



# MONTHY HEALTHLETTER

By Drs. DeSilva and Bilan

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This is the first of many articles we would like to share with you in this column on current topics. We hope to write on a different topic monthly. These views are solely meant to create thought and action among our readers and are not meant to be a substitute for sound medical advice from your doctor.



## Why do a physical exam?

By Drs. DeSilva and Bilan

We believe that prevention is the key to good health. We want to prevent major medical problems by identifying the risk factors, or performing the procedure that can prevent life threatening disease. Many of us have thought "It won't happen to me" or "I do not have anyone in the family with this problem", but the fact is that it could. We should take advantage of modern technology and medical knowledge. For example, mammograms do help identify breast cancer in early stages, colonoscopy can prevent the development of colon cancer, high cholesterol and smoking can be the risk factors in the development of heart attack and stroke. The person who only seeks care after the fact is practicing reactive medicine or care. We believe this is a truly poor way to lessen the burden of illness and costs.

Physicals are cost effective. Just think of your cost savings if you could prevent one heart attack with wise cholesterol management, smoking cessation, healthy eating, exercise and taking your prescribed medications. The dollars saved by not having to see a cardiologist for invasive studies, cost of hospitalization, additional medications, time off work, care by family members etc.

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To your Health and Happiness.  
The Excel Team



That is, if one was lucky enough to survive the first MI, as a good 50% of patients do not survive the first heart attack.

We cannot stress the importance of a good physical. Even employers have taken charge by offering incentives for their employees to see a doctor for a physical. Medicare has started covering annual physicals from January 1, 2011 after analyzing the benefits of annual physical exams. The White House has mandated that all insurances cover physicals, however, each insurance company interprets this law differently.

In preparing for a physical, take time to write down issues you want to discuss with your doctor. List the most important issue at the top. Show the list to your doctor. Although more than one visit may be necessary to cover your list, don't be afraid to bring up any concern to your doctor. The issue not discussed may be the one that gets you in trouble.

How often should one get a physical? It differs for each age group. The American Pediatric Association recommends annually, but I do believe that young adults can be seen every 2-3 years until the age of 40, then every 1-2 years. After the age of 50, annual physicals are recommended. If somebody has several medical problems, they might need to see a physician more frequently.