

7 Things to Do This Fall for Better Health*

LAUREN OSTER – SEPTEMBER 6, 2018



For a happier, healthier winter, take these essential steps in the fall.

Plan flu shots for everyone...

"Ideally, you should get the flu vaccine around October," says Neha Vyas, MD, a family physician at Cleveland Clinic. But it's still useful if you get it later, she adds.

...and ask your doc about other vaccines grown-ups and older kids may need

Preteens and teens should receive Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis), HPV, and meningitis shots; students entering college may need meningitis B protection; and healthy adults need the Tdap shot (plus Td boosters every 10 years)—some also need the hepatitis B or shingles vaccine. Your MD can help you stay up-to-date.

Refresh your meds

Double-check expiration dates on all over-the-counter drugs, and make sure you have cold and flu remedies on hand "so you don't have to run to the store when you're feeling most ill," advises Dr. Vyas.

Treat yourself to a new activity

Even hard-core gym fiends can lose motivation when the weather starts getting colder—but rain or shine, you should still aim to do at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise (or 75 minutes of high-intensity exercise) per week, plus strength moves for all large muscle groups, says Dr. Vyas. Go ahead and splurge on that new studio class, or sign up for a [streaming subscription](#)—whatever will keep you motivated and excited this fall and winter.

Check flexible spending accounts

Usually, the funds in an FSA must be used by the end of the year, so it's time to start thinking about using (or losing) the remainder of that tax-exempt cash. Consider what health care has cost you so far this year, then plan your spending accordingly.

Schedule your mammogram

While guidelines may change and every woman's risk is unique, mammograms remain an important tool in detecting breast cancer. Talk to your doc about what kind of screening schedule makes sense for you.

Book your annual physical

Though some argue that "generally healthy" adults might not need an exam and blood-work every year, your doctor will put that visit to good use. "Everyone should have a doctor they trust to provide evidence-based recommendations on their personal health care," says Dr. Vyas.

*<https://www.health.com/cold-flu-sinus/fall-health-checklist>

Photo: <https://jooinn.com/woman-in-black-leggings-while-walking-on-brown-road-2.html>