

Men's Health

Overview

Men's health addresses physical, mental, and social well-being of men across their life course. According to the Mayo Clinic and other sources, major health threats for men include heart disease, cancer (especially prostate and colorectal), lung disease, stroke, and diabetes.

Globally, men tend to have shorter life expectancy and higher rates of avoidable mortality compared to women, due in part to lifestyle, occupational hazards, late health-seeking behaviour and greater prevalence of risk behaviours.

Causes / Risk Factors

Key risk factors in men include:

- Smoking, heavy alcohol use, poor diet, overweight/obesity
- Sedentary lifestyle, high-stress occupations, inadequate sleep
- Low uptake of preventive healthcare, delayed screening, and avoidance of healthcare services
- Specific male conditions: prostate enlargement (BPH), low testosterone, erectile dysfunction may signal broader health issues

Symptoms / Warning Signs

Common warning signs in men:

- Chest pain, breathlessness, palpitations (may indicate cardiovascular disease)
- Persistent urinary symptoms (hesitancy, frequent urination) could indicate prostate issues
- Unexplained weight loss or fatigue might signal underlying cancer or metabolic disease
- Mood changes, loss of interest, or sleep problems may indicate mental health concerns which often remain unreported

Prevention / Lifestyle

Men should adopt:

- Regular physical activity (150 mins/week moderate or 75 mins vigorous), balanced diet low in processed foods
- Avoid tobacco and limit alcohol

- Maintain healthy waist circumference (e.g., <102 cm in many guidelines) to reduce risk of metabolic disease
- Regular check-ups: blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes screening, prostate exam as per age/risk
- Address mental health and stress—men are less likely to seek help, so awareness and routine discussions matter

Screening / Diagnosis

Important screening includes:

- Periodic cardiovascular screening (BP, lipids), colorectal cancer screening (depending on age)
- Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing and digital rectal exam (as per guideline) for prostate cancer risk
- Assessment for testosterone deficiency or other endocrine issues if symptoms present
- Mental health screening for depression/substance use—recommended in primary care for men with risk factors

Management / Public Health Perspective

From a public health lens:

- Programs aimed at male health must tackle behavioural risk factors (smoking cessation, alcohol reduction, physical activity)
- Raising awareness about early screening and health-seeking behaviours in men is essential
- Health systems need to adapt to reach men in non-traditional settings (workplaces, community centres)
- Research is growing on men's health, moving beyond andrology to holistic life-course approach

Summary Points

- Men face unique health risks that are largely preventable through lifestyle and screening
- Encouraging timely health-seeking behaviour and regular check-ups is essential
- Public health efforts must tailor to men's behavioural and societal contexts

Disclaimer: This document is for educational purposes only and should not be considered medical advice.