

Preventative Care

Preventative care is integrating healthy behaviors into one's lifestyle. Types of preventive care:

- Consistent Physical Activity - helps prevent chronic diseases such as heart disease and cancer, along with degenerative conditions effecting the muscles and nervous system such as multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease.
- Proper Nutrition - eating a wide variety of nutritious foods helps keep the body's systems functioning properly and can prevent conditions such as diabetes.
- Stress Management - helps individuals prevent short-term conditions such as ulcers and long-term conditions such as heart disease.
- Avoiding Tobacco - not smoking or chewing, along with avoiding second-hand smoke, can help prevent emphysema and lung cancer.ⁱ

Vaping and e-cigarettes are another practice to avoid. Know what you're getting into.

Most vaping liquids contains nicotine, but not all do. Even if you use vaping liquid that does not contain nicotine, you may be exposed to other harmful ingredients. Vaping can:

- cause coughing, shortness of breath and chest pain
- increase the risk of heart disease and asthma attacks
- lead to brain damage
- produce some cancer-causing chemicals, such as a formaldehyde
- cause addiction and dependence
- change brain development in teens
- cause cognitive and behavioural problems
- affect memory and concentration
- reduce impulse control
- cause nicotine poisoning if swallowed or absorbed through the skin
- harm your unborn baby if you are pregnant
- lead to smoking cigarettes, which can be addictiveⁱⁱ

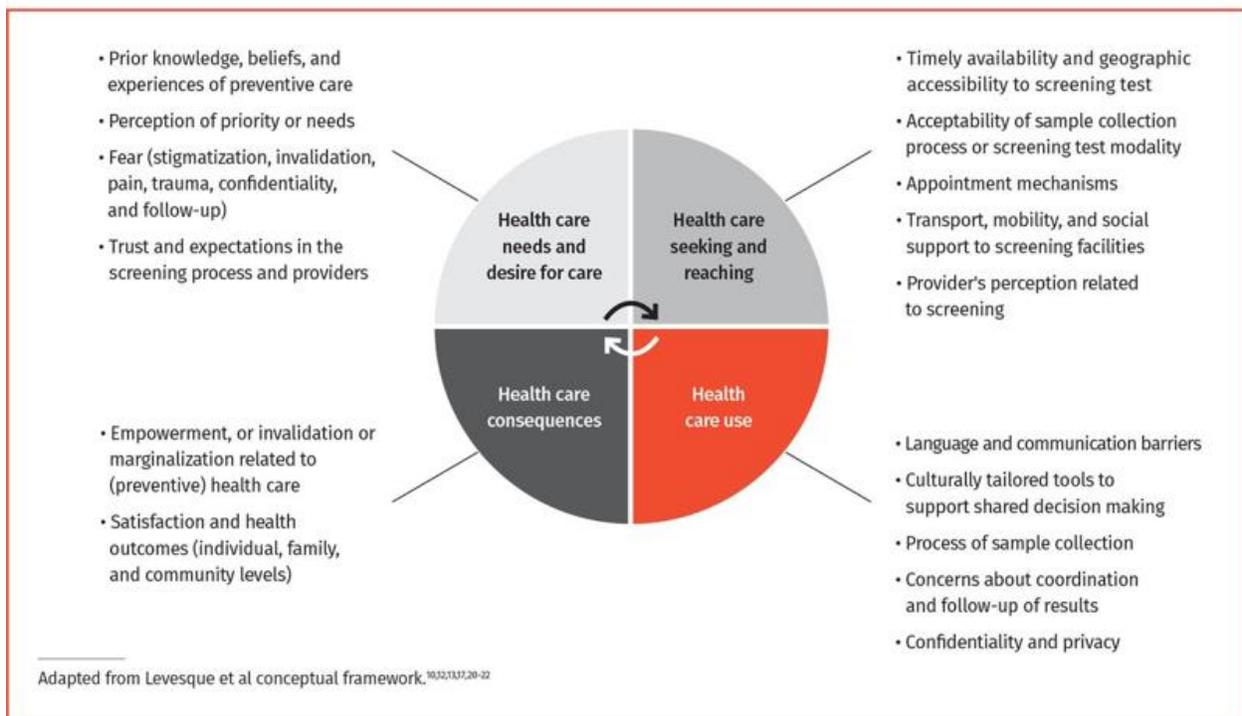
Preventive care is any medical service that reduces the risk of later negative health outcomes such as medical emergencies, disability or chronic disease. Preventive care often involves regular screening for diseases before they become serious enough to exhibit symptoms. When risk factors or signs of a disease are identified early, the cost of treating them is significantly reduced and they are less likely to develop into life threatening conditions. Screenings allow physicians to employ specific preventive care services to reduce the risk of the development of a disease, such as assistance with lifestyle changes or medications. If a screening reveals the early stages of an illness, physicians often have more success with treatment and reduce the risk of a patient requiring emergency services or fatalities related to the illness.ⁱⁱⁱ

Proactive Measures to Preventive Care

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blood pressure tests 2. Screenings for diabetes and heart disease 3. Cholesterol tests 4. Routine examinations 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Cancer screenings 6. Screenings for sexually transmitted diseases 7. Well baby visits 8. Mental health screenings^{iv}
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An article published in *Canadian Family Physician*, *Improving Preventive Screening for Indigenous Peoples* (August 2021), points out that guideline-based screening is not the best approach to addressing the needs of Indigenous peoples, that culturally appropriate resources are needed, there is difficulty accessing appropriate counselling, and more. The article shares the following framework which demonstrates the pitfalls and barriers for Indigenous peoples in accessing preventive health care.^v

Figure 1. Circle of pitfalls and barriers to accessing preventive health care and screening



Health Canada published a Canada's Food Guide for First Nations, Inuit and Métis that suggests healthy eating for different ages. The Guide recognizes and includes the value and need for traditional foods. For more information, [2007 fnim-pnim food-guide-aliment-eng.pdf \(canada.ca\)](https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/migration/hc-sc/nm/fnmi/food-guide-aliment-eng.pdf).



For an organizational approach, the Saskatchewan First Nations Family and Child Inc. (2018), developed policy to guide how to approach community-based prevention. Their policy has a focus on strength-based practices to prevent children and youth from going into care and to support the inherent culture of all First Nations people. The policy states:

The Culture of the community will be the guiding principle within all prevention programs and services.

1. Prevention provides culturally relevant programs and services that are open, flexible and inclusive of all community members.
2. Prevention programs and services will promote healthy living through teachings by utilizing Elders, language, ceremony, mentoring and community resources; that will support all aspects of a person: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.
3. Prevention programs and services will provide individualized services and culturally relevant programs in a timely manner.^{vi}

ⁱ [What is Preventive Care? - Definition, Benefits, Importance & Examples | Study.com](https://www.study.com/what-is-preventive-care-definition-benefits-importance-examples/). Retrieved March 24, 2022.

ⁱⁱ [Risks of vaping | ontario.ca](https://www.ontario.ca/risks-of-vaping). Retrieved March 24, 2022.

ⁱⁱⁱ [Types of Preventive Care: 8 Proactive Ways to Ward Off Health Problems | Rasmussen University](https://www.rasmussenuniversity.edu/types-of-preventive-care-8-proactive-ways-to-ward-off-health-problems/). Retrieved March 24, 2022.

^{iv} Adapted from [Types of Preventive Care: 8 Proactive Ways to Ward Off Health Problems | Rasmussen University](https://www.rasmussenuniversity.edu/types-of-preventive-care-8-proactive-ways-to-ward-off-health-problems/). Retrieved March 24, 2022.

^v [Improving preventive screening with Indigenous peoples | The College of Family Physicians of Canada \(cfp.ca\)](https://www.cfp.ca/improving-preventive-screening-with-indigenous-peoples/). Retrieved March 24, 2022.

^{vi} [10May_2018_prevention_policy_and_standards.pdf \(sfnfci.ca\)](https://www.sfnfci.ca/10May_2018_prevention_policy_and_standards.pdf). Retrieved March 24, 2022.