
Preventive Maneuvers for which there is Evidence that Harm Outweighs Good

Classified by Age and Strength of Evidence

These tables summarize maneuvers reviewed by the Canadian Task Force on the Periodic Health Examination for which medical evidence documents that harm outweighs potential benefit. The tables do not include evaluation of non-clinical interventions such as legislation and school-based programs or care provided by dentists (which are discussed briefly in the text). Therapeutic recommendations for individuals who have previously identified conditions (e.g. hypertension) are not included.

The information concerning recommendations is summarized by age and gender into subgroups, e.g. Prenatal/perinatal. The information is displayed with “E Recommendations” at the top (where there is good evidence to exclude the maneuver from a periodic health examination (PHE)).

The second grouping in each section are “D recommendations” (where there is fair evidence for exclusion of the maneuver from a periodic health examination).

Prenatal Care

CONDITION	MANEUVER	POPULATION	CHAPTER
FAIR EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (D RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Low birth weight/Preterm birth	Programs consisting exclusively of social support	High-risk pregnant women	Ch 4
Recurrent herpes simplex type II (progenitalis) infection	Cervical smear, culture; weekly screening	Pregnant women with history, active disease or partner with proven infection	Ch 10
Preterm birth	Home uterine activity monitoring	Low-risk pregnancies	Ch 14
Neonatal morbidity and mortality	Electronic fetal monitoring, intrapartum	Low-risk pregnancies	Ch 15

Neonatal and Well-Baby Care

CONDITION	MANEUVER	POPULATION	CHAPTER
FAIR EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (D RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Urinary infection	Urine dipstick	Newborns and infants	Ch 21

Preventive Health Care for Children and Adolescents

CONDITION	MANEUVER	POPULATION	CHAPTER
GOOD EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (E RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Urinary tract infection (asymptomatic)	Urine dipstick	Children	Ch 21
Pneumococcal pneumonia	Immunization, one dose of pneumococcal vaccine	Infants and children	Ch 34
FAIR EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (D RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Cystic fibrosis	DNA analysis for carrier status	General population	Ch 19
Cystic fibrosis	Sweat test, immunoreactive trypsin and "BM meconium" test	General population	Ch 19
Developmental problems	Denver Developmental Scale	Preschool children	Ch 26
Hearing problems	History, clinical examination	Preschool children	Ch 27
Child maltreatment	Screen for risk of maltreating children	General population	Ch 29
Obesity	Low calorie diet	Pre-adolescent obese children	Ch 30
Periodontal disease	Brushing with electric toothbrush	General population	Ch 37

Preventive Health Care for Adults

CONDITION	MANEUVER	POPULATION	CHAPTER
GOOD EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (E RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Tuberculosis	Mantoux tuberculin skin test	General population	Ch 62
Lung cancer	Sputum cytology	General population	Ch 64
FAIR EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (D RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Pneumococcal pneumonia	Immunization, one dose	Immunocompromised patients	Ch 34
Progressive renal disease	Urine dipstick	General population	Ch 38
Depression	General Health Questionnaire or Zung Self-rating depression scale	General population	Ch 39
Diabetes mellitus	Blood glucose, fasting	Non-pregnant general population	Ch 50
Osteoporotic fractures	Bone mineral density screening	Women	Ch 52
Carotid Disease/Stroke	Neck auscultation or carotid endarterectomy	General population	Ch 57
Gonorrhea	Gram stain / culture of cervical or urethral smear	General population	Ch 59
Chlamydial infection	Smear, culture or analysis	General population	Ch 60
Cervical cancer	Human papillomavirus screening	Women	Ch 63
Lung cancer	Chest radiography	General population	Ch 64
Breast cancer	Mammography	Women aged 40-49 yrs	Ch 65
Colorectal cancer	Fecal occult blood testing or sigmoidoscopy	Those with cancer family syndrome	Ch 66
Prostate cancer	Prostate specific antigen	Men over age 50 yrs	Ch 67
Prostate cancer	Transrectal ultrasound	Men over age 50 yrs	Ch 67
Bladder cancer	Urine dipstick or cytology	General population	Ch 68
Pancreatic cancer	Abdominal palpation, ultrasound or serologic tumour markers	General population	Ch 71
Ovarian cancer	Pelvic exam, transvaginal ultrasound, CA 125 or combination	Pre- or post-menopausal women	Ch 72
Testicular cancer	Tumour markers	Adolescent and adult males	Ch 74

Preventive Health Care for the Elderly¹

CONDITION	MANEUVER	POPULATION	CHAPTER
GOOD EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (E RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Urinary tract infection (asymptomatic)	Urine dipstick or culture	Elderly, specific subgroups	Ch 81
FAIR EVIDENCE TO EXCLUDE FROM PHE (D RECOMMENDATIONS):			
Urinary infection	Urine dipstick or culture	Elderly, ambulatory men	Ch 81

¹ Continue to exclude appropriate interventions from adult tables.