







Health Assessments and Screening

Health assessments/health checks are the second most frequent reason for encounter in Australian general practice (after prescription requests), occurring at a rate of 8.6 per 100 encounters. Health assessments, comprising preventive health activities and screening, are core elements of comprehensive general practice. They are particularly important in addressing the health disparities faced by disadvantaged population groups, like Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. For many GP registrars, undertaking preventive health assessments and population screening will require the application of new knowledge and skills.

<p>TEACHING AND LEARNING AREAS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Principles of effective screening programs, and the difference between screening and case finding Brief intervention and motivational interviewing skills for common lifestyle issues e.g. smoking, alcohol Guidelines for preventive health and screening activities across different ages e.g. RACGP Red Book and for different patient populations e.g. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, refugees Practice systems for implementing health assessments and preventive care (recalls, templates etc.) Medicare rules and billing for health assessments for different populations 				
<p>PRE-SESSION ACTIVITIES</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the GP registrar to undertake the Clinical Reasoning Challenge under exam conditions (7 minutes) and bring along to discuss 				
<p>TEACHING TIPS AND TRAPS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventive activities and screening can harm patients, and tests must be judiciously chosen Follow guidelines! Use a family history screening tool for genetic conditions Ensure the patient understands the benefits and risks of all screening tests and activities offered 				
<p>RESOURCES</p> 	<table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1570 432 1783">Read</td> <td data-bbox="432 1570 1503 1783"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicare Health Assessments Resource Kit Medicare Health Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (MBS item 715) How to perform a 'Healthy Kids Check' - AFP article (2010) RACGP Red Book Testing Times - NPS MedicineWise </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="336 1783 432 1839">Watch</td> <td data-bbox="432 1783 1503 1839"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quit Learning Hub - Smoking Cessation Brief Intervention Videos </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicare Health Assessments Resource Kit Medicare Health Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (MBS item 715) How to perform a 'Healthy Kids Check' - AFP article (2010) RACGP Red Book Testing Times - NPS MedicineWise 	Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quit Learning Hub - Smoking Cessation Brief Intervention Videos
Read	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicare Health Assessments Resource Kit Medicare Health Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People (MBS item 715) How to perform a 'Healthy Kids Check' - AFP article (2010) RACGP Red Book Testing Times - NPS MedicineWise 				
Watch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quit Learning Hub - Smoking Cessation Brief Intervention Videos 				
<p>FOLLOW UP/ EXTENSION ACTIVITIES</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GP registrar to conduct a mini-audit of 5-10 patients who have undergone a particular type of health assessment e.g. 45-49 year old health check or over 75 health assessment, and compare the preventive activities/screening tests to best practice guidelines Read and discuss the 2012 article General health checks in adults for reducing morbidity and mortality from disease: Cochrane systematic review and meta-analysis (which concludes that general health checks did not reduce morbidity or mortality!) 				



Health Assessments and Screening

Clinical Reasoning Challenge

Bob, a 53 year old teacher, states that he has been sent in by his wife for a 'health check'. His wife attends the practice but he has never previously attended. He is asymptomatic, denies significant PMH, has no allergies, and takes no medications.

QUESTION 1. What other key features should be sought on history? List the most important features.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____

QUESTION 2. Further enquiry reveals no significant history. What aspects of a physical examination would you perform? List the most important aspects.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____

QUESTION 3. Examination is unremarkable. Bob says that he has had no blood tests for at least 5 yrs. What screening tests would you order as part of this health check? List as many tests as appropriate.

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____

Health Assessments and Screening

ANSWERS

QUESTION 1

What other key features should be sought on history? List the most important features.

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status and ethnic background
- SNAP – smoking, nutrition, alcohol, physical activity
- Family history
- Social history
- Immunisation history
- Consider depression screening (see Red Book for details)
- Risk factors for skin cancer (see Red Book for details)
- Any specific concerns or expectations

QUESTION 2

Further enquiry reveals no significant history. What aspects of a physical examination would you perform? List the most important aspects.

- Height, weight and BMI
- BP

QUESTION 3

Examination is unremarkable.

Bob says that he has had no blood tests for at least 5 yrs. What screening tests would you order as part of this health check? List as many tests as appropriate.

For the age group 50-64, the RACGP Red Book identifies the need to:

- Measure fasting lipids
- Perform FOBT
- Calculate the risk of diabetes by using the AUSDRISK tool
- Review fracture risk factors for osteoporosis
- Calculate absolute CV risk

Other tests are only indicated if greater than average risk.