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How often you should be going to 8 different types of doctors



- Doctor's visits are necessary to stay informed about your health.
- Oftentimes people only go to the doctor when something is wrong.
- Some doctors should be seen on an as-needed basis, while others recommend annual visits.

Trips to the doctor are necessary to keep you healthy. While some doctors suggest only making appointments on an as-needed basis, others advise getting a standard check-up at least once per year.

To find out how often should you go to different specialties of medical specialists, INSIDER reached out to a few different experts in the space for clarification. Here's what you need to know.

It's worth noting that these can vary based on many different factors, so it's best to ask your physician for individual advice.

Make an appointment with your general physician at least twice per year for a standard check up and flu shot

[Dr. Niket Sonpal](#), a gastroenterologist and an internist in NYC, told INSIDER that appointments with a general physician can be made on an as-needed basis, but visits for your standard physical and annual flu shot should be made every year.

"If you are healthy and have no chronic conditions then once a year for an annual physical to the internist and once a year for your flu shot is at least the minimum," Sonpal said. "If it has been a few years since your last physical, then you may need some follows ups after your first new visit."

The Vision Council recommends patients get eye exams annually

A representative from [The Vision Council](#) told INSIDER that adults and children should receive a comprehensive eye exam from an optometrist (eye doctor) once per year. However if you start experiencing severe discomfort in or around the eye area, such as blurriness, dryness, itching, or pain, you should see an optometrist immediately for diagnosis.

People with vaginas should see their OBGYN at least once per year for a well visit

Dr. Jessica Shepherd, women's health expert, OBGYN and [U by Kotex](#) partner told INSIDER that people with vaginas should be visiting their OBGYN at least once annually for a general checkup that may include a PAP smear, STI check, and birth control discussion. Pregnant people will be required to make monthly to weekly appointments, depending on which trimester they're in.

How often you visit a gastroenterologist will depend on your age and the severity of your symptoms

Sonpal told INSIDER a general rule of thumb for visiting a gastroenterologist is that everyone between the ages of 45 through 50 should be evaluated and schedule a colonoscopy. Those who have a family history of polyps or colon cancer should make an appointment earlier in life.

Otherwise Sonpal said the only time you should be making an appointment with a GI is "when your symptoms and medical problems require special attention from a digestive and liver specialist."

How often you go to the dermatologist will depend on your diagnosis

If you don't have specific skin concerns, or a history of skin cancer, NYC Dermatologist [Dr. Hadley King](#) told INSIDER "an annual total body skin exam is sufficient." Otherwise how often you visit a dermatologist will depend on your diagnosis.

For example if you have had a non-melanoma skin cancer (a type of skin cancer that forms in the cells of the skin), King advised seeing your dermatologist for a total body skin exam every six months. If you have had a melanoma cancer (a type of skin cancer that forms in melanin-forming cells), depending on how recent the diagnosis was, King said your dermatologist might require you to undergo a total body skin exam every three months.



Dermatologist appointments can likely be yearly.

Patients with ongoing skin issues like acne, rosacea, psoriasis, or eczema, she adds, should see their dermatologist either every month, or every few months after the initial diagnosis to make sure the condition is under control.

Make an appointment with your urologist as soon as symptoms flare up

Patients should make appointments with their urologist on an as-needed basis. During an interview with INSIDER, [Anika Ackerman](#), a urologist based in Morristown, New Jersey, explained that the frequency of urologist visits depend on a few key details such as age and medical history.

"For men 50 or older, who are doing yearly prostate cancer screening, once per year is recommended," Ackerman said, adding that patients with kidney stones should follow up with their urologists once per year as well.

"For patients with recurrent UTI," she continued, "the interval can be quite variable and depends on their symptoms and UTI frequency."

Dentist appointments should be made at least one to two times per year

Because your dental health reflects your oral health habits, the [American Dental Association](#) (ADA) doesn't recommend one set number of regular dentist visits you're required to make in a year. The ADA does, however, recommend you make an appointment with your dentist at least one to two times per year to get a thorough cleaning, take x-rays, and track your overall dental health to make sure you're not at risk for oral cancer, or any other diseases.

However in addition to regular checkups and cleaning appointments, [Dr. Jason Popper](#) of Popper Dental in New York told INSIDER it's extremely important to schedule an appointment with your dentist "as soon as you notice changes in your mouth, especially when there is pain associated."

Additionally if patients who are diagnosed with diabetes, cancer, are pregnant, or are regular smokers are considered to be at "high risk" for experiencing dental issues. Under these circumstances, Popper said dentists will advise you as to how often you should be coming in for check ups.

How often you see an allergist depends on the type of allergies you've been diagnosed with

[Dr. Tania Elliott](#), an allergist and [Flonase](#) spokesperson, told INSIDER that depending on the type of allergies you have, the severity of your symptoms, as well as the kind of treatments you're receiving/medication you're on, you might be required to visit an allergist anywhere from once a week, to once per year. For example patients who experience food allergies should schedule annual check-ins to evaluate their symptoms, check the expiration date on their EpiPen, and determine whether or not they've grown out of your allergy, Elliot explained. Asthma patients, on the other hand, are required to undergo an evaluation every six to 12 weeks to receive therapy, and/or check in to ensure their symptoms aren't interfering with everyday life.



How often you see the allergist can vary, too.

Patients with seasonal allergies should visit the doctor twice a year — two weeks before your allergy season kicks off to receive medication, and four to six weeks into the season to evaluate your symptoms, Elliot said. However if your allergies require you to get allergy shots, patients are required to come into the office for injections weekly for the first six months of therapy "to build up the amount of allergen you are given," Elliot explained. Thereafter, she continued, you receive shots every month for anywhere between two to five years.

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