

MAN MOT HEALTH CHECK LIST

Introduction

It's not only your car or your boiler that needs regular servicing and checkups, your health does too. In fact, research shows that when it comes to dealing with health niggles, men are the most neglectful, with 1 in 10 waiting until a health issue becomes serious enough to require immediate medical attention before booking an appointment with their doctor. More worryingly, research suggests that 3 million men in the UK never do anything about their health and prefer to stay well clear of their GP. To keep you performing at your best, we've listed below some of the most pressing conditions affecting men's health, the symptoms to look out for and the health checks you should be aware of to keep your health on track.

Put your general-health-knowledge to the test with this quiz and ensure you're doing all you can to keep your engine ticking over for longer...

Health Checks

What is the most common sign of a prostate problem?

- Correct answer: Difficulty in passing urine
- Fake answer: Pain during sex
- Fake answer: Sudden weight gain

The most common sign of a prostate problem is difficulty in passing urine. Changes in the prostate narrow the urethra, the tube which carries urine from the bladder. This is one symptom that can indicate either a benign prostate enlargement (BPH) or prostate cancer.

There are a number of tests for prostate disease – discuss them with your GP.

Why?

Whilst survival rates of prostate cancer have improved dramatically over the past 30 years, with five year survival rates standing at 77%, approximately 10,000 British men still lose their lives to the disease each year.

Risk Factor

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer affecting men in the UK, with around 36,000 men being diagnosed each year. Recent research suggests that a healthy diet may lower the risk. There is some evidence to suggest that a chemical found in tomatoes may also lower the risk.

What waist measurement is considered within the obese range?

- Fake answer: 39 inches
- Fake answer: 42 inches
- Correct answer: 37 inches

If your waist is more than 37 inches then you're getting into the obese range. More than 40 inches around the belly button is considered as dangerously obese.

Why?

It's predicted that 80% of men will be overweight or obese by 2020. Being overweight increases your risk of developing a number of health related issues. In the short term it can cause snoring, difficulty sleeping, feeling tired on a daily basis, and back and joint pains. Left untreated, long-term problems can develop including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, infertility, type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart disease, stroke, chronic back ache and depression.

Risk Factor

1 in 5 men in England are obese; a further 40% are overweight. It sounds obvious, but if your waist circumference has revealed that you're overweight then it's time to take action. Around 9 out of 10 blokes don't eat enough fruit and veg but start making small changes to your diet and exercise and you'll soon notice a difference. Alternatively, speak with your GP to give you the kick start – and support - you need.

How many cases of undiagnosed type 2 diabetes are believed to exist in the UK?

- Fake answer: 300,000
- Correct answer: 500,000
- Fake answer: 750,000

Passing urine more frequently, increased thirst, excessive tiredness, thrush infections and weight loss are all indicators of diabetes – a problem with the hormone insulin which prevents the body metabolising sugars.

In Type 1 diabetes the signs and symptoms will usually be very obvious, developing quickly, usually over a few weeks. In people with Type 2 diabetes the signs and symptoms will not be so obvious or even non-existent.

Important risk factors for Type 2 diabetes are: Being aged 40 or over if you are white, or 25 or over if you are black or South Asian; a close family history i.e. a parent or sibling with the condition; being overweight and /or having a large waist circumference (over 37 inches, or over 35 inches for Asian men).

Taking early action is key so if any of the symptoms apply to you, ask your GP for a diabetes test. You can also take an online self-assessment test at:

<http://www.diabetes.org.uk/riskscore>

Why?

Left undiagnosed diabetes can lead to serious health complications, including kidney failure, blindness, heart disease and amputation.

Risk Factor

There are currently 2.3 million people living with diabetes and a further 500,000 people who have type 2 diabetes but aren't yet aware of it. With careful management, people with diabetes can lead full and active lives.

Which of the following could be a contributing factor to heart disease?

- Fake answer: Height
- Correct answer: Family history

Heart disease is one of the most common causes of premature death (before the age of 75) in the UK. High blood pressure, high cholesterol, weight, smoking, diabetes, family history and stress can all

be contributing factors leading to heart disease. If you're worried your heart health is at risk, speak to your GP today.

Why?

Collectively, heart and circulatory diseases cause more than one in three of all deaths in the UK.

Risk Factor

Heart disease is the single biggest health issue affecting men in the UK and whilst it's believed that a healthy diet can help to protect against it, 90% of men don't eat the recommended daily allowance of fruit and veg. Make sure you're not one of them.

What's more, some research has suggested that eating processed meat such as bacon or sausage can lead to a higher risk of contracting heart disease – so next time you reach for a fry up, think again.

How many men over the age of 40 experience erection difficulties at some point?

- Fake answer: One in five
- Real answer: One in two
- Fake answer: One in ten

Erectile dysfunction (ED) is the inability to get and maintain an erection that is sufficient for satisfactory sexual intercourse. ED, also known as impotence, is a very common condition, with up to one in two men being affected by it at some stage.²¹ Speak to your GP if you have any questions or concerns.

Why?

Many men will experience episodes of ED that improve without the need for treatment. Generally, the prognosis for ED is good. Some men will just need to make some lifestyle changes, such as losing weight and taking regular exercise. Other men might need to see their GP for treatment or access sex therapy through an a relationship support service like Relate.

Risk Factor

Few people realise that most cases of ED are actually caused by an underlying health condition. These conditions can include diabetes or heart disease.

For further information

If you have any health concerns it's important to seek medical advice straight away. Even symptoms that seem insignificant could indicate a more serious health problem. To get checked out or to seek advice, visit your GP or pharmacist or contact NHS Direct on 0845 4647 or www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk Or you can speak to a doctor in total confidence, from the comfort of your own home. Pfizer will be organising private online consultations with GP's; exclusively for men, every Monday evening between 6pm-11pm from 26 July – 22 November.

The surgery will also be hosting a series of specialist sexual health and relationship clinics manned by sexual health expert Tracey Cox and Relate counsellors.

For further information please visit www.manmot.co.uk

For more information about men's health issues you can visit the Men's Health Forum website www.malehealth.co.uk.

The online surgery is funded by Pfizer and is supported by National Obesity Forum, Men's Health Forum, Sexual Advice Association, Relate, HEART UK and Diabetes UK.

Pfizer's work with patient groups is carried out in accordance with strict guidelines and codes of conduct including the PMCPA's updated Code of Practice.