

# Improve Health Outcomes with Preventive Screenings



Ben Franklin's famous quote, "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" continues to ring true. But many patients are unsure of the benefits of preventive screenings. Engage with patients about which screenings and preventive health measures are right for them.

## Patients at risk of having diabetes

Health Partners Plans' (HPP) diabetes prevention programs (DPP) can help at-risk members reduce the chance of developing diabetes. DPP classes teach healthier lifestyle choices to prevent the onset of the disease. Patients must meet eligibility requirements. Contact your Network Account Manager (NAM) or visit [hpplans.com/diabetes-mgmt](https://hpplans.com/diabetes-mgmt) to learn more.

## Patients living with diabetes

A diabetes self-management education (DSME) program can help improve the health of members age 60 and older living with diabetes. DSME participants are more likely to have improved clinical outcomes, including better HbA1c control, blood pressure and LDL cholesterol. For help referring patients to a DSME, download our provider toolkit at [hpplans.com/diabetes-mgmt](https://hpplans.com/diabetes-mgmt).

For patients diagnosed with diabetes remember to:

- **Refer patients to an eye care specialist for an annual retinal eye exam.** A provider referral is required for most specialist visits.
- **Test patients for nephropathy every year.** Those who have documentation of nephropathy in their medical record during the past year should be tested.
- **Perform an HbA1c test at least annually.** Patients with an HbA1c level below 9 percent are considered to have their blood sugar under control.

## Prevent barriers to colorectal cancer screenings

One third of adults aged 50 or older—the age group at greatest risk—have not been screened as recommended for colorectal cancer.\* The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends that adults aged 50-75 be screened for colorectal cancer. Fear or lack of knowledge about available screening options can lead to non-adherence. Encourage screenings by sharing:

- **The importance of screening:** Colorectal cancer almost always starts with a small growth called a polyp. If found early, a polyp can be removed during a colonoscopy.
- **Other screening options:** Depending on the patient's history and risk factors, suggest alternative tests, such as a fecal occult blood test (FOBT) where the results last a year. It's noninvasive, pain free and can be performed in the patient's home. If results are abnormal, follow-up testing might be necessary, including a colonoscopy. HPP offers FOBT kits to non-compliant members (which includes members who have never taken an FOBT before and members who have completed it previously, but are overdue for screening). Any abnormal results will be shared with you for follow-up.
- **Review your care gap report in NaviNet:** Identify to your NAM any members who completed a colonoscopy in the last 10 years who are marked as non-compliant in your care gap report. We may be able to do a chart review, and if the colonoscopy is confirmed in the patient's records, enhance your practice's Quality Care Plus (QCP) payment; a colorectal cancer screening is an incentivized QCP measure for Medicare patients.



Many preventive health screenings are part of our HPP Rewards program, which allows members to earn rewards points for completing certain health activities. The activities vary for Medicaid and Medicare members, but breast cancer, colon cancer and HbA1c screenings are included. Visit [HPPrewards.com](https://www.hpprewards.com) to learn more.



## Breast cancer screenings

According to the American Cancer Society, 1 in 8 U.S. women is at risk of developing breast cancer. Stress the importance of regular mammograms among female patients between the ages of 50 and 74. Mammograms can detect breast cancer at an early stage when it's most treatable. Address these common misconceptions about mammograms:

- **Mammograms are painful:** The discomfort only lasts a few seconds. And most centers now use digital mammography that should be more comfortable for patients. Recommend patients schedule a mammogram when their breasts are not tender or swollen to help reduce discomfort.
- **Fear of finding something:** Not all abnormal findings are breast cancer—8 out of 10 lumps are not cancerous.
- **Fear of radiation:** Many centers use digital mammography that uses a very low and safe dose of radiation. Remind patients that mammograms are safe.

## For patients due for screening, follow these tips:

- Refer members to key locations for screenings.
- If you have a large patient population due for screenings, partner with the Fox Chase Mobile Screening Unit for an event. HPP can help you get started. Contact your NAM for more information.
- Write scripts for members who are overdue for screenings to reduce administrative burden.



[HPPPlans.com/providers](https://www.hppplans.com/providers)



For more information, contact the Providers Services Helpline at **1-888-991-9023** or your NAM (Network Account Manager).

\*CDC, Screen for Life: National Colorectal Cancer Action Campaign, <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/sfl/index.htm>