

## TO PREPARE FOR YOUR PHYSICAL

Dear Patient:

Thank you for scheduling a preventive health exam (complete physical) with Meetinghouse Family Physicians. This is an extremely important aspect of your total health care. In order to make the process as meaningful as possible, and to make sure that we address your issues, we are sending you this packet.

### To prepare for the visit, please do the following:

1. Bring your latest insurance card. Also be sure to update us on any changes (address, phone, employments, email, pharmacy, etc.).
2. Go through your records to find out your latest immunizations. Important immunizations for adults include tetanus (every 10 years) and pneumonia (once over age 65).
3. Avoid wearing perfumes or skin creams, which can interfere with performing an EKG, if it is needed.
4. Unless told in advance not to do so, please come in fasting (nothing to eat or drink except water for 10 hours prior to the visit. It is OK to take medication.) If you prefer to get your blood drawn at a commercial lab, do it prior to your visit, so we will have the results at the time of your physical. Please contact our office at least one week in advance.
5. Bring in a list of all medications you are taking, including doses and frequency.
6. If you monitor your blood pressure or blood sugar at home, bring in a record of the results.

### What we will do:

You will receive a detailed history, physical examination, and preventive health recommendations as part of the visit. Depending on your age, risk factors, and symptoms, you may receive a hearing test, vision test, EKG, or breathing test.

### Testing:

Testing is individualized according to age, sex, and specific risk factors. There is no uniform battery of tests that are done at an annual physical. Below are general guidelines of tests and their frequency, as recommended by the US Preventive Services Task Force.

*Pap Smear:* All women over 21 and younger if sexually active. Test yearly until there are 3 consecutive normal exams, then every 3 years. Probably not necessary over age 65 unless at high risk.

*Clinical breast exam:* All female adults annually.

*Colonoscopy:* Everyone over the age of 50; frequency of repeats depends on what is found.

*Bone mineral density:* All women over age 55; others if at high risk.

*Lipids (cholesterol):* All adults over age 18; repeat frequency depends on findings.

*Mammograms:* All women over age 40 annually.

*Blood testing:* Other than lipid testing (cholesterol) there is no blood test that is uniformly recommended on people at low risk and without symptoms. Blood sugar, blood count (for anemia), liver and kidney testing may be done according to your individual risk. In addition, many men over age 50 will opt to have PSA testing for prostate cancer. Of course you are free to decline any recommended test. In addition, feel free to discuss additional testing you feel may be warranted.

## **TO PREPARE FOR YOUR PHYSICAL (Continued)**

### **Insurance:**

If you have health insurance, we will bill your insurance company first. Please remember that not all insurance policies cover preventive exams (although most do). You are responsible for any services provided that are not covered by your insurance policy. If a service is covered, you are only responsible for your portion of the deductible, co-pay, or co-insurance, as may be applied. If you are unsure, read your policy or check with your insurance company or employer. If you are a Medicare recipient, please read the enclosed letter on Medicare's policy for preventive exams.

### **Lab testing at the point of service:**

Many patients find it beneficial to have testing and immediate results. We provide, as a service to our patients, the ability to have lipid testing, bone density testing, and hemoglobin A1C (diabetes) with immediate results. If you prefer, as a convenience and to avoid needing a follow up visit to review results that might be out of normal range, we will provide these services to you at an additional fee. A waiver for the prices for such tests is included. If you have Medicare or some PPO products, we will bill your insurance first and accept their fees as payment (less co-insurance). Otherwise we will send the tests to the lab and notify you of the results.

We want your preventive health to be personalized and meaningful. If you have any questions or concerns, please speak to us in advance.