### **Staying on Course with Your Health**

**Preventive screenings for women**

### Life doesn’t always give you time to pause. Between work, family and everything in between, it’s easy to push your own health down the list. But your well-being is the foundation for everything you do and preventive care can help keep you steady, no matter where life takes you.

### Think of screenings as checkpoints on your health journey. They give you peace of mind, catch problems when they’re easier to treat and support your long-term goals. Even if you feel fine, regular screenings create space to ask questions, talk about changes and get a plan that fits your needs. Here are the recommended screenings that can help guide your health at every stage of life:

### **Cervical Health**

### Ages 21 – 29: Pap test every three years

### Ages 30 – 65: Pap test every three years, or HPV test every five years, or both every five years

### Over 65: Screening may stop if past results have been normal for 10 years and no history of precancerous lesions

### **Breast Health**

### Ages 40 – 44: Option to begin yearly mammograms

### Ages 45 – 54: Mammograms every year

### Age 55 and older: Mammograms every two years, or continue yearly

### **General Health**

### **Blood Pressure:** Yearly, beginning in early adulthood

### **Cholesterol:** Screenings at age 45 for women without risk factors; age 20 if at higher risk. Repeat every five years if normal

### **Colorectal Screening:** Begin at age 45 for average risk. Options include a colonoscopy every 10 years, a stool-based test yearly, or a flexible sigmoidoscopy every five years

**What to Watch For**

Screenings are important and so is listening to your body between visits. Pay attention to changes such as:

* Abnormal bleeding or unusual vaginal discharge
* A new lump or change in the size or shape of your breast
* Fatigue, shortness of breath or pain in the chest, neck or jaw that feels out of the ordinary
* Persistent bloating, migraines or changes in digestion

These signs don’t always mean something serious, but they are signals worth discussing with your doctor.

**Your Next Step**

### Screenings are included with most BCBSND plans. Talk with your doctor and visit [BCBSND.me](http://bcbsnd.me) to see what’s covered, explore care options, tools and support designed to keep your health and your journey moving forward.

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