI: 18.5– 24.9 kg/m<sup>2</sup>

Waist: less than 80 cm

#### Type 2 diabetes

- High sugar (glucose) levels in your blood can cause health problems over time.
- You're at risk of type 2 diabetes if you:
  - have family history of diabetes
  - are overweight or obese.
- If you're at risk of type 2 diabetes, have a blood sugar (glucose) test.



#### Bowel cancer screening

- The bowel cancer screening test checks for blood in your poo.
- It is sent to your home.
- You can do it at home.
- Once you turn 50, have the test every two years until you're 74.





#### Bone health

- Bones lose density and strength as we age.
- After menopause, women have a higher risk of osteoporosis.
- Discuss an assessment with your doctor.
- A bone density scan is available for women at risk of osteoporosis.





## Summary

#### Throughout your life

- Maintain a healthy lifestyle and healthy weight.
- Stay socially connected.
- Check your mental and emotional health.
- Monitor your skin.
- Check your eyesight.
- Take care of your teeth.
- Have regular health checks.
- Stay up to date with your immunisations.



#### Health checks for adolescents

- HPV vaccine
- Sexual health and STI check
- Blood pressure and weight check



#### Health checks in your 20s and 30s

- Sexual health and STI check
- Breast self-check
- Cervical screening test
- Blood pressure and weight check
- Pre-pregnancy health check



#### Health checks in your 40s

- Sexual health and STI check
- Breast self-check
- Cervical screening test
- Heart health check
- Type 2 diabetes check
- Pre-pregnancy health check



#### Health checks in your 50s

- Sexual health and STI check
- Breast self-check
- Breast cancer screening (mammogram)
- Cervical screening test
- Heart health check
- Type 2 diabetes check
- Bowel cancer screening test
- Bone health assessment



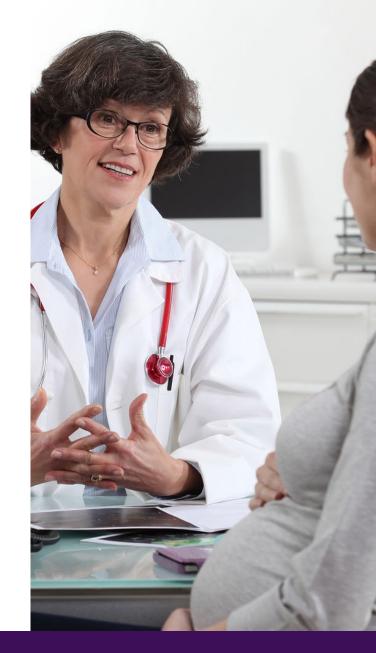
#### Health checks from your 60s

- Sexual health and STI check
- Breast self-check
- Breast cancer screening (mammogram)
- Cervical screening test
- Heart health check
- Type 2 diabetes check
- Bowel cancer screening test
- Bone health assessment



#### See a doctor...

- if you have specific medical conditions or risk factors for any illness
- if you notice any change in your body that is not normal for you.



#### More information on health checks

- Jean Hailes for Women's Health jeanhailes.org.au/health-a-z/health-checks
- Health Direct <u>healthdirect.gov.au/health-checks-for-women</u>
- Better Health Channel betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/health-checks-for-women



## Thank you

Go to **jeanhailes.org.au/subscribe** for updates on the latest in women's health











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**Disclaimer.** This information does not replace medical advice. If a person is worried about their health, they should talk to their doctor or healthcare team.

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