

Men's Urology Tune-Up

What Men Should Know about Urologic Health



What is Men's Urology?

For men, urology includes the urinary tract and the male reproductive organs, or, you could think of them as the systems below the belt. Most men know the basics of auto care, yet many men are not sure about their urologic care. This fact sheet will use the analogy of car care to help you understand the basics about your urologic health.



General Upkeep

With a car, keeping the gas tank full and air in the tires is a must. Did you know that certain healthy living tips could make an impact on male urologic health? Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- **Drink Water.** Just as cars need oil, your body needs water. Drinking six or more cups of water daily may prevent painful kidney stones.
- **Get Exercise.** Cars that sit idle may fail over time; this is also true of our bodies. A healthy heart can lead to a healthy urologic system, so try for 30 minutes of moderate exercise, five or more days a week.
- **Reduce Stress.** You wouldn't let your car engine rev all day, and you shouldn't do that with your body. Try to de-stress. Even relaxing for 10 minutes a day can lower blood pressure, which may help improve erectile dysfunction.
- **Eat Healthy.** You wouldn't put dirty fuel into a car – consider what you put in your body. Caffeine, alcohol and spicy foods can irritate your bladder, and red meat and high-fat diets can increase the risk of kidney stones and prostate cancer. Try for “high-octane” foods – like fruits, vegetables and fiber.
- **Don't Smoke.** If an engine smokes, it's bad news – it is

for our bodies too. There are many urologic conditions impacted by smoking including bladder cancer, erectile dysfunction, infertility, kidney cancer, kidney stones, painful bladder syndrome and urine leakage.



Maintenance Schedule

It's known that a car should have scheduled oil changes. Men should also know how to keep their urologic health in check.

Young Men between the ages of 18 and 40 should consider their basic care. Try to perform routine testicular self-exams. Also, find out if there is a family history of bladder, kidney or prostate cancer.

Middle-aged Men between the ages of 40 and 50 should always “watch your gauges.” It is of value to know that high blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol can cause kidney disease and erectile dysfunction. Just as certain cars need special care, certain men should be screened for prostate cancer at this age. If you are African American or have a father, brother or son with prostate cancer, consider being screened for prostate cancer. Also, if breast cancer runs in your family, you might be at risk of prostate cancer and should consider screening.

Older Men ages 50 to 70 and beyond should remember to get their bodies checked, just as cars need to have inspections. All men at this age should talk to their doctor about whether prostate screening is right for them. Also, look for changes in bathroom patterns like urgency, frequency, decreased flow or frequent night time urination. Blood in the urine is never normal and should be talked about with your doctor.



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Warning Signs

When that light appears on your dash – there's a problem. It's the same with urologic health. There are some signs that indicate it's time to call the doctor. The list below may help you decide to make that call.

- **Pain below the belt.** Pain that doesn't go away in the pelvis, genitals, side, abdomen, back or when you urinate.
- **Erection problems.** If you are having trouble getting or maintaining an erection, you can talk to a urologist. This is their job – feel free to speak openly.
- **Blood in urine.** Even a small amount of blood may be a sign that something is going on "under the hood."

Talk to your doctor about your personal maintenance plan, including your urologic health.

About the Urology Care Foundation

The Urology Care Foundation is the world's leading urologic foundation – and the official foundation of the American Urological Association. We provide information for those actively managing their urologic health and those ready to make health changes. Our information is based on the American Urological Association resources and is reviewed by medical experts. To learn more, visit the Urology Care Foundation's website, **UrologyHealth.org/UrologicConditions** or go to **UrologyHealth.org/FindAUrologist** to find a doctor near you.

Disclaimer

This information is not a tool for self-diagnosis or a substitute for professional medical advice. It is not to be used or relied on for that purpose. Please talk to your urologist or health care provider about your health concerns. Always talk to a health care provider before you start or stop any treatments, including medications. For more information, visit **UrologyHealth.org/Download** or call 800-828-7866.

