

Prevention Gaps; Things Not Done That Should Be Done

From a public health perspective, the most preventable cause for premature death:

1. smoking (18%),
2. bad diet and poor exercise (17%),
3. alcohol and drugs (4%), and
4. infections and sexual diseases (4%).

From a public health perspective the most frequent causes for disability are:

1. mental illness (25%),
2. alcohol and drug use (12%),
3. musculoskeletal problems such as arthritis or back pain (7%),
4. lung disease (6%), and
5. heart and blood vessel disease (6%).

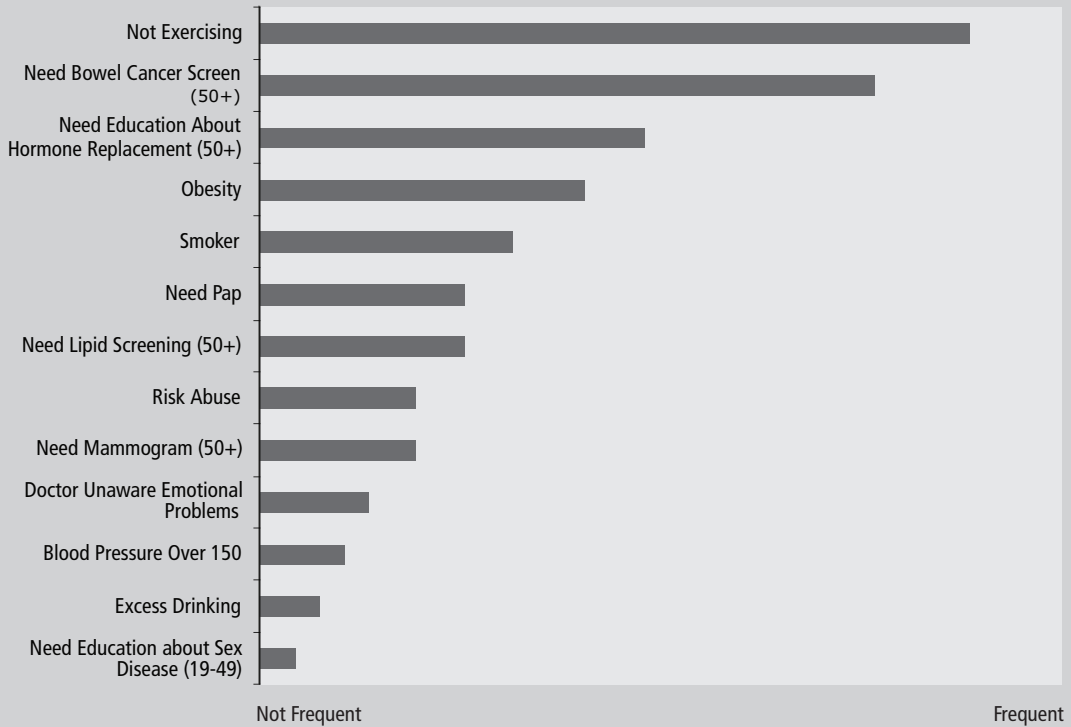
Some of the causes of disability are preventable. Most are manageable...particularly when there is “same page” care.

The following diagrams show the potential prevention opportunities for women and men between 19-69 who have completed howyourhealth. Wherever possible we have included several measures that correspond to causes of premature death and disability. We have purposely eliminated the raw percentages because they differ somewhat by age and income.

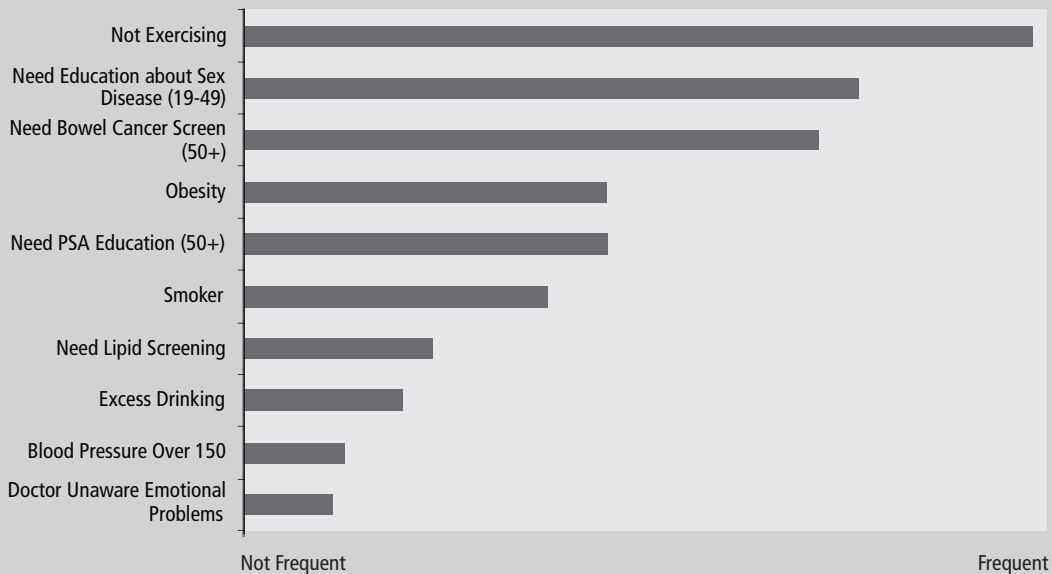
At the extremes, fewer than 5% of young women need to learn more about sexually transmitted diseases but more than 50% of women of all ages need to exercise more.

For men, there seems to be particular ignorance (or denial) of sexually transmitted diseases. Otherwise, the rank of important prevention opportunities is similar to women.

Opportunities to Prevent Problems for Women Aged 19-69



Opportunities to Prevent Problems for Men Aged 19-69

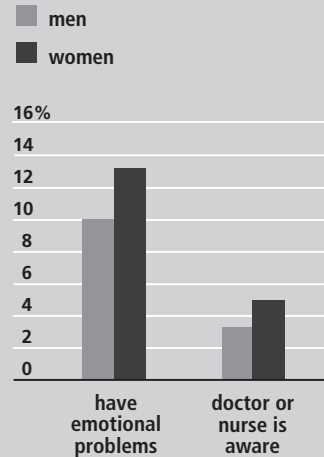


About 10-20% of adults are bothered by significant and persistent emotional problems. About 50% of the time adults report that a health professional is unaware of the emotional problem. About half of the people who are bothered by emotional problems have the opportunity to make their doctor or nurse aware of the problem.

When Americans are active self-managers of the health, they are much more likely to prevent problems. Good self-managers tend to have good health habits. Good health habits include good prevention.

Information on the howsyourhealth web-site entitled Health Habits and Health Decisions (for adults) and Health Habits and Prevention (for adolescents) describe in greater detail the lifestyle and preventive choices that have the greatest potential benefits. These can be obtained at www.howsyourhealth.org by entering your age and gender and then selecting that you want to review the reading materials.

Adults Bothered by Significant and Persistent Emotional Problems



Good Health Habits

