

Cancer

Cancer remains everyone's worst fear. But, I might remind you that cancer is often curable. It is heart disease that is the nation's number one killer.



Preventative measures

- We recommend monthly breast exams.
- We recommend yearly mammograms in every woman over the age of 40.
- We recommend yearly breast exams by a physician.
- We recommend pap smears in every sexually active woman. If you have had 3 negative pap smears and remain monogamous, you may defer the yearly exam and have a Pap smear every 3 years. If you have had a hysterectomy, you should still be examined carefully and may need a regular pelvic exam particularly if you still have your ovaries.
- There are now newer and some say better means of doing a Pap smear. A thin prep is available and is probably a better means of looking at the slides prepared from your exam.

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The **Choice Care Life Potential** Program Preventative Care

It is within your power to make a difference in your health. Unfortunately it is too easy to ignore risks to your health and it can be very hard to make effective changes that improve your health. Dr Zwelling's Life Potential program makes preventative care information accessible, and our Life Potential Profile can help you take control of your life 3 Easy Steps at a time.

- Prostate exams should be done on every male over the age of 50. There is continued debate about the usefulness of the PSA test, a laboratory test used to detect prostate cancer. The debate centers on the cost of doing too many biopsies in men without evidence of disease. A good cancer screening procedure must limit false positive results or its usefulness is limited.
- Skin exams should be done yearly by a physician during your physical.
- Stool should be examined for blood on a yearly basis starting at the age of 40. This may be a part of your pelvic or rectal exam.
- Colonoscopy has been demonstrated to be the best test to look for polyps, the progenitor of colon cancer. A colonoscopy should be completed after the age of 50 and every 5–6 years thereafter. Theoretically, we could completely eradicate colon cancer if every person had this life saving procedure in a timely fashion. Unfortunately some insurance companies will not pay for a full colonoscopy, which requires sedation.
- The only cancer vaccine that is recommended at this time is the new HPV vaccine. Please see the fact sheet on vaccinations for a full explanation.

Information helps you make healthy choices.

