

New York Health Plan Association Member Plans Adult Preventive Health Guidelines — Cancer Screening

Early detection of cancer is a key factor in a patient's chances for recovery as earlier diagnosis leads to earlier treatment. With a philosophy that emphasizes preventive medicine, health plans promote the importance of early detection through appropriate screening tests.

New York Health Plan Association (HPA) members support implementation of the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality evidenced-based clinical preventive services recommendations developed by the US Preventive Services Task Force as well as many cancer prevention guidelines developed and endorsed by other medical specialty organizations.

Individuals at increased risk for a particular cancer should speak with their physician about starting screening at a younger age or having more frequent exams. Coverage for more frequent or additional services may depend on the risks for a particular patient. It is important patients check with their individual health plan for details regarding requirements for obtaining screening.

All HPA member plans cover Cancer Prevention Screenings for:

Breast Cancer

- Clinical breast exam every 1-3 years.
- Screening mammography every 1-2 years for woman aged 40 and older.

Cervical Cancer

- Annual Screening PAP test for cervical cancer for all women who have been sexually active and have a cervix.
- Every woman who has had three consecutive, normal/negative results may be screened every 2-3 years at the discretion of the physician and patient.

Colorectal Cancer

Beginning at age 50, both men and women should receive screening for colorectal cancer.

- Colonoscopy every 10 years; *OR*
- Flexible sigmoidoscopy every 5 years or at physician discretion every 5-10 years; *AND/OR*
- Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) at physician's discretion.

Prostate Cancer

The US Preventive Services Task Force has concluded there is insufficient evidence to recommend for or against routine prostate cancer screening using prostate specific antigen (PSA) testing or digital rectal exam (DRE).

- Digital rectal exam for asymptomatic men aged 50 and older; annually for men aged 40 and over with a family history.
- Discussion with physician regarding indications for PSA testing starting at age 50 for most men, at age 45 for African Americans, and at age 45 or earlier for men with a family history of prostate cancer.