



Medical tests all women must have

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tests or heart disease that might not have obvious symptoms," Dr Kyeyune says.

Blood sugar

The blood sugar test checks the level of glucose (sugar) in your blood. If the glucose is high, it means your body is not making enough insulin or it is not being used efficiently. This can indicate that you have diabetes or pre-diabetes. Dr Kyeyune says women of 20 years and above should do this test once a year or more often if your blood pressure is high.

"There is also the lipid panel test which tests for fats or cholesterol in the blood. It is done to establish levels of unhealthy cholesterol which can clog blood vessels, resulting in high blood pres-

sure or heart failure. Women of child-bearing age or those with diabetes should get tested once a year to prevent pre-eclampsia during pregnancy," Dr Kyeyune adds.

Thyroid check

The thyroid gland is found in the neck and produces hormones that regulate metabolism. Women are more likely to have an underactive thyroid gland (hypothyroidism) or overactive thyroid gland (hyperthyroidism) than men.

Tests should be carried out to measure hormone levels to make sure your thyroid is working correctly. "If you are 60 years and above or have symptoms such as fatigue, increased appetite, muscle weakness, brittle hair and nails

and unexplainable weight gain or loss ask your doctor to check your hormone levels for either hypothyroidism or hyperthyroidism," says Dr Kyeyune.

Bone density

According to Dr Kyeyune, a bone density test is used to detect osteoporosis, a condition that causes bones to become weak and brittle. It is done by measuring the levels of vitamin D in your blood. Vitamin D is essential for bone strength and other important functions in the body. "Older women are more likely to have vitamin D deficiency because their skin does not produce enough of vitamin."

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FEATURE



HOW OFTEN DO YOU DO MEDICAL CHECKUPS?



Every four months I check my blood pressure, blood sugar, stomach scan and blood count. I go to the dentist twice a year and check my eyes once a year.
EDRINAH DOUMBA



After having my children, I would only go whenever I had an issue. However, recently I have had to do several because I had to undergo two operations.
HADASSAH WERE



Honestly I cannot checkups. As a mum I cannot remember had one but I know in the past.
PETREST RUTH

Medical tests all women must have

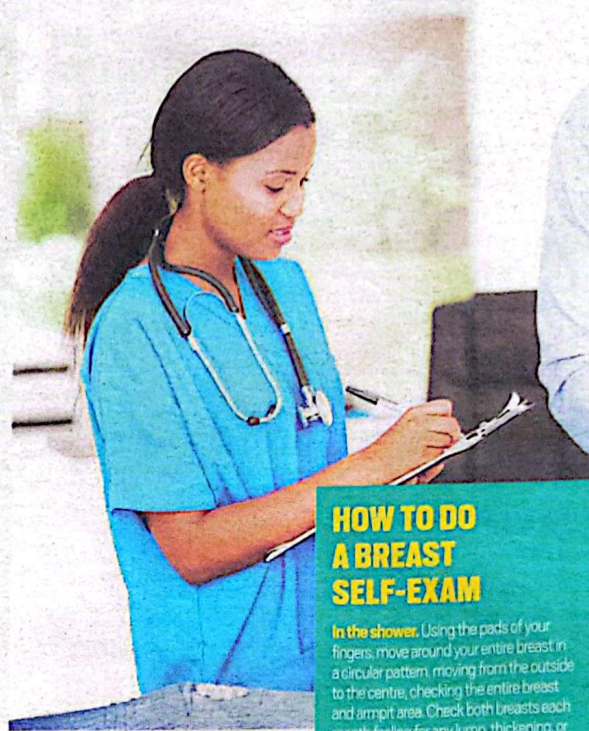
No matter what your age, it is always helpful to do regular medical tests to make sure everything is functioning the way it should be. Because each one's health is different, ask your doctor what specific tests you need more.

...FROM COVER

Have your first test at age 65 and another every five years thereafter. Women can lose up to 30 per cent of their bone mass in the five to seven years following menopause. Get tested at menopause if you have ever smoked, have a history of nontraumatic fractures as an adult, or have a family history of osteoporosis," she says.

Eye check up
 Dr George Bwesigye, a general practitioner at Najjera Hospital, says women between the ages of 20-40 should have a comprehensive eye exam every two to four years while those 65 and above should have one every one to two years.
 "Regular checkup will help catch any eye health problems such as vision changes and sties to cataracts and glaucoma. Glaucoma is highly treatable, and in most cases glaucoma-induced vision loss can be slowed with medication if treated early. Get exams before age 40 if glaucoma runs in your family, if you have a risk factor, such as diabetes or if you use steroids," he warns.

Ovarian reserve test
 This is an egg count test that helps women know their chances of getting pregnant before they start trying. If you are thinking about having children in the near future, an ovarian reserve test can tell you more about your fertility potential. "Ovarian reserve testing requires a blood test and an ultrasound," says Dr Herman Ssewagude an OB/GYN from Seven Hills Medical Centre.
 Dr Ssewagude adds that the ovarian reserve test will show a woman's egg count and egg quality.
 "Getting pregnant after age 40 is a challenge for women that may have no other impediment to conception because older women will have mostly abnormal eggs,"



HOW TO DO A BREAST SELF-EXAM

In the shower. Using the pads of your fingers, move around your entire breast in a circular pattern, moving from the outside to the centre, checking the entire breast and armpit area. Check both breasts each month feeling for any lump, thickening, or hardened knot. Notice any changes and get lumps evaluated by your healthcare provider.

In front of a mirror. Visually inspect your breasts with your arms at your sides. Next, raise your arms high overhead. Look for any changes in the contour, any swelling, or dimpling of the skin, or changes in the nipples. Next, rest your palms on your hips and press firmly to flex your chest muscles. Left and right breasts will not exactly match—few women's breasts do, so look for any dimpling, puckering, or changes, particularly on one side.

Lying down. When lying down, the breast tissue spreads out evenly along the chest wall. Place a pillow under your right shoulder and your right arm behind your head. Using your left hand, move the pads of your fingers around your right breast gently in small circular motions covering the entire breast area and armpit.

Use light, medium, and firm pressure. Squeeze the nipple, check for discharge and lumps. Repeat these steps for your left breast.

Source: www.nationalbreastcancer.org

he says adding: "An egg is genetically "normal" (euploid) or abnormal (aneuploid); abnormal eggs will lead to infertility, miscarriage, or genetic disorders such as Down syndrome. So the chance of natural pregnancy depends directly and exclusively on "the chance that this month's egg is a healthy one" not on how many are left in the reserves for the future."

STI check
 How often one tests for STI depends on an individual's risk factors such as frequency of new sexual partners and if you use condoms or not, Dr Sse-

97%

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN, IF DIAGNOSED EARLY CAN SURVIVE BREAST CANCER

Regular health exams and tests can help find problems early, when your chances for treatment are better. STOCK PHOTO

wagudde says. He adds that ordinarily, sexually active women should get tested once a year for gonorrhoea and chlamydia even if they always practice safe sex.

"It is a good practice to get tested after having unprotected sex, or if you think your partner might have had sex with someone else. Remember people might not have any symptoms, but can still pass STDs to someone. So get tested regularly even if you feel totally fine or have tested negative before," he advises.

Breast exam
 According to Dr Bwesigye, breast cancer is on the increase, with two peaks at ages 35 and 65. "However, 97 per cent of women diagnosed early survive without a recurrence for at least five years," Dr Bwesigye says. He adds that breast screening should start at age 20, with your doctor manually examining your breasts for any signs

of lumps or other changes you have painful lumps; dimples on the breast or lymph nodes in the armpit with your doctor as these of breast cancer. "At age should do annual mamm whether you have or do or symptoms of the disease

Dental screening
 Dr Hamidu Kibuku says problems are not painful, so it is essential to year checkup to make sure no problems.

"The dentist will do a face check which will help any potential gum disease, tooth decay and clean up," Dr Kibuku says.

Women who are pregnant on certain contraceptive are prone to gum inflammation you have more than two fee, wine or other alcohol every day, you should end routine checks as you are at risk for gum disease and