



ACA Requirements for Coverage of Preventive Health Services

This information is based on HMAA's review of national health care reform legislation. HMAA reviews resources annually in August and makes benefit plan updates effective the following January 1. The references provided reflect information published as of the month of August.

This information is intended for educational purposes and should not be used as tax, legal or compliance advice. Interpretations of the legislation may vary, and some regulations differ for particular members enrolled in certain groups. Recommendations are subject to limitations, exclusions and administrative guidelines.

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Updated HRSA-Supported Women's Preventive Services Guidelines

HRSA is supporting the Women's Preventive Services Initiative clinical recommendations listed below for preventive services that address health needs specific to women and fill gaps in existing guidelines.*

Breast Cancer Screening for Average-Risk Women

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends that average-risk women initiate mammography screening no earlier than age 40 and no later than age 50. Screening mammography should occur at least biennially and as frequently as annually. Screening should continue through at least age 74 and age alone should not be the basis to discontinue screening.

These screening recommendations are for women at average risk of breast cancer. Women at increased risk should also undergo periodic mammography screening, however, recommendations for additional services are beyond the scope of this recommendation.

Breastfeeding Services and Supplies

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends comprehensive lactation support services (including counseling, education, and breastfeeding equipment and supplies) during the antenatal, perinatal, and the postpartum period to ensure the successful initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding.

Screening for Cervical Cancer

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends cervical cancer screening for average-risk women aged 21 to 65 years. For women aged 21 to 29 years, the Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends cervical cancer screening using cervical cytology (Pap test) every 3 years. Cotesting with cytology and human papillomavirus testing is not recommended for women younger than 30 years. Women aged 30 to 65 years should be screened with cytology and human papillomavirus testing every 5 years or cytology alone every 3 years. Women who are at average risk should not be screened more than once every 3 years.

Contraception

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends that adolescent and adult women have access to the full range of female-controlled contraceptives to prevent unintended pregnancy and improve birth outcomes. Contraceptive care should include contraceptive counseling, initiation of contraceptive use, and follow-up care (e.g., management, and evaluation as well as changes to and removal or discontinuation of the contraceptive method). The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends that the full range of female-controlled U.S. Food and Drug Administration-approved contraceptive

methods, effective family planning practices, and sterilization procedures be available as part of contraceptive care.

The full range of contraceptive methods for women currently identified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration include: (1) sterilization surgery for women, (2) surgical sterilization via implant for women, (3) implantable rods, (4) copper intrauterine devices, (5) intrauterine devices with progestin (all durations and doses), (6) the shot or injection, (7) oral contraceptives (combined pill), (8) oral contraceptives (progestin only, and), (9) oral contraceptives (extended or continuous use), (10) the contraceptive patch, (11) vaginal contraceptive rings, (12) diaphragms, (13) contraceptive sponges, (14) cervical caps, (15) female condoms, (16) spermicides, and (17) emergency contraception (levonorgestrel), and (18) emergency contraception (ulipristal acetate), and additional methods as identified by the FDA. Additionally, instruction in fertility awareness-based methods, including the lactation amenorrhea method, although less effective, should be provided for women desiring an alternative method.

Screening for Gestational Diabetes Mellitus

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends screening pregnant women for gestational diabetes mellitus after 24 weeks of gestation (preferably between 24 and 28 weeks of gestation) in order to prevent adverse birth outcomes. Screening with a 50-g oral glucose challenge test (followed by a 3-hour 100-g oral glucose tolerance test if results on the initial oral glucose challenge test are abnormal) is preferred because of its high sensitivity and specificity.

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative suggests that women with risk factors for diabetes mellitus be screened for preexisting diabetes before 24 weeks of gestation—ideally at the first prenatal visit, based on current clinical best practices.

Screening for Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends prevention education and risk assessment for human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection in adolescents and women at least annually throughout the lifespan. All women should be tested for HIV at least once during their lifetime. Additional screening should be based on risk, and screening annually or more often may be appropriate for adolescents and women with an increased risk of HIV infection.

Screening for HIV is recommended for all pregnant women upon initiation of prenatal care with retesting during pregnancy based on risk factors. Rapid HIV testing is recommended for pregnant women who present in active labor with an undocumented HIV status. Screening during pregnancy enables prevention of vertical transmission.

Screening for Interpersonal and Domestic Violence

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends screening adolescents and women for interpersonal and domestic violence at least annually, and, when needed, providing or referring for initial intervention services. Interpersonal and domestic violence includes physical violence, sexual violence,

stalking and psychological aggression (including coercion), reproductive coercion, neglect, and the threat of violence, abuse, or both. Intervention services include, but are not limited to, counseling, education, harm reduction strategies, and referral to appropriate supportive services.

Counseling for Sexually Transmitted Infections

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends directed behavioral counseling by a health care provider or other appropriately trained individual for sexually active adolescent and adult women at an increased risk for sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends that health care providers use a woman's sexual history and risk factors to help identify those at an increased risk of STIs. Risk factors may include age younger than 25, a recent history of an STI, a new sex partner, multiple partners, a partner with concurrent partners, a partner with an STI, and a lack of or inconsistent condom use. For adolescents and women not identified as high risk, counseling to reduce the risk of STIs should be considered, as determined by clinical judgement.

Well-Woman Preventive Visits

The Women's Preventive Services Initiative recommends that women receive at least one preventive care visit per year beginning in adolescence and continuing across the lifespan to ensure that the recommended preventive services, including preconception, and many services necessary for prenatal and interconception care are obtained. The primary purpose of these visits should be the delivery and coordination of recommended preventive services as determined by age and risk factors.