

THERE'S  
SOMETHING  
SPECIAL  
ABOUT THE  
HEALTH OF

the  
AFRICAN  
AMERICAN  
COMMUNITY

## Prostate and breast cancer: Understand your personal risk

Preventive health screenings can make the difference between life and death, especially when it comes to prostate and breast cancer. It's important to find the disease early when it is most treatable. Early detection and treatment also give you the best chances for recovery. Preventive screenings are of particular importance for the African American community. Consider these statistics:

- African American men have the highest rate of prostate cancer of all races. They also have the lowest survival rate.
- African American women get breast cancer less frequently than white women, but a greater percentage of African American women die from it.

Unfortunately, there is no clear explanation for these figures. That's why it's critically important that you schedule regular preventive screenings.

**Prostate cancer screening:** The American Cancer Society recommends that African American men start screenings at 45. However, those with a family history of prostate cancer should begin screening at 40. There are two main screening methods used: a PSA test and a doctor-administered digital rectal exam. Your doctor can help you determine which test is right for you and how often you should be tested.

**Breast cancer screening:** Starting at 40, mammograms to screen for breast cancer are recommended for all women. Based on risk, a doctor will recommend a mammogram every 1 to 2 years. However, starting at 50, every woman should receive a mammogram annually. Talk to your doctor to find out when you should start screening for breast cancer and how often you should schedule your screenings.

**At Independence Blue Cross, we encourage our members to stay as healthy as possible by mailing reminders to schedule preventive and wellness screenings. Members can also call a Health Coach at 1-800-ASK-BLUE (1-800-275-2583) for information about many common health issues, including those about screenings and treatment options for prostate and breast cancer. Health Coaches are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year-round. It's just one more way we're here for you every step of the way.**



Independence  
Blue Cross [www.ibx.com](http://www.ibx.com)