

# Health in Poland

## **Health prevention for migrants**



**PFM**  
POLSKIE FORUM  
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[www.forummigracyjne.org](http://www.forummigracyjne.org)

**Legal work in Poland means that you have health insurance.** The employer pays the insurance contributions every month. A working person can include their close family members: wife, husband, children, in their insurance coverage, by reporting them for insurance purposes to the employer. This means that you and your family can benefit from the insurance.

You can also pay by insurance yourself – the NFZ (National Health Fund) provides for the possibility of voluntary insurance – a migrant can take out insurance independently. This option is available to people who have a residence card.

More information:  
<http://www.nfz.gov.pl/dla-pacjenta/ubezpieczenia-w-nfz/>

**Every insured person has the right to receive public medical assistance in Poland on the same terms as Polish citizens.** But even for insured persons, not all medical services in Poland are free of charge.

Public healthcare institutions are marked with the “NFZ” symbol, i.e. Narodowy Fundusz Zdrowia. Basic medical care at these facilities is available free of charge to insured persons. As a rule, you need to make an appointment in advance to see a doctor and wait for the appointment.

It is often possible to undergo some screening tests/check-ups free of charge – the range of these free examinations varies and changes from time to time. It is worth asking about it at your nearest healthcare facility or hospital. Many institutions post information about free check-ups online.

Prevention is based on regular health check-ups in order to prevent diseases or detect them as early as possible – then the treatment lasts shorter and produces results faster. It is also cheaper.

**The following catalogue of recommended health check-ups applies to HEALTHY INDIVIDUALS. It includes tests designed for cancer prevention.**

**If you are ill, you should of course follow medical instructions and schedule of examinations recommended by your doctor.**

# SCREENING TESTS/CHECK-UPS

Regardless of age, everyone should regularly undergo basic health check-ups:

## Once a year

- Basic check-ups: CBC, ESR, blood glucose level and general urinalysis.
- Arterial blood pressure measurement, weight check and general examination performed by an internist.

## Every 3 years

- Measurement of electrolyte levels in blood (potassium, sodium, magnesium, phosphorus, calcium) – every 3 years (any deficits in the body cause e.g. fatigue, muscle tremor, hypertension).

If you have multiple moles on your skin, see a dermatologist.

Dental check-ups are recommended once every six months.

Other recommended tests depend on the age and gender of the patient.

## Age 20-30

### EVERYONE:

- Lipid profile, i.e. measurement of cholesterol levels in the blood, including HDL and LDL fractions, as well as triglycerides – every 5 years
- Abdominal ultrasound scan – every 3-5 years
- Chest X-ray – every 5 years (in particular smokers)

WOMEN	MEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gynaecological examination and cytological smear – once a year.</li> <li>• Every 2 years you should think about having a transvaginal ultrasound scan.</li> <li>• Breast self-examination – every month, between the 6th and 9th day of the menstrual cycle.</li> <li>• In case of cancer in family medical history – from the age of 20, once every six months you should have a breast ultrasound scan plus mammography every year. Ask your doctor for a palpation examination of your breasts once a year.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-check of the testicles (once a month).</li> <li>• Testicular examination by a doctor (for testicular cancer) – every 3 years.</li> <li>• Proctologic examination (for men in the risk group of prostate diseases).</li> </ul>

## Age 30-40

### EVERYONE:

- Lipid profile – once every five years. In case of circulatory diseases in the family – every year.
- Arterial blood pressure measurement, weight check and general examination performed by an internist – once a year.
- Abdominal ultrasound scan – every 3 – 5 years
- Chest X-ray – once every 5 years (in particular smokers)
- Vision test performed by an ophthalmologist and examination of the fundus of the eye – once every 5 years. In case of visual impairments – according to the doctor's instructions.

WOMEN	MEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Monthly self-examination of the breasts,</li><li>• Regular gynaecological examination and cytological smear (once a year).</li><li>• Breast ultrasound scan (once a year)</li><li>• Transvaginal ultrasound scan of the genitals – once.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Self-examination of the testicles at least once every six months</li><li>• Testicular examination by a doctor (for testicular cancer) – every 3 years.</li><li>• Proctologic examination (for men in the risk group of prostate diseases)</li></ul>

## Age 40-50

### EVERYONE:

- Lipid profile (cholesterol, fractions, triglycerides) – once every two years (if there is an increased risk of atherosclerosis and cardiovascular diseases in the family, if the individual is overweight or smokes cigarettes, then a lipid profile test should be done every year).
- Vision test performed by an ophthalmologist and intraocular pressure measurement – once every 2 years.
- ECG i.e. electrocardiogram – once every 3 years.
- Chest X-ray every 5 years (smokers – chest X-ray every year).
- Abdominal ultrasound scan – every 3 – 5 years.
- Gastroscopy – once every five years.
- To ensure prevention of colorectal cancer, it is also a good idea to do a faecal occult blood test once a year.
- Densitometric examination (bone density) – once every 10 years.
- Dental examination – once every six months.
- Monitoring of moles by a dermatologist.

WOMEN	MEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gynaecological examination and cytological smear – once a year, preferably with the same and trusted doctor, who knows your body.</li><li>• Transvaginal ultrasound scan of genitals – once every 2 years.</li><li>• Self-examination of the breasts – once a month.</li><li>• Breast ultrasound scan and mammography – once every 2 years.</li><li>• Thyroid hormone level test – once.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prostate check-ups through a per rectum examination – once a year.</li><li>• Lung x-ray – every 2 years (smokers – according to doctor's instructions).</li><li>• Self-check of the testicles – once a month.</li></ul>

## Age 50+

### EVERYONE:

- Abdominal ultrasound scan – once a year.
- Chest X-ray every 5 years (smokers – every year).
- Densitometric examination (bone density) – once every 10 years.
- After the age of 50, colonoscopy should be performed at least once every 5 years.
- To ensure prevention of colorectal cancer, it is also a good idea to do a faecal occult blood test once a year.
- Electrocardiogram (ECG) – once a year.
- Ophthalmic examination (fundus examination, intraocular pressure measurement) – once a year.
- Dental examination – once every six months.
- Monitoring any moles.

WOMEN	MEN
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gynaecological examination, cytological smear and ultrasound scan of genitals – once a year.</li><li>• Mammography – once every two years.</li><li>• Self-check of the breasts – every month.</li><li>• Determination of the level of sex hormones in the blood – once every few years.</li><li>• Thyroid hormone level test – once a year.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After the age of 50, the risk of changes in the prostate gland increases, which is why every man in this age group should visit a urologist, undergo a per rectum prostate exam and retake the exam once every two years.</li><li>• PSA antigen marking – once a year.</li><li>• Testicular examination by a doctor – once every 3 years.</li><li>• Self-check of the testicles – once a month.</li></ul>

# WHAT ELSE SHOULD YOU KNOW?

## Examinations at work

Your employer has an obligation to refer you for a medical examination before you start working – and regularly during your work (frequency of the examinations depends on the type of work). The employer pays the costs of these examinations (reimburses the employee for the cost of the examinations).

## Examinations without insurance

There is a network of private healthcare facilities in Poland, where you can undergo tests for a fee. Life-saving medical assistance in an emergency (e.g. in the event of a road accident) is free of charge for everyone.

## Don't smoke!

One in five cancer cases in Europe is caused by smoking. The most commonly diagnosed cancer in the world is lung cancer. It affects almost exclusively smokers and people exposed to passive smoking (who spend

## Self-examination

A very important aspect of cancer prevention is independent regular monitoring of your own body. Breast examination, testicular examination – this is a test that you can perform yourself. On the internet you will easily find instructions on how to perform the test correctly and what to look for.

## Diet and lifestyle

Your health is affected by your lifestyle and diet. Your health is mainly influenced by a healthy diet, regular physical activity, sleep and rest. A simple walk improves cardiovascular function, prevents osteoporosis and improves mood. And one more thing...

time among smokers). Five years after quitting smoking, the risk of falling ill is reduced by half! Smoking also affects the incidence of pancreatic, urinary and respiratory cancer. **So don't smoke.**



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Publication prepared as part of the project entitled "Organisation and provision of specialised advisory services for foreigners staying in the area of the capital city of Warsaw and support with the integration process", co-financed by the City of Warsaw.

